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Between Two Logics: Deleuze and Artaud on the Logics of Sense and Sensation

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Between Two Logics: Deleuze and Artaud on the Logics of Sense and Sensation

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An abstract of
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Abstract

Between Two Logics: Deleuze and Artaud on the Logics of Sense and Sensation

By Robert Mark Causey

My dissertation takes a look at the critical appropriation of the work of the poet, actor, playwright, and artist, Antonin Artaud, by the philosopher Gilles Deleuze. I trace a development in Deleuze's understanding of Artaud primarily from his early *The Logic of Sense* to his *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* by demonstrating how the confrontation with Artaud, in part, helps Deleuze move from a logic of sense to a logic of sensation. I focus particularly on the issue of language and the image of the Body without Organs that Deleuze takes from Artaud's 1947 radio play, "To Have Done with the Judgment of God." I argue that Deleuze's conception of the Body without Organs is not the same as Artaud's conception of it. In looking at Deleuze's early reading of Artaud in *The Logic of Sense*, I argue that he makes a clinical diagnosis of Artaud based on what he takes to be Artaud's schizophrenic language. There Deleuze reads Artaud as someone who is trapped in the corporeal depths of sensation unable to rise to the surface of sense. Artaud's nonsense (unlike Lewis Carroll's) is thus a failure to achieve sense. While the understanding of schizophrenia develops and expands especially during the period of collaboration with Félix Guattari, I maintain that an element of this clinical judgment never disappears from Deleuze's relationship with Artaud. Artaud, I contend, resists the depersonalizing aspects of Deleuze's philosophy by wanting to maintain a certain sense of self-presence. I show in what ways Deleuze, in spite of the apparent valorization of schizophrenia in the later works, always keeps Artaud at arm's length and tries to separate the man and his works in a way that Artaud will not allow. By doing so, I argue that Deleuze unwittingly repeats the error of the *NRF* editor, Jacques Rivière, in his correspondence with the young Artaud by failing to grasp the uniqueness of Artaud's personal case and suffering. This suffering is individuating for Artaud. At issue is Deleuze's method of reading a literary author as well as the relationship between philosophy and madness, and Deleuze's aesthetics.

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Abbreviations

The following is a key to the abbreviations used in the notes:

Works by Artaud:

AA Artaud, Antonin. *Artaud Anthology*. Edited by Jack Hirschman. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1965.

OC Artaud, Antonin. *Œuvres Complètes*. 26 vols. NRF. Paris: Gallimard, 1976-. The volume number will be given in Roman numeral. Where a volume has two parts, this will be indicated by asterisks: *(part 1), **(part 2). Thus, OC, XIV** refers to volume 14, part 2.

CW Artaud, Antonin. *Collected works*. Translated by Victor Corti. 4 vols. London: John Calder, 1978-.

SW Artaud, Antonin. *Antonin Artaud: Selected Writings*. Edited by Susan Sontag. Translated by Helen Weaver. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.

TD Artaud, Antonin. *The Theater and its Double.* Translated by Mary C. Richards. New York: Grove Press, 1958.

Works by Deleuze:

DR Deleuze, Gilles. *Difference and Repetition*. Translated by Paul Patton. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.

ECC Deleuze, Gilles. *Essays Critical and Clinical*. Translated by Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997.

FB Deleuze, Gilles. *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*. Translated by Daniel W. Smith. London: Continuum, 2008.

LoS Deleuze, Gilles. *The Logic of Sense*. Translated by Mark Lester. Edited by Constantin V. Boundas. New York: Columbia University Press, 1990.

N Deleuze, Gilles. *Negotiations: 1972-1990*. Translated by Martin Joughin. New York: Columbia University Press, 1995.

Works by Deleuze and Guattari:

AO Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Translated by Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983.

K Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*. Translated by Dana Polan. Vol. 30. Theory and History of Literature. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986.

TP Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Translated by Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987.

WP Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. *What Is Philosophy?* Translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994.

Introduction

"Well then, are we to speak always about…Nietzsche's and Artaud's madness while remaining on the shore? Are we to become the professionals who give talks on these topics? Are we to wish only those who have been struck down not to abuse themselves too much? Are we to take up collections and create special journal issues? Or should we go a short way further to see for ourselves, be a little alcoholic, a little crazy, a little suicidal, a little guerilla—just enough to extend the crack but not enough to deepen it irremediably?—Gilles Deleuze[1]

"Not just anyone can go mad [*Ne devient pas fou qui veut*]."—Jacques Lacan[2]

The Disappearance of Antonin Artaud

In his recent book, *Antonin Artaud's Writing Bodies*,[3] Adrian Morfee observes, "A list of theorists who have devoted substantial articles to the discussion of Artaud's writings reads like a roll-call of recent intellectual history: Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze (both on his own and as a co-author with Félix Guattari), Julia Kristeva, Susan Sontag, Philippe Sollers, Leo Bersani, not to forget earlier critical interventions by Maurice Blanchot, and the more fleeting attention of Michel Foucault."[4] Morfee goes on, however, to express his concern (and he is not alone in this) about a certain bias that these authors have introduced into the reading of Artaud. "Artaud's writing," he warns, "is disappearing under criticism."[5] Rather than reading Artaud on his own terms, Morfee contends, "The critical theorists see Artaud as offering an experience of otherness they seek to think…."[6] Morfee continues:

> For post-structuralism, rather than being a self-conscious, self-possessed source of insight, the subject is regarded as decentred, elusive, an effect of language or residue of pernicious metaphysical thinking. But self-conscious self-possession is precisely what Artaud wants, and, far from

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[1] LoS, 157-158.
[2] Jacques Lacan, *Écrits: The First Complete Edition in English,* trans. Bruce Fink (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006), 144.
[3] Adrian Morfee, *Antonin Artaud's Writing Bodies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005).
[4] Ibid., 6.
[5] Ibid., 12.
[6] Ibid., 6.

> being at ease with postmodern views of language, Artaud finds the fact that meaning is caught in a perpetual round of deferral to be catastrophic (as is clear in texts such as 'La question se pose de…'). The post-structuralist readings at least partially edit out the desires motivating the text, altering the tenor of Artaud's project.[1]

In what follows, I will be investigating the claim that Deleuze's appropriation of Artaud does in fact alter the tenor of Artaud's project. It will be my contention that Deleuze's desire to construct a conceptual *persona* out of Artaud leads him to depersonalize Artaud's work, in essence separating Artaud's work and his life, making the man, Antonin Artaud, disappear, and replacing him with a theoretical double.[2] This becomes especially apparent with his appropriation of Artaud's image of the body without organs. Deleuze's (and Guattari's) attempt to turn the body without organs (or as they most often abbreviate it, BwO) into a philosophical concept severs its connection to the body (first and foremost Artaud's own body) and, I will argue, misses something vital of Artaud's own project. The body without organs, I will argue, is already a concept for Artaud prior to Deleuze and Guattari's discovery and subsequent appropriation of it. It is part of Artaud's metaphysical project to (re)create himself and the world in his own image. I agree with Morfee that self-conscious self-creation is precisely what Artaud wants (so long as it is understood that the *self* in question here is nothing like a Cartesian *cogito*). There is something in Artaud that would resist the impersonal aspect of Deleuze's project. While there is certainly good reason for Deleuze to see Artaud as a philosophical friend[3] and ally in the combat against transcendental structures like Oedipus, the signifier,

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[1] Ibid., 6-7.
[2] According to Frida Beckman, Artaud corresponds to the persona of the "idiot" in *What is Philosophy?* See her "The Idiocy of the Event: Between Antonin Artaud, Kathy Acker and Gilles Deleuze," *Deleuze Studies* 3 no. 1 (2009): 54-72.
[3] See Deleuze and Guattari's discussion of the friend as philosopher, i.e., the "friends of wisdom, those who seek wisdom but do not formally possess it," WP, 2-3.

or the socius, there are some crucial differences in their projects which I hope to bring out.

There is a central ambivalence in Deleuze's relationship to Artaud. On the one hand, he treats Artaud as an exemplary case, a case of schizophrenia, which he valorizes to a certain extent.[1] On the other hand, he seems to keep Artaud the man always at arms length preferring to conceptualize his works rather than deal with the singularity and particularity of Artaud's life and his suffering. Deleuze and Guattari's BwO is more about ontology than the lived body.[2] There is a progression in Deleuze's thinking about Artaud and his body without organs from the early solo works, *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense,* through the collaborations with Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*, to the later solo works, *Francis Bacon* and *Essays Critical and Clinical*. The BwO moves from the depths of the (catatonic) schizophrenic body to become a more and more disembodied plane of consistency. Artaud goes from the suffering schizophrenic who is unable to rise to the surface of sense in *The Logic of Sense* to the "fulfillment of literature" in *Anti-Oedipus*.[3] Or as Anne Tomiche demonstrates,

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[1] In an interview reflecting back on her intervention at the Artaud/Bataille conference at Cerisy-la-Salle in 1972, Julia Kristeva states:

> It would be possible to situate the place of the interrogation of madness at that precise moment as a moment of dissidence against the norm, against that kind of flaccid consensus which we used to call 'bourgeois', but which was also that of a society which did not question itself. At that time there was also a movement of the radical anarchist type which, it seems to me, embroidered madness, and, with due respect, I would situate the work of Deleuze and Guattari in this movement. There was what one might call a romantic tendency to rehabilitate madness.

Edward Scheer, "Artaud: Madness and Revolution" in *100 Years of Cruelty: Essays on Artaud*, ed. Edward Scheer (Sydney: Power Publications and Artspace, 2000), 264.

[2] "…the totality of BwOs has less to do with the 'body' as such, and more to do with ontology." Laura Cull, "How Do You Make Yourself a Theatre without Organs? Deleuze, Artaud and the Concept of Differential Presence," *Theatre Research International* 34, no.3 (2009): 246.

[3] AO, 134.

Artaud progresses in Deleuze's thought from The Schizo to *Le Môm*o.[1] While the conceptualization of schizophrenia does, I think, change during and after the collaborations with Guattari, who after all ran the La Borde clinic, Deleuze still maintains an almost clinical distance from Artaud the man. There is an aspect, I hope to show, in which, in spite of himself, Deleuze passes judgment on Artaud, unwittingly placing himself much closer to *La Nouvelle Revue Française* editor Jacques Rivière than he would ever care to admit. In his first publication on Artaud, an article for *Critique* (1968), "Le Schizophrène et le mot" (reprinted as the "Thirteenth Series of the Schizophrenic and the Little Girl" in *The Logic of Sense*), Deleuze passes a clinical judgment on Artaud when he equates his language with that of schizophrenia. While Deleuze will later distinguish more carefully between *clinical* and *critical* judgments in his *Essays Critical and Clinical*, the clinical edge of his relationship with Artaud, I will contend, never completely disappears.

