

Deleuze Connections

'It is not the elements or the sets which define the multiplicity. What defines it is the AND, as something which has its place between the elements or between the sets. AND, AND, AND, AND – stammering.'

Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues*

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Deleuze and the Contemporary World

Edited by Ian Buchanan
and Adrian Parr

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of profit). This is the history of oil and nuclear power. And it does both at once: capitalism confronts its own limits and simultaneously displaces them, setting them down again farther along. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 463)

17. Capitalism, by removing the conditions that enable 'transcendental' accords to maintain themselves, in the process promotes a cultural logic that favours the description over the concept, and this cultural logic also contains within itself propensities that weaken or obviate the dichotomy between the individual and the collective, and thus creates the conditions for the emergence of a culture that, with the supersession of capitalist 'non-being', will allow singularity potentially to become generalised as a cultural principle.
18. The sketchy account of singularity given here is taken from the much more substantial treatment in Giorgio Agamben (1993). Several sentences in this section are reproduced from my 'The Epochality' (1997).
19. A point well-made in Daniel Lazare (1996) and (2001).
20. For discussion, see Bob Jessop (1997: 574-5).
21. This formulation is owed to Jessop (1997: 574-5).
22. Samir Amin has argued that only in this way can the system of a globalised economic polarisation be neutralised and ultimately dismantled. See Amin (1990 and 2000).

The Becoming-Minoritarian of Europe

Rosi Braidotti

No notion is more contested in European politics and social theory than the sociopolitical space of the European Union (EU). The EU is a molar political entity that has become an internationally significant economic player, but it also offers a critical political vision that universalises its own concept of 'civilisation'. As a progressive project, the EU constitutes an alternative to the aggressive neo-liberalism of the USA on a number of key issues (privacy; telecommunication; genetically modified food and the environment) and as an advocate of human rights and world peace. It is a project that is faced with a diverse set of contradictions.

On the one hand, Europe celebrates transnational spaces, but on the other hand, it is witness to the resurgence of hyper-nationalisms occurring at the micro-level. The cosmopolitan global city and paranoid Fortress Europe stand face-to-face as opposite sides of the same coin. In an attempt to bypass the binary of global versus local, and so as to destabilise the established definitions of European identity, I will narrate an alternative vision of Europe's 'becoming-minoritarian'. The decline of Eurocentrism will be taken as a premise that points to a qualitative shift in our collective sense of identity. Contained within the progressive project of the EU are the seeds for a post-nationalist sociopolitical space, which is to say, putting it in more Deleuzian terms, the possibility of a radical 'becoming-minoritarian' is immanent to the sociopolitical space of the EU.

As part of both the de-Nazification and the economic reconstruction of Europe following World War II, the common European space was created, but this move was not immune to resistance at the national level. In fact, the notion of a common Europe continues to encounter enormous resistance (Morin 1987; Spinelli 1992). Several progressive political movements today, ranging from the Green Party to the European Social Forum and the feminists, give top priority to a post-Eurocentric vision of the

European Union. Politically speaking, the nationalist and xenophobic tenets of the Right vehemently oppose the EU, producing a wave of paranoid fear that is both anti-European and racist to the core (Hall 1987 and 1990). In this way, the EU project is caught in the schizoid political economy of postmodernity, paradoxically positioned between an increasingly globalised perspective and an equally intense fragmentation (Appadurai 1994). Globalisation enacts both a profound cultural and economic homogenisation and an extreme concentration of power in very few hands. Thus, a new, allegedly post-nationalist identity coexists with the return of micro-nationalisms, xenophobia, racism and anti-Semitism (Benhabib 1999). Common European citizenship and currency coexist with increasing internal fragmentation and regionalism. The disintegration of the former Soviet empire simultaneously marks the triumph of the capitalist market economy and the return of ethnic wars of an only apparently archaic kind. The 'new' Europe is therefore trying to steer its course in the midst of complex and contradictory co-ordinates.