This study will focus on the elements of language and the body, two terms hardly separable for Artaud, to investigate Deleuze's appropriation of Artaud's body without organs. As Deleuze will argue in *The Logic of Sense*, the resistance that Artaud and Wolfson demonstrate to the decomposition of language into the "syllables, letters, and above all consonants which act directly on the body, penetrating and bruising it," reveals the intimate linkage between language and body.[2] Artaud's fusion of consonants, as evidenced in his translation the portion of Carroll's *Jabberwocky*, into unpronounceable and non-decomposable blocks is for Deleuze the linguistic creation of the body without

[1] Anne Tomiche, "L'Artaud de Deleuze: du Schizo au Môm*o*," in *Deleuze et les Écrivains : Littérature et Philosophie*, ed. Bruno Gelas and Hervé Micolet (Éditions Cécile Defaut, 2007), 155- 171. *Môm*o is Marseillaise slang for "idiot" or "child."
[2] LoS, 87.

organs. Triumph over the wounding of language experienced by both Artaud and Wolfson, Deleuze writes, "may now be reached only through the creation of breath-words (*mots-souffles*) and howl-words (*mots-cris*), in which all literal, syllabic, and phonetic values have been replaced by *values which are exclusively tonic* and not written. To these values a glorious body corresponds, being a new dimension of the schizophrenic body, an organism without parts which operates entirely by insufflation, respiration, evaporation, and fluid transmission (the superior body or body without organs of Antonin Artaud)."[1] It is in this way that according to Deleuze the two issues of body and language are inseparable for Artaud and form the basis for his analysis of Artaud and his body without organs.

The importance of Artaud for Deleuze can hardly be overstated. Umberto Artioli claims that *Anti-Oedipus* "would be unthinkable without the work of Artaud."[2] Tomiche points out that even if Deleuze never devoted a whole book to Artaud, as he did to Proust and Kafka, nevertheless "the presence of Artaud is always recurrent in his work."[3] I am certainly not the first to emphasize Artaud's importance for Deleuze. There have been several recent studies on their relationship, although mostly from the side of Deleuze studies.[4] There have been some complaints from the Artaud side about Deleuze's

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[1] LoS, 88.
[2] Umberto Artioli, "Production de 'réalité' ou faim d'impossible?" Europe; revue littéraire mensuelle 667, 668: (November-December 1984): 143. My translation.
[3] Tomiche, "L'Artaud de Deleuze," 155. My translation.
[4] Any forming of "sides" like this is of course fraught with dangers and imprecision, but as a heuristic device it is helpful in broadly situating the intervention that I am trying to make here. I certainly do not claim that any of these authors would claim to be on one "side" as against the other. See Cull, 253 n.7 for a fairly extensive and up-to-date list of works on the Deleuze-Artaud connection (primarily from the Deleuzian side). I would add Frida Beckman, "The Idiocy of the Event: Between Antonin Artaud, Kathy Acker and Gilles Deleuze," *Deleuze Studies* 3 no. 1 (2009): 54-72; and Julie Kuhlken, "Why is Deleuze an Artist-Philosopher?" in *Gilles Deleuze: Image and Text*, ed. Eugene W. Holland, Daniel W. Smith, and Charles J. Stivale (London and New York: Continuum, 2009), 198-217.

misappropriation of Artaud (most notably Thévenin[1], Artioli[2], Morfee[3] and Goodall[4]) but rarely has there been an actual dialogue between the two sides.[5] Deleuzians more or less just comment on Deleuze's reading of Artaud without questioning its legitimacy, without going back to Artaud's works to read them for themselves. Artaudians sometimes complain about Deleuze's reading but from the perspective of a more limited engagement with Deleuze's *œuvres* (most often Deleuze's early article). My hope is that by giving Artaud his own voice here and by trying to include the historical development of Deleuze's own engagement with Artaud's works that this study will enable a fuller and, in my opinion, long overdue dialogue to take place.

[1] Paule Thévenin, "*Entendre/ voir/ lire*," in *Antonin Artaud, ce Désespéré qui vous parle* (Paris: Seuil, 1993), 189-282.
[2] Artioli, "Production de 'réalité.'" A partial translation appears in *Antonin Artaud: A Critical Reader*, ed. Edward Scheer (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 137-147.
[3] Morfee, *Writing Bodies*.
[4] Jane Goodall, *Artaud and the Gnostic Drama* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).
[5] I find no references, for instance, to Thévenin's criticism in the Deleuzian literature with the exception of a brief mention by Tomiche, "L'Artaud de Deleuze," 159. But she quotes Deleuze and Guattari's answer to a "*critique malin*" from AO, 134-135 as if it answers Thévenin's concerns.

Chapter One

Language on the Surface of Sense

> [C]e qui importe ce n'est pas d'ajouter le corps à la parole,
> ce n'est pas d'incarner d'une part les mots,
> de l'autre de faire saillir le démon de l'anatomie humaine parlant toute
> seule et pour son compte à côté de la grammaire des mots purs,
> non,
> c'est la raison d'être elle-même du langage de la grammaire *que je désaxe*
> …
> et je la désaxe de telle façon et sur un tel plan qu'il en apparaît la
> nécessité d'une nouvelle
> *agonie* humaine,
> d'une nouvelle façon de souffler son corps, *perpétuellement*,
> …
> comme hors apparences, hors notions et hors monde, dans un cri corporel
> pur, sur le bord du temps et du néant.
> --Antonin Artaud[1]

> It is difficult to respond to those who wish to be satisfied with words, things, images, and ideas.
> --Gilles Deleuze[2]

Language and *The Logic of Sense*

The Logic of Sense is as close as Deleuze ever comes to a full-fledged philosophy of language. Even there, however, he is equally if not more concerned with other concepts like *event* and *series*. As Ronald Bogue observes:

> *The Logic of Sense* is Deleuze's most extended discussion of language, but in certain regards the book occupies an anomalous position within his works. The opposition of surfaces and bodies, elaborated at such length and in such detail, disappears in *Anti-Oedipus* and subsequent books—indeed, one might say that surfaces and depths are combined eventually as *Anti-Oedipus*' desiring-machines and bodies without organs give way to *A Thousand Plateaus'* assemblages on planes of consistency. In the second half of *The Logic of Sense* Deleuze develops a complex psychoanalytic account of the genesis of language from the depths of the body, utilizing a full panoply of Freudian and Lacanian terminology, but in *Anti-Oedipus*

[1] Antonin Artaud, "À Arthur Adamov, 26 octobre 1947" in *Artaud : Œuvres*, ed. Évelyne Grossman (Paris: Quarto Gallimard, 2004), 1631.
[2] LoS, 23.

> he launches a frontal attack on psychoanalysis and thereafter virtually abandons the vocabulary of psychoanalysis.[1]

The Logic of Sense was translated into English relatively late (1990) in comparison to his other works, but was in fact one of Deleuze's early works (appearing in France in 1969). It is the last book that Deleuze writes solo before the collaborations with Félix Guattari. As Jean-Jacques Lecercle observes, "[*The Logic of Sense*] seems to have left few traces in the remainder of the corpus."[2] Deleuze himself hardly mentions this book in the later interviews and the concept of *sense* developed there seems to have been dropped as non-productive. Comments about Lewis Carroll very similar to those made in *The Logic of Sense* do however appear in a very short piece Deleuze included in his very last work, *Essays Critical and Clinical.*[3]

Lecercle also notes the "insistent murmur, among Deleuze scholars, that it was a text the master himself later disapproved of as 'too structuralist.'"[4] But Lecercle himself goes so far as to flatly assert that "*Logique du Sens* is a structuralist book."[5] Indeed, in 1967, two years prior to *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze contributed an article, "*A quoi reconnaît-on le structuralisme*?", to François Châtelet's eight-volume series on the history of philosophy.[6] This article, as Lecercle notes, is an important *Ur-text* for understanding *The Logic of Sense*.[7] In both the book and this article, Deleuze draws heavily on Lacanian terminology and, as Bogue noted of *The Logic of Sense*, even gives a

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[1] Ronald Bogue, *Deleuze on Literature* (New York and London: Routledge, 2003), 29.
[2] Jean-Jacques Lecercle, *Deleuze and Language* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 99.
[3] "Lewis Carroll" in ECC, 21-22.
[4] Lecercle, *Deleuze and Language*, 99.
[5] Ibid., 105.
[6] François Châtelet (ed.), *Histoire de la philosophie*, vol. 8: *Le XXe siècle* (Paris: Hachette, 2000; 1st edn, 1973), 299-335. Deleuze's article is translated as "How Do We Recognize Structuralism" in *Desert Islands and Other Texts: 1953-1974*, ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Michael Taormina (Los Angeles and New York: Semiotext(e), 2004), 170-192.
[7] Lecercle, *Deleuze and Language*, 106.

largely psychoanalytic account of the origins of language drawn from the works of Lacan and Melanie Klein ("Twenty-Eighth Series of Sexuality").

The general consensus seems to be that if in fact *The Logic of Sense* does belong to a structuralist or psychoanalytic Deleuze, all that changed when he started working with Guattari. The tone taken with structuralist linguistics and psychoanalysis (Lacan in particular) certainly does seem to change with *Anti-Oedipus* and thereafter.[1] In spite of his own earlier insistence about *The Logic of Sense* being a structuralist book, Lecercle more recently (2008), in his preface to James Williams' commentary on *The Logic of Sense*, denounces as unjust the "critical *doxa*" which holds that: "[*Logique du sens*] is somewhat of an impasse in the Deleuze corpus, the work of a structuralist Deleuze, still under the influence of Lacan and psychoanalysis, two unfortunate aspects which his meeting with Guattari enabled him to get rid of—the real Deleuze, before and after *Logic of Sense*, the vitalist Deleuze, herald of the Bergsonian virtual, of difference, becomings and haecceities, is not found in the *Logic of Sense*, an accident in a distinguished philosophical career."[2] Williams is able to demonstrate admirably many aspects of continuity between this work and the rest of the Deleuzian corpus, but for him "*The Logic of Sense* is about the relations of events to series" (both concepts that survive in the later works) and not about language or even sense *per se*, although language and sense do play an important role in the relation of events to series as Williams brings out.[3] It is important to note for our purposes that it is here in *The Logic of Sense* that the concept of

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[1] Consider for example after all the positive use of object relations theory in *The Logic of Sense*, the caricature of Klein telling one of her child patients, "Say that it's Oedipus, or you'll get a slap in the face," in *AO*, 45.
[2] Jean-Jacques Lecercle, preface to *Gilles Deleuze's Logic of Sense: A Critical Introduction and Guide*, by James Williams (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), vii.
[3] James Williams, *Gilles Deleuze's Logic of Sense: A Critical Introduction and Guide* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008) , 1.

the Body without Organs borrowed from Antonin Artaud (subsequently abbreviated by Deleuze and Guattari to the acronym *BwO*) makes its first appearance in Deleuze's work ("Thirteenth Series of the Schizophrenic and the Little Girl").[1] This concept certainly does survive (with a vengeance, some might say) in the later works.