Yet strong opposition to the EU can also be heard from a largely nostalgic Left. The cosmopolitan tradition of socialism militates against the European dimension: solidarity with the third-world always carries a politically correct consensus, whereas an interest in European matters is dismissed as narcissistic and vain. Advocating a project concerned with strengthening international working-class solidarity, the European Left is slow to understand the non-dialectical, non-topological and non-teleological and hence schizophrenic nature of advanced capitalism (Deleuze and Guattari 1977 and 1987).¹

De-centring Europe

Historically, continental philosophy – prior to and including post-structuralism – is connected to the issue of European identity and 'civilisation'. Since the end of the nineteenth and the start of the twentieth century, the 'crisis' of European philosophy has both reflected and highlighted larger sociopolitical issues related to the geopolitical status of Europe, colonialism and a growing sense of crisis around European identity.² According to an entire generation of post-structuralists – Foucault, Deleuze, Derrida and Irigaray – especially after World War II the crisis of philosophical humanism historically coincides with the decline of Europe as an imperial world power. Recently, wise old men like Habermas and Derrida along with progressive spirits like Balibar have taken the lead, stressing the advantages of de-centring Europe as a sociopolitical laboratory so as to develop a post-nationalist sense of citizenship.

As a world power Europe practised a form of universalism concomitantly excluding difference. According to a post-structuralist frame of reference these constitutive 'others' are the specular complement of the subject of modernity. They are the woman, the ethnic or racialised other, and the natural environment. Respectively, they constitute the second sex or sexual complement of Man; the coloured, racialised or marked 'other' that allows the Europeans to universalise their whiteness as the defining human trait; and the environment against which technology is pitched and developed. These 'others' are of crucial importance to the construction of the identity of the universal called Europe. One cannot move without the other, therefore the redefinition of European identity intrinsically poses the question of the social and discursive status of 'difference', both in the sense of sexual difference and that of ethnic diversity.³

The project of European unification involves a shift in consciousness that in turn expresses the critique of the self-appointed missionary role of Europe as the alleged centre of the world. A post-nationalist vision of Europe entails a process of becoming-minoritarian, one that works to promote the deterritorialisation of the false universalism underpinning European identity, so as to propose a post-nationalist vision of Europe.⁴ As a post-nationalist project, the EU will, ideally, undergo a change in consciousness, moving towards a more accountable eco-philosophy of European multiple belonging. The opposite of the grandiose and aggressive universalism of the past, being both a situated and accountable perspective, this image of a post-nationalist Europe turns our collective memory to the service of a new political and ethical project. It looks to the future confidently and to the past without nostalgia. As such it is a creative gesture, producing horizons of hope and, simultaneously, constructing the possibility of a future that is alive to difference and change.

One concrete example of this process is the rethinking of 'whiteness'. For people who inhabit the European region, the present is marked to an unprecedented degree by transculturality, migration and flows of people. We are perhaps witnessing the end of European cultural homogeneity. As Michael Walzer (1992) has argued, cultural homogeneity is the foundational political European myth in much the same way as multiculturalism is a prevailing American myth. Of course, European history at any point in time provides ample evidence to the contrary: waves of migrations from the east and the south make a mockery of claims to European ethnic or cultural homogeneity, while the persistent presence of Jewish and Muslim citizens in Europe challenges the traditional European identification with Christianity. Nonetheless, the myth of cultural homogeneity is crucial to the tale of European nationalism.

Today these myths are being exposed and exploded as questions concerning entitlement and agency seep to the surface. Thus, the EU is faced with the following issue: can one be European, Black and Muslim? One of the radical implications of the project of the EU is the possibility of giving a specific location, and consequently historical specificity to anti-racist whites. Now, the question itself can racialise our location. This is quite a feat because until recently only white supremacists, Nazi skin-heads and other neo-fascist groups actually put forward a theory of biological and cultural essentialism on the inherent qualities of white people. Apart from this, whiteness was quite simply invisible, an unseen factor by whites. It took the work of black writers and thinkers to expose whiteness as a political issue. Located in the lily-white purity of our universalist fantasy, disembodied and disembedded, 'we' actually thought we had no colour.

In his analysis of the representation of whiteness as an ethnic category in mainstream films, Richard Dyer (1997) argues that, being the norm, whiteness is invisible, as if this is natural, inevitable or the ordinary way to do things. The source of the representational power of white lies in the propensity to be everything and nothing at the same time, whereas black, of course, is always marked off as a colour. The effect of this structured invisibility and the process of naturalising whiteness is that it masks itself as a 'colourless multicolouredness'. White contains all other colours. White is the void that lies at the heart of a system, defining the contours of both social and symbolic visibility in regimes of colonial domination. For Deleuze and Guattari (1977 and 1987) no dominant notion – such as masculinity or race – can have a positive definition, that is to say, the prerogative of being dominant is that a concept defined oppositionally produces the marks of oppression and/or marginalisation. The superiority of the dominant is registered in its ability to position the other as inferior, without seeming to do so. The dominant concept is always an 'invisible hand'. We tend to perceive it as a comparatively benign point of reference. Its function appears to be nothing other than as a term to index and patrol access and participation to entitlements and powers. Thus, the invisibility of dominant concepts is also the expression of their insubstantiality – which makes them all them more effective against the countless others on whose structural exclusion their power rests.

The immediate consequence of this invisibility is not just political, but methodological as well. Whiteness, like all molar categories, is hard to grasp critically; it tends to break down into ethnic and nationalist sub-categories: Irishness, Italianness, Jewishness, and so on. It follows therefore, that non-whites have a much clearer perception of whiteness than

whites. The reverse, however, is not the case: blacks and other ethnic minorities do not need this specular logic in order to have their own location. Cultural identity, as external and retrospective, tends to be defined by Europeans in the confrontation with other – usually black – peoples. This is similar to the experiences of Irish, Italian and Jewish immigrants in countries like the US, Canada and Australia. Their 'whiteness' emerged oppositionally, as a factor that concomitantly distanced them from natives and blacks. Feminist critics like Frankenberg (1994a and 1994b) and Brodtkin Sacks (1994) have provided detailed analyses of this phenomenon of 'whitening' by which Euro-immigrants – especially Jews and Italians – were constructed as 'whitened' citizens in the US. The extent to which this kind of 'whitened' identity is illusory, as much as it is racist, can be seen in how divided the diasporic, Euro-immigrant communities actually are. But all are equally 'whitened' by the gaze of the coloniser who is bent on pitching them against the black population.

By learning to view their subject position as racialised, white people can work towards anti-racist forms of whiteness, or at least anti-racist strategies that deterritorialise whiteness. Interestingly, this strategy carries with it enormous benefit for people currently migrating from the east of Europe. Comparable dynamics are operating within the EU, which result in a new racialised hierarchy that polices access to full EU citizenship. Thus, peoples from the Balkans, or the south-western regions of Europe are considered to be not quite as 'white' as the rest of Europe. The whitening process expands with the new frontiers of the EU pushing outwards the 'illegal others'. But this process quite consciously needs an 'other', a people whose skin is still darker, less white, than the newly anointed. An oriental or eastern ethnic divide is operating which equates EU citizenship with whiteness and Christianity, casting shadows of suspicion on all 'others'. Locations are historicised and situated on contingent foundations that structure one's being-in-the-world, one's social modes of belonging and not belonging. In other words, being diasporic, nomadic, hybrid, or in-between are not equivalent. Sociologically these translate into different structural locations in respect to language, culture, class, labour, access and participation in power (in the broadest sense of the term). The task of the social critic is to make relevant distinctions among these different locations and map points of intersection in order to create a politically invested cartography, identifying a common ground that can be shared by multiply-located subjects committed to constructing new post-national subjectivities and not merely to deconstruction for its own sake. I call this the new materialism of post-humanist subjects. It refers to subjects who are embedded, embodied and

accountable, but not territorialised, molarised and unified. It implies, too, a nomadic politics: a politics of affirmative or creative modality. In this way I share the thesis put forward by another Deleuzian philosopher Edouard Glissant (1997). He, too, develops an effective rhizomatic poetics and politics, taking as his point of reference the historical experience and the specific location of Africans and West Indians caught in the transatlantic slave trade. He argues that even an experience as devastating as slavery produces specific forms of knowledge and subjectivisation that transcend the burden of the negative.