The connection with Artaud is also interesting because it will return twelve years later to trouble Deleuze's other logic in his later solo work, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* (incidentally the first book Deleuze writes after the collaboration with Guattari on the Capitalism and Schizophrenia project).[2] At issue in *The Logic of Sensation* is the rendering visible or invisible forces. In the earlier work, *The Logic of Sense*, the issue had been the relation of the body to sense (and to language). The concern in the Bacon book is with pictorial rather than verbal language. The issue of the expression of intensities and bodily sensations, however, is common to both works and Artaud is a key figure for Deleuze in that discussion. Note that we are not talking about *representation*, nor is expression limited to speech or writing (as the focus on pictorial or theatrical languages indicates). It is a much broader term, which for Deleuze is about the manifestation of forces or the unfolding of various potentials.[3]

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[1] This chapter of *The Logic of Sense* being largely a reprint of a 1968 article he wrote for *Critique* (255-256) entitled, "Le Schizophrène et le Mot."

[2] Of course, Deleuze's engagement with Artaud does not end with the *Francis Bacon* book. Artaud and the BwO is also prominently featured in Deleuze's last book, *Essays Critical and Clinical* in the essay "To Have Done with Judgment," the very title of which is borrowed from Artaud's radio play, "To Have Done with the Judgment of God." What I am trying to do is play back and forth between the two logics of sense and sensation, and not just the books, *The Logic of Sense* and *Francis Bacon*.

[3] The idea of expression is of course central to Deleuze's work on Spinoza in *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Zone Books, 1992) where substance expresses itself in attributes, each attribute being an expression, and the essence of substance being what is expressed (p. 110). For Deleuze, there is no hidden substance behind the expressions—substance just is its various expressions. See Claire Colebrook's entry "Expression," in *The Deleuze Dictionary*, ed. Adrian Parr (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 93-94. See also Simon Duffy, *The Logic of Expression: Quality, Quantity and Intensity in Spinoza, Hegel, and Deleuze* (Hampshire, England: Ashgate, 2006), 236ff.

I am trying to trace a certain progression in Deleuze's thought between the two logics of sense and sensation. In doing so, I hope to show that *The Logic of Sense* is a necessary step along the way to a Logic of Sensation. I will argue that the vocabulary changes after the collaboration with Guattari and that the Body without Organs becomes more and more disembodied. This trajectory, however, was already prepared for in *The Logic of Sense* in the discussion of Nietzsche that takes place there. Nietzsche and Artaud are mentioned together in *The Logic of Sense* and Deleuze sees many parallels but also a crucial difference between the two. The crucial difference being that, in Deleuze's eyes, Nietzsche the philosopher was able to do (at least for a time before his own final descent into madness) what Artaud the artist was not—namely, to ascend from the depths to conquer the surface. The language of depth and height—descent and ascent—is important here as we will see. The grid is the human body and the directions of descent and ascent correspond to corporeal depths and noncorporeal heights, the surface of sense being the point of contact between the two. While Artaud (for the Deleuze of *The Logic of Sense* at least) remains caught up in the vicissitudes of the human body, Nietzsche discovered the pre-personal and non-material play of forces that becomes so important to the Deleuzo-Guattarian formulation of the BwO. The chief difficulty is then how to communicate (i.e. bring to the surface) those forces in whatever language: be it verbal, theatrical, musical, or artistic. Deleuze's attention, as I hope to demonstrate, shifts from verbal language—especially the far-too-limited language of propositions—to artistic language in an attempt to find a broader rubric for the communication of these forces.

Surface and Depth: The new dualism

In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze sets up a contrast between surfaces and depths. Relying heavily on Emile Bréhier's *La théorie des incorporels dans l'ancien stoïcisme,*[1] Deleuze returns to the Stoic understanding of *sense* for his own logic of sense. Sense, as we will see, is the boundary between things or states of affairs and the propositions that express them.[2] It was a Stoic innovation to have separated bodies or states of affairs from what Deleuze will call *events* and the propositions that express and are expressed by these events.

To understand how sense functions as a border between bodies or states of affairs and events, we must first understand the separation between the two. According to Bréhier, the Stoics separated *causes*—bodies and their actions and passions, or "states of affairs," from *effects*—incorporeal, logical and dialectical attributes.[3] These incorporeal attributes, Deleuze calls *events*. They do not, strictly speaking, exist, but rather *subsist* or *inhere* in the states of affairs.[4] They are the effects or results of the actions and passions of bodies. Events are surface effects. Two armies clash on the field.[5] But where will one find *the battle*? All there is are bodies fighting—wounding and being wounded. The battle is at once everywhere and nowhere. No particular confrontation between

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[1] Emile Bréhier, *La théorie des incorporels dans l'ancien stoïcisme* (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1928).
[2] LoS, 22.
[3] LoS, 4-5.
[4] Subsistence is the Meinongian category for ideal or abstract objects (the virtual) as opposed to concrete objects which are said to exist (the actual). See Peter van Inwagen's entry, "Subsistence," in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, ed. Robert Audi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 774. Deleuze glosses Meinong's theory of "possible objects" and their ontological status of "extra-being" in LoS, 35.
[5] Deleuze uses the image of the battle with reference to Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*. LoS, 101.

combatants individually constitutes the battle. The battle is something that is supervenient to all of the individual skirmishes taken together. The battle as such, unlike the individual combatants, does not care who wins or loses. It is impervious to such vicissitudes.

The Stoics contrast the thickness and depth of bodies with the surface of these effects. These effects "play only on the surface," Deleuze writes, "like a mist over the prairie (even less than a mist, since mist is after all a body)."[1] Depth belongs to bodies. Only bodies have passions and actions. Bodies contain mixtures of substances and qualities and can themselves be mixed. The effects of these bodily states of affairs are merely surface play. The surface is a plane; it has no depth. Sense lies at the surface.

According to Bréhier, "[The Stoics distinguished] radically two planes of being, something that no one had done before them: on the one hand, real and profound being, force; on the other, planes of facts, which frolic on the surface of being and constitute an endless multiplicity of incorporeal beings."[2] According to this analysis, force belongs to the depths while facts or states of affairs belong to the surface. Only bodies contain the depth of forces. Facts or states of affairs have only a kind of derivative being that subsists on the body. They cannot really be said to *be* in the same sense as bodies *are*.

Furthermore, states of affairs are determined, Deleuze says, by the mixtures of bodies. "Mixtures," he writes:

> are in bodies, and in the *depth of bodies*: a body penetrates another and coexists with it in all of its parts, like a drop of wine in the ocean, or fire in iron. One body withdraws from another, like liquid from a vase. Mixtures in general determine the quantitative and qualitative states of affairs: the dimensions of an ensemble—the red of iron, the green of a tree. But what we mean by 'to grow,' 'to diminish,' 'to become red,' 'to become green,'

[1] LoS, 5
[2] LoS, 5.

> 'to cut,' and 'to be cut,' etc., is something entirely different. These are no longer states of affairs—mixtures *deep inside bodies*—but incorporeal events *at the surface* which are the results of these mixtures.[1]

Thus events are in one sense separable from bodies (not entirely though, because they subsist or inhere in the state of affairs that are mixtures of bodies). They are more like verbs (especially in the infinitive) than adjectives. Infinitives like "to grow" or "to cut" require no distinct subject or object. They point to events rather than substances.[2] Because they lack individuating characteristics like person, tense, and mood, events are best expressed by verbs in the infinitive. Events, Deleuze argues, "are not substantives or adjectives but verbs."[3] Infinitives can of course function like substantives, but they do not lose their verbal character. They do not pick out substances (persons, places, or things), but remain intangible. They point to things that happen to or in bodies, but are not themselves physical. Infinitives work well for Deleuze because they point out the non-individuated or non-personal aspect of the event that he wishes to emphasize.

Rather than saying the tree *is* green, we should say the tree *greens*.[4] The greening is a surface effect. Green is not an object or a body that interacts with another object or body, i.e. that of the tree, but is rather something that happens to the body of the tree itself as an event. It is a result of mixtures (the presence of chlorophyll in the leaf, sunlight, etc…). The green is not a *something*, but rather the result of the light hitting the chlorophyll in the leaf and reflecting back certain wavelengths of the light spectrum. It is

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[1] LoS, 5-6.
[2] Deleuze's inspiration here comes from Luce Irigaray's "*Du Fantasme et du verbe*" (*L'Arc* 1968, no. 34). There is an English translation in Luce Irigaray, *To Speak is Never Neutral*, trans. Gail Schwab (London and New York: Continuum, 2002), 55-62.
[3] LoS, 5.
[4] LoS, 6.

a certain intensity of light. Did not Goethe once describe color as the deeds and sufferings of light?

Only bodies undergo actions or passions. Deleuze cites (from Bréhier) the example of the scalpel cutting the flesh. When the flesh is cut it does not take on a new quality—it is still flesh—but rather a new attribute, that of being cut. "The attribute," Deleuze explains, "has an entirely different nature than corporeal qualities. The event has a different nature than the actions and passions of the body. But it *results* from them, since sense is the effect of corporeal causes and their mixtures."[1] Sense lies at the surface, not in the corporeal depths. The cut is thus not a being itself but simply a new way or mode of being for the flesh. It now exists *as cut*. The cut is a result or effect of a mixture of bodies (the flesh and the scalpel), which according to Bréhier's analysis is "not to be classified among beings."[2]

It was the Stoics according to Deleuze who first discovered these "surface effects."[3] Only bodies and their mixtures can truly constitute causation. One body strikes or mixes with another and causes a predictable effect. The relations of events constitute what Deleuze will call "quasi-causes."[4] Two parallel series are established. The interactions between bodies constitutes one series while the interactions between events constitutes another. Between these series there is resonance made possible by language.

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[1] LoS, 94.
[2] LoS, 5.
[3] LoS, 7.
[4] LoS, 6.

Height: The third dimension

To the duality of surface and depth, Deleuze will also add a third dimension: height. Akin to Plato's Forms, height is the principle of transcendence as opposed to immanence. It belongs to idealism rather than empiricism. Height is related to language in that language as a pre-existent ideal structure comes to us as if from the heights. As we will see when Deleuze describes the psychological process of language acquisition, for the infant the voice of the parent (the infant's first initiation into language) comes literally from on high. To become a language user is to enter a preexistent structure. One must learn the pre-established rules to be able to make one's own moves in this game. Language is also connected to universal concepts (concepts like God and World which also preexist the individual) through signification.