There are several important features at stake in Glissant's remarkable position; the first is the primacy of the relation over any of its terms, including the negative ones. A relation functions through the middle, the 'milieu'. Peoples who are culturally and ethnically positioned in the middle – like the Caribbeans or West Indians – have a head start in understanding the crucial importance of the relation. However, they also have a historical legacy of destruction and violence that is hard to transcend insofar as it includes both the erasure of the original culture and the adoption of the colonising culture by force. In response to this ethical and political challenge, Glissant actively theorises the becoming-minoritarian (or rhizomatic) of blacks, Creoles, descendants of slaves and other colonised peoples. This is described as a spiritual and logistical shift in the structure of the subject, one that advances a sense of openness toward both self and other.

Glissant's position includes a sharp critique of Europe, which is based on the ontology of sameness or the rule of one. This includes a dualistic relationship to the rest of the humans. There exists a dominant mode of nomadism in Western culture – in the form of epic journeys of discovery all of which find their historical apogee in colonialism. The power of sameness in the West is best described in terms of monolingualism, or the illusion of a single cultural and linguistic root. In what appears to be a very Deleuzian stance, Glissant plays the rhizome against the root and calls for a global polylinguism. This includes the deconstruction of the hubris of European master cultures and the arrogance with which they consider their languages as the voice of humanity. This universalist pretence is one of the mechanisms supporting colonialism. It also entails the reappraisal of minor languages, dialects and hybrids in a phenomenon that Glissant describes as 'creolisation'.

Glissant offers a striking example of the poetics of relation in his analysis of how the French colonisers spoke their own, 'home grown' dialects – Norman or Breton – rather than the high and noble language of the French nation, in the Caribbean territories. This bastardised language mingles

with the local languages creating a crossover between two distinct but analogous forms of linguistic non-purity. Creolisation, therefore, cuts both ways and it differs from the master language in its very structure. The thought of relation as a form of philosophical nomadism stresses the importance of the middle and this shifts our thinking away from concepts of purity, origins and oneness. Glissant defines this productive multiplicity as 'echoes of the world' – modalities that resonate with the vitality of human biodiversity on both a biological and cultural level. These modes reconnect us to the living chaos of the world as living matter in transformation: a dynamic resilient *bios-zoe* force of global creolisation. Glissant captures this vitality and honours it as a poetics, or ethics of rhizomatic interconnections.

Philosophical nomadism pursues the same critique of power as black and post-colonial theories, not in spite, but because of the fact that it is located somewhere else. It addresses in both a critical and creative manner the role of the former 'centre' in redefining power relations. Margins and centre shift and destabilise each other in parallel, albeit dissymmetrical, movements.

As the project for a post-nationalist European Union demonstrates, the challenge is to invoke rhizomatic interventions that destabilise dogmatic, hegemonic, exclusionary power structures lying at the heart of dominant subjectivities and identity formations underpinning these. If we are to move beyond the sociology of labour mobility and the breast-beating of critical thinkers squashed by white guilt, we need to enact a vision of the political subject that encompasses change in the way relations are territorialised along the cultural, linguistic, economic, political and social coordinates. The point is not merely to deconstruct identities or loudly proclaim counter-identities but to open up identity to different connections able to produce multiple belongings that in turn precipitate a non-unitary vision of a subject. Such a subject actively constructs itself in a complex and internally contradictory set of social relations. To achieve this, first we need to embrace intensive movements that activate processes of change rather than fixating on essences. This means sociological variables (gender, class, race and ethnicity, age, health) need to be supplemented with a theory of the subject that calls into question the inner fibres of self-production. This requires the desire, ability and courage to sustain multiple belongings in a context that predominantly celebrates and rewards unified identities.

So how does the sociopolitical space of becoming-minoritarian work? This question anticipates a notion of European space of mediation that is an open, multi-layered project, one that has no fixed essence. As

Balibar suggests (2001 and 2002) a space of mediation provides a space of critical resistance to hegemonic identities of all kinds. My own choice to rework whiteness in the era of postmodernity is firstly to situate it in the geohistorical space of Europe and the political project of the EU. This amounts to historicising it and demystifying its allegedly 'natural' location. The next step is to analyse and revisit it critically until it opens onto a new practice of flexible and multi-layered European subjectivity. The third step consists in trying to relocate European identity with the aim of undoing its hegemonic tendencies. I refer to this alternative conception of identity as 'nomadic'. Being a nomadic European subject means to be in transit within different identity-formations, but also to be sufficiently anchored to a historical position so that one can also accept responsibility for the position one takes. The key words here are: 'accountability' and the 'strategic relocation of whiteness'. The privilege that came with white invisibility that was conferred on Europeans and also positioned it as the alleged centre of the world is also dispelled by the 'becoming-minoritarian of Europe'. By assuming full responsibility for the partial perspective of its own location the concept of a minoritarian European space allows for an alternative political vision to surface, one that acknowledges the scattered hegemonies of a globalised world no longer dominated by European power alone.