Because of its linkage to universal concepts, philosophy has long been associated with heights. "The popular and the technical image of the philosopher," Deleuze observes, "seem to have been set by Platonism: the philosopher is a being of ascents; he is the one who leaves the cave and rises up. The more he rises the more he is purified." There is an undeniable link, as Nietzsche points out, between philosophy and asceticism. "The philosopher's work," Deleuze continues, "is always determined as an ascent and a conversion, that is, as the movement of turning toward the high principle (*principe d'en haut*) from which the movement proceeds, and also of being determined, fulfilled, and known in the guise of such a motion."[1] The dimension of height then represents the intelligible heaven, as that which holds itself above the change and impermanence of the

[1] LoS, 127.

physical world. It is, like Plato's Form of The Good, the transcendent standard by which everything else is judged.

Deleuze names three philosophical images for each of these dimensions. As we will see, while Nietzsche to some extent, and Artaud for sure, will represent the depths, the Stoics will represent the surface and Plato will represent the heights. The pre-Socratics, to whom Nietzsche will return, also represent the depths. "The pre-Socratic philosopher," Deleuze observes, "does not leave the cave; on the contrary, he thinks that we are not involved enough or sufficiently engulfed therein."[1] The pre-Socratics sought the secrets of the physical world. Their thought was directly related to the concerns of this life. It was Socrates who changed this fundamental orientation. And it was Nietzsche who tried to reverse it. "The encased depths," Deleuze writes, "strike Nietzsche as the real orientation of philosophy, the pre-Socratic discovery that must be revived in a philosophy of the future, with all the forces of a life which is also a thought, and of a language which is also a body."[2] Deleuze surprisingly relates this pre-Socratic and Nietzschean orientation towards the depths with schizophrenia. We will have much more to say about this linkage later.

For all of his efforts to invert the Socratic trajectory, however, Nietzsche does not remain trapped in the depths in the same way that Artaud does. The difference in Deleuze's view as we will see between Nietzsche the philosopher and Artaud the mad artist is that Nietzsche is able to ascend, perhaps not to the heights, but at least to the surface. In fact, Deleuze comments: "Nietzsche was able to rediscover depth only after

[1] LoS, 128.
[2] LoS, 129.

conquering the surfaces."[1] Unfortunately, he could not remain long at the surface and fell back into the depths in the end. Nietzsche in Deleuze's view begins in the depths, and then finds a way to rise momentarily to the surface before plunging once more into the depths. Artaud never succeeds in making it even to the surface.

As James Williams warns, however: "Any reader drawing a conclusion such as Plato-height-bad, Nietzsche-depth-better and Stoicism-surface-best would be making a mistake, by missing the dynamic interconnection of all and their dependence on the events determining the reader and its world."[2] Sense is precisely the border between depth and height and has a necessary relation to both. One would be meaningless without the others. Sense is related to the depths because it is the result of the actions and passions of bodies. It is related to the heights through language.

Propositions and Events

For Deleuze, there is an essential relation between event effects and propositions. "It is characteristic of events," he states, "to be expressed or expressible, uttered or utterable, in propositions which are at least possible."[3] According to Deleuze, there are three aspects that structure the traditional proposition: denotation, manifestation, and signification.[4] *Denotation* is the external relation of the proposition to a particular state of affairs. It is the association of the words themselves with particular images which ought to represent the state of affairs to which they refer. Judgments of true and false are

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[1] LoS, 129.
[2] Williams, *Gilles Deleuze's "Logic of Sense,"* 82.
[3] LoS, 12. I am following Deleuze's analysis in the Third Series of the Proposition here (LoS, 12ff.). I am also indebted to Williams's commentary (op. cit. 39ff.).
[4] Deleuze is influenced here by Bertrand Russell's philosophy of language and especially his critique of Meinong in his essay "On Denoting" originally published in *Mind* 14, no.56 (1905): 479-493. Russell criticizes Meinong's category of "extra being" (*Sosein*). Deleuze refers to their debate in LoS, 20.

made at this level. *True* signifies that a denotation is effectively filled by a state of affairs while *false* signifies that a denotation is not effectively filled by a state of affairs. Denotation does not pick out universal terms but rather particulars (*singuliers*): this, here, now. *Manifestation* is the relation of the proposition to the speaker. It is the statement of desires and beliefs which correspond to the proposition. The manifestation holds whether or not the denotation is effectively filled. It merely tells you something about my internal state and beliefs. I may truly believe something to be the case even if it turns out not to be in actual fact the case. *Signification* is about the relation of the words to universal concepts and the syntactic connections of the words in relation to these concepts. Signification means having conceptual implications whereby one proposition can relate to another as premises or conclusions in a logical demonstration. Here the condition of truth is not contrasted with falsity but rather with the absurd which is nonsense or paradox.[1]

According to Deleuze, none of these elements are sufficient on their own. They must work together in a circle. Every proposition necessarily includes aspects of all three elements. Each refers to the other and needs the other to form a meaningful proposition. Statements depend on the context, the definitions and connotations of the words used, and the objects or states of affairs referred to in them. A simple statement like, "The cat is on the mat," for example, depends on the time at which the sentence is uttered, the definitions of *cat* and *mat*, an understanding of the kind of relation between cat and mat that would qualify as "on", and so forth. In other words, there is no denotation without also having manifestation and signification and likewise for each. "This claim," as Williams notes, "is very radical and should not be read as the claim that each component

[1] *Cf.* LoS, 69.

of language is insufficient on its own only in some way, but as the much stronger but also more troubling claim that each component only works when it is with the others in a circle."[1] We are caught in a vicious circle here constantly turning from denotation to manifestation to signification unless we can find some fourth element to break the circle. The circle is vicious because we cannot rest on any component for the meaning, each component conditions and is in turn itself conditioned by every other component. We are led into endless questions in search of the sense of even the simplest statement.

Deleuze, taking a clue from the Stoics, finds this fourth element in the element of sense. If, for instance, we find ourselves being accosted by an obtrusive interlocutor like Eric Idle in Monty Python's "Nudge Nudge Wink Wink" sketch, we will never get anywhere by turning around in the circle. It is only when we grasp that he is in fact insinuating something that we break out of the circle and the true motivation behind Idle's barrage of words is revealed. Suddenly we grasp what the real subject of his questions is. We can not get this from the circle of denotation, manifestation, and signification. It is only by going beyond the circle to what is really at stake beyond the words, so to speak, that we get their sense.

Sense is the fourth element of the proposition that the Stoics discovered. Deleuze defines sense as: "the expressed of the proposition, [it] is an incorporeal, complex, and irreducible entity, at the surface of things, a pure event which inheres or subsists in the proposition."[2] Sense is not in *denotation* because it does not render the proposition true or false. Sense is about events not states of affairs that could be represented or pointed to in the proposition. Sense is not in *manifestation* because the order of beliefs and desires

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[1] Williams, *Gilles Deleuze's "Logic of Sense,"* 40.
[2] LoS, 19.

is founded not on the individual but on conceptual implications and permanence of certain signifieds (God and world). In the system of language, propositions appear only as premises or conclusions signifying concepts that already exist prior to the manifestation of the subject who speaks. Sense is not in *signification* because it presupposes an irreducible denotation. We do not get very far just studying the words if they have no reference. Without the element of sense we would run in an endless circle from the conditioned to the condition and back again.

Origins of Language

Deleuze gives a very complicated account of the origin of language in *The Logic of Sense* which draws heavily on psychoanalysis from Freud to Lacan and Klein. A brief summary of the psychoanalytical account of the journey through developmental stages from the pre-verbal to the verbal, however, should suffice for our purposes. This account begins with the terrifying predicament of the newborn. The newborn is a bundle of physical sensations. They have limited motor control and are completely at the mercy of others to meet their basic needs. At this stage there are no clear boundaries between their own bodies and other bodies. At this preverbal stage the only sounds an infant can make are bodily noises: cries, howls, grunts, gurgling and so on. At this point, the newborn's only experiences with language are the voices that come literally from on high, above where the child is lying. For the baby neither these voices nor his or her own sounds at this point signify anything. This is a *pre*-sense level (Deleuze will also call it an *infra-sense* or *untersinn* level). Deleuze relates this level to the schizophrenic depths. This stage of non-differentiation is the infant's Body without Organs. Sensation at this point is not defined or assigned to specific regions or organs of the body, which is to say it is

not yet organ-ized. This is the stage Freud once referred to as "polymorphous perversity."[1] Everything is pure libido, or *id* in the terms of Freud's second topography. In Lacanian terminology this is the experience of the Real.[2]

In the course of normal development, these bodily sensations and drives become organized into discrete zones. The infant realizes the limits of its body and other bodies. There is a sense of separation and distinction from others. Not yet possessing language, the infant at this stage does begin to learn that certain sounds and cries can help get its needs met. A certain cry seems to bring the absent mother back. At this stage, Lacan's Mirror Stage, the infant begins to develop an image of the self as a complete entity. This holistic image of the self is internalized as an imaginary and ideal I (the Imaginary Stage). The ego begins to form as the organizing principle of the various drives and sensations. This is the Freudian level of primary narcissism which results in ego formation. What results is the establishment of the surface.

Finally, the infant is taught to substitute language for bodily noises to get its needs met. The parents teach the child to ask in words for what it wants rather than scream or cry. This is the infant's initiation into the linguistic level where now words come to have denotation and significance. This language is, however, the language of the other. It preexists the infant who must now master its already established structure. According to the Lacanian stages, the infant has now entered the Symbolic. For Freud, as Deleuze notes, there is a relation between language and the super-ego. "For the child," as Deleuze explains Freud's account of the acoustic origin of the super-ego, "the first approach to

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[1] See Sigmund Freud, "Introductory Lectures" in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey, vol. 15 (London: Hogarth, 1953-74), 209.

[2] For Lacan's account of psycho-sexual development in relation to language see Jacques Lacan, "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the *I* Function as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience," in *Écrits*, 75-81. See also "The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis," *Ecrits*, 197-268.

language consists in grasping it as the model of that which preexists, as referring to the entire domain of what is already there, and as the familial voice which conveys tradition, it affects the child as a bearer of a name and demands his insertion even before the child begins to understand."[1] This is the language-from-on-high that corresponds philosophically to the Socratic realm of the intelligible forms. During this "Mirror Stage," as Lacan calls it, the child also begins to learn that it has a name—a word that corresponds to it—and that it constitutes an *I*.