Complex Shifting Locations, Not Multitudes

Recently, the issue of Europe as an alternative political model has also become central to Antonio Negri (Friese, Negri and Wagner 2002). Although in many senses Negri's position differs from that of Deleuze, there are significant points of comparison between the two. Negri combines a monistic Spinozist political economy with a post-Marxian brand of materialist analysis of labour conditions under advanced capitalism. Like Deleuze, Negri searches for a productive space of becoming-revolutionary, yet he goes on to locate the motor of world resistance in his concept of the 'multitude'. He also singles out the new EU as the political arena where the – allegedly rhizomic – politics of the multitude confront the gravitational pull of a globalised empire.

The multitude is, in fact, the appointed alternative to global capitalism. I share Negri's normative injunction, namely that of creating social horizons of political hope, but I cannot fully share his zealous conviction that this is the only, or necessarily revolutionary option sanctioned by history and the will of the multitude. His analysis of the contemporary political situation relies on the becoming-woman of labour and the renewed

emphasis on the materiality of corporeal bodies. This constitutes a 'micro-political' form of activism, one that resonates with Guattari's notion of transversal subjectivity. This notion is crucial to Negri's work with Michael Hardt and their critique of globalisation. Together they argue that in advanced capitalism, the priority of material labour over immaterial labour is steadily being eroded. And though they recognise that material forms of labour are statistically still in the majority, they argue that immaterial labour is rapidly assuming the position of cultural dominance. The 'information society' is based on immaterial labour: that is labour which prioritises the 'content' of our heads rather than the muscle-strength of our bodies or tactile skill of our hands. This position also gives weight to the production and reproduction of affects, like caring and the creation once more of fading community connections. Historically, though, the latter has been the province of women's work, yet now it constitutes a central piece of capitalist production. Caring and affective labour are both material and immaterial; they simultaneously produce communities and the regulatory effects of biopower.

Hardt and Negri stress the immaterial and affective nature of the labour force; this being one that trades in phonetic skills, linguistic ability and proper accents services, as well as requiring attention, concentration and great care. However, they neglect to consider the gendered political structures of advanced capitalism or the contradictions inherent to the process of becoming-woman of labour. To illustrate this shortcoming in their argument let us consider a new category in the political economy: the new digital proletariat. The most striking example of this is provided by the workers in call centres that process phone enquiries from locations miles away from the callers' homes. Denounced strongly by Arundhati Roy (2001), these 'call centres' or data outsourcing agencies are a multi-billion dollar industry that have attracted a great deal of critical attention both in mainstream and in alternative media.

Roy (2001) describes in detail the 'call centre College' on the outskirts of Delhi in a suburb called Gurgaon. Here, hundreds of Indian graduates are trained to perform the backroom operations of transnational companies. They answer queries on a wide range of subjects ranging from car rentals and credit card inquiries to plane tickets. The key is never to let the caller suspect that their call is being processed in Delhi. Thus, the students have to learn to speak English with the appropriate and expected accents – generally Australian, British or American – they need to read the local newspapers to be up to date on small items of news and, of course, they need to erase their own identity and change names in order to 'pass'. Whilst certainly reminiscent of those age-old problems

of working-class exploitation, this kind of labour presents a whole new kind of labour exploitation.

In a series of visual installations, the Raqs Media Collective (Biemann 2003) presented an incisive critique of the specific forms of simulation embodied in these call centres, namely the erasure of their remoteness from the callers' homes. They cite the example of a woman called Sunita who is known on the phone as Sandra. Replying to phone enquiries Sunita simulates Sandra who is supposed to live in Minneapolis, US. This strategy of simulation is not mere impersonation as there is no visual or physical contact between the parties involved. Nor can it be seen as a form of identification, as the worker need not feel or experience herself as being from a different culture/nation in order to fulfil her contractual obligations. It is more of a logistical issue: working in a call-centre is a matter of carefully orchestrated simulation. As such, it requires a radical 'othering' of oneself, or a form of schizophrenia that entails the reification of the worker's own life-world. Not unlike characters in a chat room, the call-centre worker performs her labour market persona in such a way as to emerge from the process neither wiser, nor enriched (especially considering that wages in the developing world call centres are paid one tenth of their Western counterparts), but rather firmly located as: 'the emerging digital proletariat that underpins the new world economy' (Biemann 2003: 85).