It is important to note that the heights at first are pre-sense as well. Both the depths and heights are pre-sense. Sense only happens at the surface when the depths are related to the heights. Something crucial happens here: words become substituted for bodies and their passions. Sounds are no longer merely bodily noises but become elements of language. It is the surface that makes this possible. As Deleuze explains:

> Language is rendered possible by that which distinguishes it. What separates sounds from bodies makes sounds into the elements of a language. What separates speaking from eating renders speech possible; what separates propositions from things renders propositions possible. The surface and that which takes place at the surface is what 'renders possible'—in other words, the event as that which is expressed. The expressed makes possible the expression.[2]

There is a double set of conditioning here: the event makes the proposition expressible and the proposition makes the event expressible. Each conditions the other. The event, Deleuze says, "belongs to language, and haunts it so much that it does not exist outside of the propositions which express it. But the event is not the same as the proposition; what is expressed is not the same as the expression."[3] The event inheres or subsists in the

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[1] LoS, 193.
[2] LoS, 186.
[3] LoS, 181.

proposition but the two must not be conflated. The event is a virtual reality whereas the state of affairs is actual.[1] The proposition is what allows the two to converge.

Deleuze calls the movement from bodily depths to the surface of language a "dynamic genesis."[2] Deleuze posits two geneses in *The Logic of Sense*: a static or ontological genesis and a dynamic one. These two geneses correspond to the two movements so central for Deleuze's philosophy: the movement from the virtual to the actual, and the reverse movement from the actual to the virtual respectively.[3] The static genesis describes the individuation of incorporeal events in actual bodies and states of affairs. The dynamic genesis describes the opening out of bodies or states of affairs onto the preexistent plane of ideal events. The dynamic genesis of language shows how we move from actual bodies and states of affairs to language itself. The dynamic genesis is the birth of the surface out of the depths of the individual bodies. We will trace this genesis in more detail below after a brief consideration of Deleuze's specific analysis of Klein's contribution in relation to the psychoanalytic theory of the origin of language. As Deleuze says of these geneses:

> [W]e find ourselves confronted with a final task: to retrace the history which liberates sounds and makes them independent of bodies. It is no longer a question of a static genesis which would lead from the presupposed event to its actualization in states of affairs and to its expression in propositions. It is a question of a dynamic genesis which leads directly from states of affairs to events, from mixtures to pure lines, *from depth to the production of surfaces*, and which must not implicate at all the other genesis.[4]

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[1] It is important to remember that for Deleuze the virtual is *no less real* than the actual. It is not to be confused with the potential.
[2] LoS, 186.
[3] See Williams's discussion, *Gilles Deleuze's "Logic of Sense,"* 194ff.
[4] LoS, 186.

This distinction between geneses is crucial for Deleuze. It is a part of the continuity between *The Logic of Sense* and the earlier analysis of the virtual/actual distinction from *Difference and Repetition*.

The distinction is crucial for our purposes because it points to the very heart of what I will call the *Artaud problem* for Deleuze. He uses Artaud's Body without Organs on the one hand to undermine the notion of individual subjectivity, but on the other hand faults Artaud for remaining trapped in the depths of the individual body. Nietzsche, according to Deleuze, is eventually able to free himself from the understanding of the Dionysian in terms of bodily forces [i.e. those of the individual body] and to realize the Dionysian as a realm of *impersonal* forces. Artaud does not make this transition. He never, in Deleuze's view, breaks sufficiently free from his body into the purely impersonal. I will have much more to say about this comparison between Nietzsche and Artaud later, but for now I just want to underscore what an uneasy presence is Artaud in *The Logic of Sense*.

It is important to note here that Deleuze is not interested in the individual lived body, but rather the life force itself. "[T]he lived body," Deleuze later writes, "is still a paltry thing in comparison with a more profound and almost unlivable Power [*Puissance*]."[1] Deleuze is a vitalist not a phenomenologist like Merleau-Ponty.[2] For this reason, there is almost a simultaneous attraction and repulsion to Artaud here. The Body without Organs provides a line of flight or means of escape from individual subjectivity,

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[1] FB, 32.

[2] Foucault once observed that "*The Logic of Sense* can be read as the most alien book imaginable from *The Phenomenology of Perception*." Michel Foucault, "Theatrum Philosophicum" in *Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*, ed. James D. Faubion, trans. Robert Hurley et al., (New York: The New Press, 1998), 347. Deleuze will also praise Sartre over Husserl for his discovery of the "impersonal transcendental field." LoS, 98.

but it can also plunge one irretrievably into corporeal depths. As much as Deleuze, like Nietzsche before him, wants to invert Platonism, he does not want to simply privilege the bodily depth over the heights.

The opposition is not a simple one between the bodily and the ideal, but rather a deeper opposition between the personal and pre-personal or impersonal. The individual body is still too personal. Nietzsche's real opposition, as we will see, was not Dionysus versus Apollo, or even Dionysus versus Socrates, but rather Dionysus versus Christ as the ideal form of the Person.[1] In the end, for Deleuze Nietzsche's Dionysus has less to do with the body and more to do with the impersonal life force itself. This is the rediscovery of the depths that Nietzsche attains only after his ascent to the surface.[2] Nietzsche is able to reach a depth that Artaud cannot, according to Deleuze, because of his failure to make it out of his own bodily depths to the surface.

Words and Bodies

For words to function, they must become meaningful sounds as opposed to bodily noises. Sense requires that words become separated or independent from bodies. Speaking must become disengaged from eating, both being functions of the body, but the one related to the depths and the other being related to the surface. Bodies must be separated from incorporeal events. "When we say that the sound becomes independent," Deleuze continues, "we mean to say that it ceases to be a specific quality attached to bodies, a noise or a cry, and that it begins to designate qualities, manifest bodies, and signify subjects or predicates."[3] Language comes to denote (to point out objects), to

[1] I will return to this notion under the heading of "Faciality" in Chapter 4.
[2] LoS, 107-108.
[3] LoS, 187.

manifest (it establishes the *I* of the speaker), and signify through the syntactic structure of language itself (propositions become relatable as premises and conclusions).[1]

The duality we noted with the Stoics between bodies and events, corresponds here to the duality between bodies and language.[2] Sense is the border between the two. "Sense," Deleuze explains, "is that which is formed and deployed at the surface. Even the frontier is not a separation, but rather the element of an articulation, so that sense is presented both as that which happens to bodies and that which insists in propositions."[3] But this surface of sense is very fragile. There is the constant threat of falling back into the depths. Sense produces surfaces. But, Deleuze warns, "when this production collapses, or when the surface is rent by explosions and by snags, bodies fall back again into their depth; everything falls back again into the anonymous pulsation wherein words are no longer anything but affectations of the body—everything falls back into the primary order which grumbles beneath the secondary organization of sense."[4] Sense is a secondary and rational organization of more primary non-rational bodily sensation.[5] There is a constant threat of falling back into a schizophrenic language of the depths (which is not properly a language of words at all).

Klein: From the schizoid depths to the language of the heights

The overall progression that Deleuze wants to map here is the ascent from the schizoid depths to the language of the heights and the creation of sense that happens at

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[1] On Deleuze's specific usage for the terms, denotation, manifestation, and signification see the Third Series of the Proposition, LoS, 12-22.
[2] LoS, 23.
[3] LoS, 125.
[4] LoS, 125.
[5] The background here is likely Erwin Straus's distinction between perception and sensation in his *The Primary World of the Senses: A Vindication of Sensory Experience*, trans. Jacob Needleman (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963).

the surface of their mutual encounter. In addition to Freud and Lacan, as we saw above, Deleuze also makes extensive use of the object relations theory of Melanie Klein. For my purposes, I only want to note the move that Deleuze charts from the schizoid depths to the depressive heights, because Artaud is directly implicated here in Deleuze's reading. This move from the schizoid position to the depressive position is the movement from noise to voice, while the movement at the surface is the movement from voice to speech.[1]

According to Klein, in the initial stage of orality, the mouth and breast are bottomless depths.[2] The breast and even the whole body of the mother is split into the good (the wanted and gratifying) and bad (the unwanted and frustrating) object. The activities of this stage are introjection and projection. These objects are internalized by the infant and are perceived by it as foreign bodies within its own body. "The introjection of these partial objects into the body of the infant," Deleuze explains, "is accompanied by a projection of aggressiveness onto these internal objects, and by a re-projection of these objects into the maternal body. Thus, introjected morsels are like poisonous, persecuting, explosive, and toxic substances threatening the child's body from within and being endlessly reconstituted inside the mother's body."[3] We will see with Deleuze's analysis of the cases of Artaud and Louis Wolfson, how words themselves become these threatening introjected morsels for the schizophrenic. "The entire system of introjection and projection," Deleuze continues, "is a communication of bodies in, and through, depth." Introjection and projection mark this initial stage, which Klein calls the *paranoid-schizoid position*. This stage is followed by the *depressive position* as the child begins to identify itself with the good object. This is the child's first attempt to achieve

[1] LoS, 232.
[2] LoS, 187.
[3] LoS, 187.

an identity and marks the formation of the ego which is also confirmed by the superego. The final stage, the sexual stage, arrives with Oedipus. As Deleuze explains, in this final stage "the libidinal impulses tend to be disengaged from destructive impulses and to invest through 'symbolization' always better organized objects, interests, and activities."[1]

The history of the depths is "terrifying."[2] It begins with the experience of a bottomless depth: an oral-anal depth. According to Deleuze's analysis of Klein, in the end what the schizoid position (in its failure to reach the depressive position) opposes to the internalized bad object is not the good object, which is still a partial object, but rather the body without organs which is complete.[3] The conflict is ultimately not between partial objects, good or bad, but between partial objects and complete or whole objects. The body without organs, because it does not contain parts, represents the complete object. The schizoid position gives up on introjection and projection altogether and becomes, in Artaud's description a being without mouth or anus: ""No mouth No tongue No teeth No larynx No esophagus No stomach No intestine No anus I shall reconstruct the man that I am [*sic*]."[4] There is tension at this stage between the id and ego.

There are two different depths here. There is a hollow depth "wherein bits whirl about and explode" and a full one wherein the bits are dissolved and become liquid and homogenous.[5] There are also two corresponding types of mixtures: one of hard and solid fragments which change, and the other liquid, fluid, and perfect.[6] Deleuze says that the latter is "without parts or alteration because it has the property of melting and welding

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[1] LoS, 188.
[2] LoS, 187.
[3] LoS, 189.
[4] Quoted in LoS, 342 note 8.
[5] LoS, 188-189.
[6] LoS, 189.

(all the bones in a mass of blood)."[1] We will see later the importance of the images of bone, flesh and blood for both Deleuze and Artaud. When the schizophrenic regresses to this schizoid position his language reflects these dualities. As Deleuze explains:

> If we assume that the schizophrenic, with all the language he has acquired, regresses to this schizoid position, we should not be surprised to find again in schizophrenic language the duality and complementarity of words-passions, splintered excremental bits, and of words-actions, blocks fused together by a principle of water or fire. Henceforth, everything takes place in depth, beneath the realm of sense, between two nonsenses of pure noise—the nonsense of the body and of the splintered word, and the nonsense of the block of bodies or of inarticulate words (the 'that doesn't make sense,' *ça n'a pas de sens*, acting as the positive process of both sides).[2]

In the nonsense of the body, sounds have not yet become words. They are just bodily noises. These sounds are not yet independent of the body. "When we say that the sound becomes independent," Deleuze explains, "we mean to say that it ceases to be a specific quality attached to bodies, a noise or a cry, and that it begins to designate qualities, manifest bodies, and signify subjects or predicates."[3] The sounds of the body, even cries, are not yet structured into speech. They have not yet attained the level of the surface effect or event. In other words, they are still at a level of pure sensation, not yet sense. They neither signify, manifest, nor denote. The nonsense of the block of bodies or inarticulate words is the indistinguishable words of schizophrenic language such as Deleuze thinks he detects in Artaud's glossolalia (as we will see when we turn to his discussion of Artaud's attempt to translate a portion of Carroll's "Jabberwocky"). These words do not connect bodies with events because they lack sense. They only act like proper words but do not have the same effect.

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[1] LoS, 189.
[2] LoS, 189.
[3] LoS, 187.

There are two kinds of nonsense in *The Logic of Sense*. There is the playful logic of Carroll's paradoxes and portmanteau words which ""say their own sense,"[1] and then there is the nonsense, like Artaud's *mots-cris* and *mots-souffles*, which lack sense (in terms of an absence of something that *should* be there but is not). They do not attain the surface and do not connect the planes of height and depth or that of bodies and events. In Carroll's form of nonsense, which is not opposed to sense, meaning escapes the one way determination (*sens unique*) of good sense.[2] Alice is both taller and smaller at the same time. Paradox does not obey the laws of non-contradiction. It is and…and… rather than either/or. It breaks out of the confining circle of denotation, manifestation, and signification. Nevertheless, this form of nonsense does convey a sense. It is possible, as Humpty Dumpty demonstrates, to make sense of portmanteau words. When Alice says of the poem, "Jabberwocky," "Somehow it seems to fill my head with ideas--only I don't exactly know what they are," she is admitting that it has a sense even if it is not good sense.[3] The negative meaning of nonsense as absence of sense denotes a failure to rise to the surface of meaning.

Language and Structure

Language has a structure. In fact, according to "*A quoi reconnaît-on le structuralisme*?" it is the only thing that properly does have structure.[4] Here Deleuze extends the definition to include even esoteric and non-verbal language. "There is a structure of the unconscious," Deleuze writes there, "only to the extent that the unconscious speaks and is language. There is a structure of bodies only to the extent that

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[1] LoS, 67.
[2] See LoS, 75-77.
[3] Lewis Carroll, *The Annotated Alice* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2000), 150.
[4] DI, 170.

bodies are supposed to speak with a language which is one of the symptoms."[1] Just as bodily symptoms announce underlying structures and processes, so to does language reveal (but must not be confused with) these underlying bodily structures and processes. Literary uses of language, as we will see, have both a clinical and a critical aspect for Deleuze. Unlike language, the depths of the body are not structured or organized into series.[2] In order for them to speak, they must become organized at the surface. It seems that for Deleuze this structure is what separates language from mere noise or sounds. The speaker of a language is assumed to have a certain mastery over the structure of the language they use. When Artaud's language gets out of his control, it collapses into the negative sort of nonsense. Schizophrenic language, as we will see, fails to organize itself according to the pre-established structure of language and thus fails to create a surface of sense.

Eating and Speaking: The Dynamic Genesis

In terms of the static genesis, eating and speaking are already separated on the surface of sense.[3] They are separate series that relate to one event or the other: to eat or to speak. In terms of the dynamic genesis, however, it is less clear how we get from one to the other. Both to eat and to speak emerge from the depths of the body. One, *to eat*, is directed towards the depths of the body, while *to speak* is directed towards the surface: introjection and projection. "[I]t is an entirely different question," Deleuze says, "how

[1] DI, 171.
[2] LoS, 224.
[3] LoS, 186.

speaking is effectively disengaged from eating, how the surface itself is produced, or how the incorporeal event results from bodily states."[1]

Introjection and projection are properly states of the body. Deleuze, with a reference to Artaud, describes this initial schizoid position:

> This schizoid system is inseparable from the terrible prediction: speaking will be fashioned out of eating and shitting, language and its univocity will be sculpted out of shit… (Artaud speaks of the 'caca of being and its language'). But, to be precise, what guarantees the first rough sketch of this sculpture, and the first stage in the formation of a language, is the good object of the depressive position up above. For it is this object that, from among all the sounds of the depths, extracts a Voice.[2]

Language will arise out of pure bodily processes. Partial objects, both good and bad, are taken into the infant's body and also expelled from it. What makes the transition from sound to voice, from bodily processes to language, is the identification with the good object of the heights. In the depressive position described by Klein, the child seeks to identify itself completely with the good object.[3] This identification with the object seeks to displace the schizoid system of introjection and projection. The depressive position is linked to the superego and to language. It is an organizing principle that comes from above. As we saw, the child is made to substitute words for noises and to enter into the linguistic structure. The schizophrenic, like Artaud purportedly, refuses the depressive position and the identification with the good object, consequently never achieving a voice. They are left with inarticulate words and *mots-cris* and *mots-souffles*. It is this refusal of the organizing principle, which is what the body without organs opposes, that ultimately prevents the schizophrenic from obtaining language.

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[1] LoS, 186-187.
[2] LoS, 193.
[3] See LoS, 187-188.

But the move from noise to voice is not the whole story. There is a second movement from voice to speech. This movement is made possible by the organization of the sexual surface.[1] The polymorphous sexual surface becomes organized into erogenous zones. These zones are in turn coordinated by the phallus. A third element also appears at this stage which is the trace of castration (the Oedipal stage). The voice is still prelinguistic. It does not yet denote, manifest or signify. The child is still "learning to speak on his own body."[2] It is at this level of the sexual organization of the surface, however, that speech now begins. "[I]t begins," Deleuze writes, "when the formative elements of language are extracted at the surface, from the current of voice which comes from above. This is the paradox of speech. On the one hand, it refers to language as to something withdrawn which preexists in the voice from above; on the other hand, it refers to language as to something which must result, but which will come to pass only with formed units."[3] Thus, speech and language are not conterminous. As Saussure demonstrated in his famous *Cours*, *langue* is superior to *parole*. Language is the preexisting structure from which the voice borrows to make speech. To make speech, however, there must be articulated elements. The more fluid and inarticulate language of the schizophrenic refuses this final movement from voice to speech. As we will see in the next chapter as we turn to investigate Artaud's failed "translation" of the first stanza of Carroll's "Jabberwocky," Artaud's language there becomes unpronounceable and inarticulate blocks of sound. According to Deleuze's analysis, this "language" is driven only by the phonetic values of pure sound and does not avail itself of the structural principles of language.

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[1] LoS, 232-233.
[2] LoS, 232.
[3] LoS, 232-233.

Deleuze's analysis is important here because it shows why he thinks that Artaud ultimately fails. If it can be demonstrated, however, that Deleuze has misread what Artaud was up to here in some fundamental way, it casts serious question on his reading of Artaud as a schizophrenic and his subsequent appropriation of Artaud's image of the body without organs. Even if it is argued that Deleuze's approach to Artaud changes and evolves in his later writings, as I think it does, this lends support to the argument that *The Logic of Sense* is in some ways an anomaly in the Deleuzian corpus.

Given his admitted hermeneutical principle of buggery,[1] it might seem that Deleuze would not be very susceptible to the sort of critique that I am suggesting here—one that argues that there is something essential about Artaud's own project that Deleuze has missed. To be sure, Deleuze's primary concern is not in explicating Artaud, but rather in using him for his own purposes. But I will argue that Deleuze's assessment of Artaud in *The Logic of Sense* makes Artaud too schizophrenic (in the *clinical* sense of the term) and that Deleuze's reading of Artaud there is problematic for his own later purposes (which perhaps Deleuze himself later realized). The important question, if I am right about a certain misreading of Artaud here, is whether that misreading is based on a fundamental claim about language and certain assumptions on Deleuze's part about verbal and artistic expression. In other words, does the change I detect in his reading of Artaud after *The Logic of Sense* have anything to do with a shift in logics from sense to sensation? The question is whether something like intentionality or meaning is required in the movement from noise to language. How much mastery and control must a language user possess to be considered as such? To begin to explore these questions, we

[1] N, 6.

will turn to Deleuze's specific analysis of Artaud's language in the "Thirteenth Series of the Schizophrenic and the Little Girl."

Chapter Two

Artaud and the (IL)Logic of Sense

For the problem is not to go beyond the bounds of reason, it is to cross the bounds of unreason as a victor: then one can speak of 'good mental health,' even if everything ends badly.
—Gilles Deleuze[1]

[I]n Artaud's work, language, having been rejected as discourse and re-apprehended in the plastic violence of the shock, is referred back to the cry, to the tortured body, to the materiality of thought, to the flesh—Michel Foucault[2]

Artaud and the BwO

The Logic of Sense contains Deleuze's first mention of the term *body without organs*. Although he mentions Artaud in *Difference and Repetition*, he does not refer to Artaud's image of the body without organs there. It must be said at this juncture (prior to the collaborations with Guattari) the body without organs does not seem a very promising concept. It is here only associated with the collapse into the schizophrenic depths and the refusal of the surface. It is even associated with schizophrenic catatonia.[3] This is not to suggest that the depth is somehow bad (that would introduce a form of judgment alien to Deleuze), but it does suggest a failure on the part of the schizophrenic to resolve the conflict between the *id* and *ego* which is made possible by the depressive position. Schizophrenic language is no language at all in the proper sense of the term. It refuses the organization of the heights and ends up lacking in sense. This is not the playful nonsense of paradox or Carroll's portmanteau words which "say their own sense," but rather a failure to achieve the surface and any sense at all.

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[1] ECC, 20.
[2] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage Books, 1970), 383.
[3] LoS, 189.

What I want to suggest at this point is that Deleuze's relation to Artaud and to the concept of the body without organs changes after the collaboration with Guattari to a more positive assessment.[1] As I will argue below, Deleuze is here still too much in the role of the clinician who is diagnosing the case of Artaud. He is making him an example. As Julie Kuhlken notes, "…in *The Logic of Sense* Deleuze approaches Artaud in the mode of a dispassionate example-taker, the latter's 'body without organs' has nothing but theoretical value for his philosophy. It is the task of his subsequent engagement with Artaud to give it a problematic value."[2] Deleuze is at this point much under the influence of psychoanalysis.[3] The valorization of schizophrenia (as a theoretical concept but not a clinical entity) is still to come with the *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* project.