The kind of cultural cross-dressing performed by call-centre digital proletarians is neither the creative mimesis of strategic repetitions, nor is it the destabilising effect of queer identity politics. It is simply today's variation on the theme of what Deleuze and Guattari have identified as capitalism's demand that the worker be pre-mutilated so as fit into the global marketing of both material commodities and of Western lifestyles, cultures and accents. This *tour de force* by the digital workers of the new global economy rests on an acute and explicit awareness of one's location in space and time. It is a territorial issue and as such it raises serious questions about border-crossings, nomadic shifts and paths of deterritorialisation. It is quite clear that the allegedly ethereal nature of cyberspace and the flow of mobility it sustains is fashioned by the material labour of women and men from areas of the world thought to be peripheral. This space of fluctuation is highly racialised and sexualised. A new 'feminisation' and 'racialisation' of the virtual workforce has taken place, which amounts to the deterioration of rights and conditions.

Although Hardt and Negri theorise the schizophrenic dimension of capitalism, they fail to practise what they preach. Their vision of the

allegedly ongoing revolutionary process, which they express in a euphoric and at times hyperbolic language, contradicts the conceptual premises of their thought. Theirs remains a highly abstract project, one that fails to ground itself in the embedded and embodied brands of materialism that feminist theory has developed. The process of becoming-revolutionary is a rather ascetic and humble process: an art or a practice. There is no overarching meta-narrative of one global multitude in either feminist notions of situated knowledges (Haraway 1988) or in Deleuze's philosophy of radical immanence.

Becoming Ethical

What is the ethical import of the process of multiple belongings and a becoming-nomadic whereby affects take centre stage? Let us begin by moving this question away from Negri's metaphysics of labour towards Deleuze's philosophy of radical immanence. Becoming-political involves a radical repositioning or intensive transformation on the part of subjects who want to become-minoritarian in a productive and affirmative manner. It is clear that this shift requires changes that are neither simple, nor self-evident. These changes mobilise the affect of the subjects involved and can be seen as a process of transforming negative passions into affirmative ones. Fear, anxiety and nostalgia are clear examples of the negative emotions involved in the project of detaching ourselves from familiar forms of identity. Achieving a post-nationalist sense of European identity requires the disidentification from established, nation-bound points of reference. Such an enterprise inevitably entails a sense of loss as cherished habits of thought and representation are relinquished.

The beneficial side effects of this process are unquestionable (as I have already enumerated above) and in some way they compensate for the pain loss produces. Thus, the critical relocation of whiteness can produce an affirmative, situated anti-racist European subject-position. In a more Spinozist vein, it also produces a more adequate cartography of our real-life conditions, free from delusions of grandeur. This mature and sobering experience is, however, also an enriching and positive one. Migrants, exiles and refugees all have first-hand experience of the pain and loss felt as a result of being uprooted and forced into dis-identifying with familiar identities. Diasporic subjects of all kinds express the same sense of wounding. Multi-locality is the affirmative translation of this negative sense of loss. Following Glissant, the becoming-nomadic points to a process of positive transformation of pain of loss, turning it into the active production of multiple forms of belonging and complex allegiances. What

is lost in the sense of fixed origins is gained in an increased desire to belong, in a multiple rhizomic manner that overcomes the bilateralism of binary identity formations.