The crucial role that Guattari plays here, should not be overlooked. As Deleuze's former doctoral student, Eric Alliez writes of his teacher's progression: "And the fact is that *Difference and Repetition* will be immediately followed by this very unique book, *The Logic of Sense*, where the BwO emerges for the first time, with Artaud's *physical words*, in the middle of a process it breaks—the project of a *structuralist logic of sense*—leading to an aporetic end, an end which will require and announce the work with Guattari."[4] In an interview talking about the collaboration on *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze himself recalls that early on he had a feeling that Guattari was the more advanced of the

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[1] Julie Kuhlken has noted this evolution in the treatment of Artaud as well in her recent article "Why is Deleuze an Artist-Philosopher," as has Anne Tomiche in her "L'Artaud de Deleuze."
[2] Kuhlken, "Why is Deleuze an Artist-Philosopher," 209.
[3] There is an interesting translational choice in the English preface to *The Logic of Sense* that Jean-Jacques Lecercle has noted. Although an early work, *The Logic of Sense* was translated into English later than Anti-*Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*. The English translation changes Deleuze's own description of *The Logic of Sense* as "un essai de roman logique et *psychanalytique*" to "an attempt to develop a logical and *psychological* novel" (LoS, xiv, emphasis mine) as if to distance the co-author of *Anti-Oedipus* from the taint of psychoanalysis. See Lecercle's discussion in his *Deleuze and Language*, 102.
[4] Eric Alliez, "The BwO Condition or, The Politics of Sensation," in *Biographien des organlosen Körpers*, ed. Eric Alliez and Elisabeth von Samsonow, Trans Art, IV (Wien: Turia + Kant, 2003), 13.

two.[1] Interestingly enough, however, it was Deleuze's concept of the body without organs in *The Logic of Sense* that attracted Guattari to him in the first place. As Guattari says in a 1972 joint interview with Deleuze about *Anti-Oedipus*, "What I was after in the work with Gilles were things like the body without organs, multiplicities, the possibility of a logic of multiplicities connected with the body without organs."[2] Guattari, the former student and analysand of Lacan, must have been attracted to Deleuze's description of how the schizophrenic resists the signifier and the articulation of language through the construction of the body without organs.

With his psychiatric training and actual experience working with schizophrenics, Guattari will help Deleuze expand his understanding of both schizophrenia and the body without organs when they begin writing together. There is an illustrative story in François Dosse's joint biography of Deleuze and Guattari concerning a time that Deleuze went to visit Guattari and their dinner was interrupted by a call from La Borde clinic which Guattari ran informing him that one of the patients had escaped into the woods. According to Alain Aptekman an associate of Guattari's who was present at the time, "Gilles blêmit…Gilles me dit pendent ce temps: 'Comment tu peux supporter les schizos?' Il ne pouvait pas supporter la vision des fous."[3] Schizophrenia is clearly only a theoretical entity for Deleuze. He stands at a safe distance from Artaud as well, encountering him only in the written word and the recording of his radio play *Pour en finir avec le jugement de dieu* (curiously Deleuze never talks about the drawings).

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[1] N, 13.
[2] N, 15.
[3] François Dosse, *Gilles Deleuze et Félix Guattari : Biographie croisée* (Paris : La Découverte, 2007), 18-19.

Artaud Through the Looking Glass

In the "Thirteenth Series of the Schizophrenic and the Little Girl" in *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze equates Artaud's poetic language with the schizophrenic language of the depths. Deleuze uses Artaud's attempted translation of the first stanza of Carroll's poem, *Jabberwocky*, to compare Carroll's playful language of nonsense at the surface with Artaud's more pernicious form of nonsense of the depths.[1] "As we read the first stanza of 'Jabberwocky,' such as Artaud renders it," Deleuze explains, "we have the impression that the two opening verses still correspond to Carroll's criteria and conform to the rules of translation generally held by Carroll's other French translators, Parisot and Brunius. But beginning with the last word of the second line, from the third line onward, a sliding is produced, and even a creative, central collapse, causing us to be in another world and in an entirely different language. With horror, we recognize it easily: it is the language of schizophrenia."[2]

Let us examine the evidence for Deleuze's claim. Carroll's original reads:

> 'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
> Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
> All mimsy were the borogoves,
> And the mome raths outgrabe.[3]

Brunius (1944) renders the second line, "Gyraient sur la loinde et guimblaient." Parisot (1945) translates it, "Gyraient sur l'alloinde et vriblaient." The line in Artaud's translation (1943) that Deleuze picks up on is: "Allaient en gilroyant et en

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[1] Artaud was actually translating from the Humpty Dumpty chapter of *Through the Looking Glass*. Alice only recites the first stanza of Jabberwocky before Humpty Dumpty interrupts her. See Carroll, *Annotated Alice*, 215. Artaud's translation of this chapter begins in OC, IX, 133ff.
[2] LoS, 83-84.
[3] Carroll, *Annotated Alice*, 215.

brimbulkdriquant."[1] According to Deleuze, it is with the neologism *brimbulkdriquant* that the slippage starts. Artaud's full translation is as follows:

> Il était Roparant, et les vliqueux tarands
> Allaient en gilroyant et en brimbulkdriquant
> Jusque-là où la rourghe est a rouarghe a rangmbde et rangmbde a rouarghambde :
> Tous les falomitards étaient les chats-huants
> Et les Ghoré Uk'hatis dans le GRABÜG-EÛMENT.[2]

By the time we get to the third line it is apparent that this is now Artaud's work and no longer Carroll's. Here it seems that the tonic value of the "words" (the assonance and consonance of the *u* and *a* sounds along with the repetition of r's) drives the syntax regardless of Carroll's original line.

But does that mean, as Deleuze suggests, that it is the product of a schizophrenic? Paule Thévenin, Artaud's assistant at Ivry, the executrix of his literary estate, and editor of his *Oeuvres Completes* for Gallimard, takes strong exception to Deleuze's reading here. Unfortunately, these criticisms, published in her 1969 *Tel quel* article, "Entendre/Voir/Lire,"[3] have been completely ignored in the Deleuze literature as far as I can tell.[4] It is true that for the 1993 reprint of the article, Thévenin, having by then the benefit of Deleuze's subsequent statements about Artaud and schizophrenia, issues a partial retraction of her earlier stance, but she never fully retracts it. Thévenin writes in a new introduction to her article for its inclusion in her 1993 book, *Antonin Artaud, ce Désespéré qui vous parle*:

> J'ai même conservé toute la partie polémique qui correspond à une époque où il m'était intolérable que l'œuvre et la personne d'Antonin Artaud

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[1] These translations are quoted in Thévenin, "*Entendre/ voir/ lire*," 205.
[2] OC, IX, 140.
[3] Paule Thévenin, "*Entendre/ voir/ lire*," *Tel quel* nos. 39 and 40 (fall and winter 1969). Reprinted in Paule Thévenin, *Antonin Artaud, ce Désespéré qui vous parle*, 189-282.
[4] With the above mentioned exception of Tomiche.

> fussent systématiquement associées à la schizophrénie. A relire cette partie, il m'apparaît que la querelle faite à Gilles Deleuze est un tantinet exagérée, voire même un peu injuste. Je suis certaine qu'il ne m'en voudra pas de l'avoir maintenue dans son historicité, il a suffisamment prouvé depuis son profond intérêt pour l'œuvre d'Antonin Artaud.[1]

Deleuze is only able to prove his "profound interest" in Artaud as an artist and thinker in his own right and not just as a clinical case *after* "*Le Schizophrène et le Mot*." By 1993 Thévenin has had the benefit of the *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* books co-written with Guattari and the refined definitions of schizophrenia that one finds there. Before turning in more detail to Thévenin's criticism, however, I want to consider more generally what Deleuze makes of Artaud's putative schizophrenic language at this stage.

Deleuze maintains that Carroll's language is "emitted at the surface" while Artaud's is "carved into the depth of bodies."[2] Deleuze uses Artaud's translations of Carroll as an opportunity to point out the fragility of the surface. He speaks of the whole organization of the surface disappearing and being "overturned in a terrible primordial order."[3] This primordial order refers to the schizoid regression from Klein's analysis above. He alludes to Artaud's attempts in terms of "an irreversible madness" and of "a pathological creation affecting bodies."[4] Deleuze diagnoses this as a *clinical* problem of "sliding from one organization to another, or a problem of the formation of a progressive and creative disorganization" as well as a *critical* problem "of the determination of differential levels at which nonsense changes shape, the portmanteau word undergoes a change of nature, and the entire language changes dimension."[5] Artaud slides from the

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[1] Thévenin, *"Entendre/ voir/ lire,"* 189. To be fair, this retraction is ignored in some of the Artaud literature as well. I am thinking of Adrian Morfee who calls Thévenin's article a "devastating reply" but does not mention the later partial retraction. See Adrian Morfee, *Writing Bodies*, 109 n. 8.
[2] LoS, 84.
[3] LoS, 82.
[4] LoS, 82.
[5] LoS, 83.

organization of the surface to the disorganization of the depths. Carroll's words in Artaud's translation change their nature and dimension. They go from a positive nonsense (which carries its own sense) to a lack of sense. They no longer make sense (*ça n'a pas de sens*) because they no longer maintain the border between bodies and states of affairs or words and things. Painfully aware of his own position here, Deleuze comments that "only the commentator may change dimensions, and that is his great weakness, the sign that he inhabits no dimension at all."[1]

Critical and Clinical

Deleuze makes a distinction between the critical and clinical that is more fully worked out in his later writings.[2] On the clinical side, he suggests that literary writers are often expert symptomatologists who lend their names to a new grouping of symptoms, Sade or Masoch for example. This is made possible on the critical side by the specific use of language that these authors employ to express these symptoms. For Deleuze, as Dan Smith explains in his introduction to Deleuze's collection of essays entitled, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, "The idea was not to apply psychiatric concepts to literature, but on the contrary to extract non-preexistent clinical concepts from the works themselves."[3] "Is it our fault," Deleuze asks in a later interview referring to several literary authors, "that Lawrence, Miller, Kerouac, Burroughs, Artaud, and Beckett know more about

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[1] LoS, 93.
[2] Derrida makes a similar distinction in his essay on Artaud, "La Parole Soufflée" in *Writing and Difference*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), 169 which appeared two years prior to LoS. Unfortunately, neither Deleuze nor Derrida ever seem to pick up on the other's distinction here.
[3] Daniel W. Smith, "Introduction" in Gilles Deleuze*, Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), xix. For Smith's discussion of the critical/clinical distinction which I am following here see especially xvii-xix.