The qualitative leap through pain, across mourning landscapes of nostalgia, is a gesture of active creation, one that affirms new ways of belonging. It is a fundamental reconfiguration of our way of being in the world that acknowledges the pain of loss whilst moving beyond this pain. This is the defining moment of becoming-ethical: the movement across and beyond pain, loss and negative passions. The real aim of the process is to overcome the stultifying effects of passivity that pain can produce. In this way, the internal disarray, fracture and pain provide the ethical conditions for transformation. Clearly, this is an antithesis of the Kantian moral imperative to avoid pain, or to view pain as the obstacle to moral behaviour. Nomadic ethics is not about avoiding pain, rather it is concerned with transcending the resignation and passivity that ensue from being hurt, lost and dispossessed. One has to become ethical as opposed to just applying moral rules and protocols as a form of self-protection. Transformations express the affirmative power of life as the vitality of *bios-zoe*, the very opposite of morality.

Edgar Morin also acknowledges the importance of pain in stirring forth ethical and political consciousness (Morin 1987). He describes his 'becoming-European' as a double affect: the first concerns a disappointment with the unfulfilled promises of Marxism. The second is compassion for the uneasy, struggling and marginal position of post-war Europe squashed between the US and the USSR. The pain of this awareness that Europe was ill-loved and a castaway: '*une pauvre vieille petite chose*' ('a poor old little thing') (Morin 1987: 23) results in a new kind of bonding and a renewed sense of care and accountability. The sobering experience – the humble and productive recognition of loss – has to do with self-representation. Established mental habits, images and terminology railroad us backwards toward established ways of thinking about ourselves. Traditional modes of representation are legal forms of addiction. To change them is not unlike undertaking a detoxification cure. A great deal of courage and creativity is needed to develop forms of representation that do justice to the complexities of a subject. We already live and inhabit social reality in ways that surpass tradition: we move about in the flow of current social transformations, in hybrid, multi-cultural, polyglot, post-identity spaces of becoming (Braidotti 2002). We fail, however, to bring them into adequate representation. There is a shortage on the part of our social imaginary, a deficit of representational power that underscores the political timidity of the European unification

process. Some of this difficulty is contingent and may be linked to the lack of a European public space, as Habermas suggests (1992); or the lack of visionary leadership among politicians, as Mény put it (2000). In any case, European issues fail to trigger our imagination.

The real issue, however, is conceptual: how do we develop a new post-nationalist European social imaginary through the pain of dis-identification and loss? Given that identifications constitute an inner scaffolding that supports one's sense of identity, how do changes of this magnitude take place? Shifting an imaginary is not like casting away a used garment; it is more akin to shedding an old skin. Whilst it may happen more frequently at a molecular level, when it occurs in the social arena it tends to be a painful experience. This is a collective activity, a group project that connects active conscious and desiring citizens. It points towards a virtual, but no less real, destination – a post-nationalist Europe – without being utopian. As a project it is historically grounded, socially embedded and already partly actualised in the joint endeavours of those who are currently working towards it. If this is in any way utopian, it is only in the sense of the positive affects that are mobilised in the process: the necessary dose of imagination, dreamlike vision and bonding, all of which a social project needs in order to advance.

Feminism is a significant example of this kind of transformative political project: feminists take a critical distance from the dominant social institutions of femininity and masculinity, and choose instead to relate these to other variables, such as ethnicity, race and class. Feminist theory has addressed the issue of the reconstruction of the social imaginary through the emphasis it has placed both on identification (as a factor in identity formation) and dis-identification (strategically using this to raise consciousness). However, it has mostly achieved this within a psychoanalytic framework, choosing to emphasise the imaginary as the process of linguistic mediation. This refers to a system of representation by which a subject gets captured by ruling social and cultural formations: legal attachments to particular identities, images and terminologies. For Althusser and Lacan, these are governed by a symbolic system as it is represented in the Law of the Phallus. The interaction or mediation between the self and these imaginary institutions provides the motor for the process of becoming-subject. Needless to say, for Lacan this process labours under the burden of negativity, as lack, mourning and melancholia. This is also a legacy from Hegel, reducing the subject to a process of being-subjected-to, for instance in the negative sense of power as *potestas*.

The post-structuralist generation, starting with Foucault, challenged both the negativity and the static nature of the Lacanian master code on which all forms of mediation are supposed to hinge. The binary opposition of self versus society is too narrow to account for the complex workings of powering our culture. A thick and highly dynamic web of power effects is the factor through which self and society are mutually shaped by one another. The choreography of constraints and entitlements, controls and desire is the hard core of power. This core is devoid of any substantial essence and is a force, or activity – a verb that is, not a noun. Power as positive or *potentia* is crucial in forming the subject as an entity enmeshed in a network of inter-related social and discursive effects; here biopower, or the power over living matter, is one good example of this. For Deleuze and Guattari, as for Foucault, the system of mediation is not merely linguistic, it is also material.

What might be termed Deleuze's 'social imaginary' (setting aside for the moment the fact that he rejects the Lacanian concept of the imaginary, as well as its Althusserian inflection) would not be postulated along linguistic lines at all – it would be like a prism, or a fractal that disintegrates the unity of vision into bundles of multi-directional perceptive tools. Deleuze relies on Spinoza's idea of 'collective imaginings' (Gatens and Lloyd 1999) to elucidate the following important idea: 'social imaginary' is ultimately an image of thought. That is to say, it is a habit that captures and blocks alternative ways of thinking about ourselves and the environment. Collectively, we can empower some of these alternative becomings. This being is a collective and affective process. European post-nationalist identity is such a project: political at heart, it has a strong ethical pull made up of conviction, vision and desire. As a project it requires active participation and a striving toward what we are capable of becoming more than defining who we are. This liberatory potential is directly proportional to the desire and collective affects it mobilises. The becoming-minoritarian of Europe actively experiments with different ways of inhabiting social space.

Far from being the prelude to a neo-universal stance, or its dialectical pluralist counterpart, or even the relativistic acceptance of all and any locations, the project of the-becoming-minoritarian of Europe is an ethical transformation by a former centre that chooses the path of imminent change. Through the pain of loss and disenchantment, just like 'post-Woman women' have moved towards a redefinition of their 'being-gendered-in-the-world', 'post-nationalist Europeans' may be able to find enough self-respect to become the subjects of multiple ecologies of belonging.

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Borderlines

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Verena Andermatt Conley

In their dialogues and collaborations, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari enquire of the nature of borders. They summon principles of inclusion and exclusion associated with borderlines. They eschew expressions built on the polarities of 'either . . . or' and in their own diction replace binary constructions with the conjunctive 'and'. Furthermore, in 'Rhizome,' the introduction to *A Thousand Plateaus*, they argue for rhizomatic connections – fostered in language by 'and . . . and . . . and' – to replace what they call the arborescent model of the ubiquitous Western tree (Deleuze and Guattari 1987). In constant movement, the tissues and tendrils of rhizomes call attention to the horizontal surfaces of the world in which they proliferate. They bring to their observer a new sense of space that is seen not as a background but a shape that, with the rhizome, moves and forever changes. In the field of play Deleuze and Guattari often produce hybrid, even viral connections and downplay the presence of genealogies conveyed in the figure of the tree bearing a stock-like trunk. Rhizomatic connections form open territories that are not constricted by the enclosing frame of a rigid borderline.

In the same breath the two philosophers argue for 'smooth' spaces of circulation. They take a critical view of 'striated' spaces, replete with barriers and borders that are part of an 'arborescent' mentality. Striated spaces cross-hatched by psychic or real borderlines drawn by the state (social class, race, ethnicities) or by institutions (family, school), prevent the emergence of new ways of thinking. Crucial, Deleuze and Guattari declare, is the mental and social construction of new territories and the undoing of inherited barriers. Institutional, familial and even psychoanalytical striations that impede a person's mobility in mental and physical spheres need to be erased or, at least, drawn with broken lines. When guilt is at the basis of the unconscious, productivity and creativity are

Notes

1. More recently, however, the issue of European politics has begun to receive a new lease on life, through political movements like the European Social Forum and the anti-Iraq war movement along with intellectual interventions from the likes of Balibar, Mény, Negri, Passerini and others.
2. Nietzsche and Freud, then Husserl and Fanon and later Adorno and the Frankfurt school are evidence of this trend.
3. I have analysed the political status of otherness in *Transpositions. On Nomadic Ethics* (Cambridge: Polity Press, forthcoming in February 2006).
4. The work of post-colonial and anti-racist feminist thinkers on power, difference and the politics of location, all of whom are familiar with the European situation, helps illuminate these paradoxes in contemporary Europe (Spivak 1987; Hall 1990 and 1992; Brah 1993 and 1996; Harding 1993; Lutz et al. 1996; Yuval-Davis and Anthias 1989).