schizophrenia than psychiatrists and psychoanalysts?"[1] Although he introduces the terms of the critical/clinical distinction here, their fuller elaboration is not yet present in *The Logic of Sense*. Deleuze's analysis of Artaud here still seems to turn him into a clinical case of schizophrenia. Contrary to his own distinction, Deleuze seems to diagnose, that is to apply a psychiatric concept to literature, when he says of Artaud's language, "With horror, we recognize it easily: it is the language of schizophrenia." What is meant by schizophrenia will change somewhat when Deleuze starts writing with Guattari, but at this point it seems a clinical diagnosis. As Jeffrey Atteberry notes, "Whether or not Deleuze here uses the term schizophrenia in a manner that is in strict accordance with clinical practice, he clearly has recourse to the language of psychoanalysis as a means of explicating Artaud's texts, a strategy that would appear to make Artaud's writing into a case study; and in doing so, Deleuze finds himself in a vulnerable position and open to the charges of partaking in the crimes against Artaud."[2] Or as Adrian Morfee observes of Artaud's attempted "translation":

> It is reasonable to recognize, on the one hand, that this is an extraordinary linguistic performance, but to rebut, on the other hand any attempt to ring-fence this as the language of schizophrenia. It may just as readily be seen as the language of liberation. Not only does Artaud refuse to employ the phonetic pool of modern French, but in the extra third line he renders his version all but unpronounceable. He thereby frees himself from the French language and from its norms. By so thoroughly exceeding the act of translation, Artaud asserts his linguistic autonomy.[3]

It is Artaud's struggle for autonomy, for his own artistic voice, more so than his mental illness that is visible in his attempt against Carroll. This is why that Thévenin in 1969, having only the Deleuze of "*Le Schizophrène et le Moi*" to judge by, takes such strong

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[1] N, 23.
[2] Jeffrey Atteberry, "Reading Forgiveness and Forgiving Reading: Antonin Artaud's *Correspondence avec Jacques Rivière*," *MLN* 115, no. 4 (2000), 716.
[3] Adrian Morfee, *Writing Bodies*, 109.

exception to the clinical diagnosis of Artaud there, and why, twenty-one years later, she partially (but never fully) retracts her prior statements in light of Deleuze's subsequent collaborative works in which the concept of schizophrenia is redefined. "D'emblée," Thévenin writes of Deleuze's article, "Gilles Deleuze, tombant dans le piège majeur, identifie Antonin Artaud à la schizophrénie."[1] Deleuze at this point does not seem to be able to resist trying his hand at psychoanalyzing Artaud. Kuhlken, comparing Deleuze's treatment of Artaud in *The Logic of Sense* with his previous treatment in *Difference and Repetition* notes, "Rather than appearing in his own voice, Artaud is witnessed at arm's length, almost as a quasi-academic source, and again through the intermediary of another, in this case Lewis Carroll. As before, Deleuze's interest in Artaud lies in his exemplarity—this time as a counter-example to Carroll—but also again the opposition between the paired writers is too clean."[2] Kuhlken takes Deleuze's observation about the weak position of the commentator quoted above as Deleuze's own recognition of this shortcoming.

It is true that on the critical side, Deleuze does call Artaud's problem here a "progressive and creative disorganization," so that schizophrenia is not a purely negative regression but rather a creative response. Deleuze's reference to a "central collapse" is taken from Artaud's own self-description in a letter to Rivière where he complains of a "central collapse of the soul."[3] Artaud's attempted creation, however, ultimately seems to miscarry for Deleuze. It gets lost in the depths. Moreover, unlike Sade and Masoch, Artaud here does not lend his name to a new and creative mapping of symptoms, *Artaudism*, but is rather subsumed under an already identified and established disorder.

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[1] Thévenin, *"Entendre/ voir/ lire,"* 200.
[2] Kuhlken, "Why is Deleuze an Artist-Philosopher," 207.
[3] SW, 34-35.

The one concept that Artaud can arguably be said to contribute is that of the body without organs. It is not clear, however, whether in Deleuze's eyes this is a concept *for Artaud* or whether it only becomes a concept when a philosopher like himself takes it up. For Artaud the body without organs seems more a lived experience, whereas Deleuze makes of it a completely theoretical concept. For Deleuze, as we will see, it becomes a way to get beyond the lived body to connect with pre-individual life force itself.

Art(aud) Therapy

It is while interred in the asylum at Rodez, that Artaud attempts his "translation" from the Humpty Dumpty chapter from Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass*. Deleuze does not seem to be aware of the circumstances of this translation (at least he makes no mention of them). In fact he makes it seem that Artaud chose this task of his own volition. According to Deleuze, Artaud chose the Humpty Dumpty episode in order to contrast Humpty Dumpty and Alice in order to make a point about fragmented bodies versus the body without organs (a distinction we will turn to shortly). "Artaud," he explains, "had *no other reason* for confronting the text of Humpty Dumpty."[1] Paule Thévenin, however, points out that Artaud was pressured into doing the translations by his doctor and the head of the clinic as Rodez, Gaston Ferdière. Artaud, whose English was not perfect, and who had no liking for Carroll, did them only under compulsion.[2] As Thévenin shows, part of what Deleuze mistakes as schizophrenic language is the result of Artaud's deliberate (and for her, fully conscious and controlled) revolt against both Carroll and Ferdière. There is also a tremendous amount of playfulness and (black) humor in Artaud's work that Deleuze appears completely impervious to, but he is

[1] LoS, 92 (emphasis mine).
[2] See Thévenin, *"Entendre/ voir/ lire,"* 201.

certainly not alone among Artaud commentators in that regard. "[Artaud] s'amuse beaucoup," Thévenin writes, "à le farcir de mots inventés, à prendre de la sorte, par l'humour, et de façon magistrale, sa revanche sur Carroll. Il le fit avec une malice joyeuse et même un goût de la farce où je ne vois, pour ma part, nulle trace de schizophrénie."[1] It is easy to imagine that in many ways Carroll here is a substitute for Dr. Ferdière, upon whom the incarcerated Artaud is at this point completely dependent. As Tomiche notes:

> De fait, s'il traduit le Jabberwocky parce que Ferdière le lui demande et qu'il s'y sent contraint, il retourne la situation par l'humour pour faire du texte de Lewis Carroll « un plagiat édulcoré et sans accent d'une œuvre par moi écrite et qu'on a fait disparaître de telle sorte que moi-même je sais à peine ce qu'il y a dedans. » C'est sans doute moins à un délire psychotique qu'à l'indignation d'avoir été amené à traduire contre son gré et à la malice, qui lui permet ainsi de prendre une sorte de revanche sur Lewis Carroll, qu'il faut attribuer une telle affirmation.[2]

Deleuze does note the anger towards Carroll, but attributes it to a different cause than Artaud's forced labor. In fact, Artaud is aware that he has not "translated" Carroll. Artaud vents his spleen against Carroll in his letters to his friend, and fellow Carroll translator, Henri Parisot.[3] He tells Parisot: "I have not produced a translation of 'Jabberwocky.' I tried to translate a fragment of it, but it bored me. I never liked this poem, which always struck me as an affected infantilism…*I do not like poems or languages of the surface*…."[4] Artaud subtitles his "translation", "*Tentative anti-grammaticale contre Lewis Carroll*."[5] This was from the start Artaud's own work only loosely inspired (or better *provoked*) by Carroll. Artaud at one point even

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[1] Thévenin, *"Entendre/ voir/ lire,"* 202.
[2] Tomiche, "L'Artaud de Deleuze," 160-161.
[3] See SW, 446-451.
[4] Quoted in LoS, 84 (emphasis is Deleuze's).
[5] OC, IX, 133. Artaud adds this subtitle in 1947 for its publication in the journal *l'Arbalète*. Deleuze refers to this subtitle (LoS, 91) but takes it as further evidence of the dissolution of Artaud's schizophrenic language.

anachronistically accuses (and this is, I suspect, some of the humor that Deleuze misses) Carroll of having plagiarized "Jabberwocky" from him: "For 'Jabberwocky' is nothing but a sugar-coated and lifeless plagiarism of a work written by me, which has been spirited away so successfully that I myself hardly know what is in it."[1] Deleuze takes this as a tacit admission on Artaud's part of the recognition of a resemblance with Carroll.[2]

Ferdière assigned this translation to Artaud as a form of "art therapy," a field he helped pioneer. Ferdière, himself a poet (whose poetry was too obscene to publish)[3] and friend of the surrealists took a personal interest in reclaiming the artist in Artaud. Ferdière himself recounts,

> Le résultat que j'ai obtenu […] était dû dans une large mesure à l'Art-thérapie. J'ai été, on le sait, un des pionniers de celle-ci et j'en ai précisé les règles dans un grand nombre de réunions et de congrès. *La main d'Artaud a dû réapprendre à écrire*, grâce à la correspondance de plus en plus nombreuse qu'il entretenait avec ses amis (et, au début, il fallait le forcer à une réponse, même courte et encombrée de formules toutes faites), grâce surtout aux traductions que je lui demandais amicalement : c'était un service à me rendre et qui pressait ; il me fallait, pour tel ou tel travail en cours, une adaptation d'un poème de Lewis Carroll ou d'un chapitre entier de *la Traversée du miroir*.[4]

Ferdière presented this project to Artaud as doing him [Ferdière] a personal favor on a book project he was working on. Artaud, who needed to please his doctor (the same doctor who submitted Artaud to some fifty-one electro-shock treatments despite a fractured vertebrae resulting from the third treatment), was in no position to refuse.

Of all the authors that Ferdière could have chosen, why Lewis Carroll? And why this particular chapter from *Through the Looking Glass?* Artaud was indeed multi-

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[1] OC, IX, 172; SW, 451. Deleuze refers to this as well (LoS, 86) but takes it as an admission on Artaud's part of a certain resemblance between Carroll and himself.
[2] LoS, 86.
[3] See Stephen Barber, *Antonin Artaud: Blows and Bombs* (London: Faber and Faber, 1993), 104-105.
[4] Quoted in Thévenin, *"Entendre/ voir/ lire,"* 201.

lingual—born to a Greek mother and French father, Artaud grew up speaking French and Greek at home. He knew some Arabic, German, and even Spanish, but not much English. The chaplain of the asylum had to help Artaud with the English. So it could not have been Artaud's facility with English that prompted Ferdière to choose Carroll for him to translate. I would suggest that the reason Ferdière chose to assign this text of Carroll's to Artaud as a form of art therapy was precisely to try to teach Artaud the kind of linguistic control that Carroll had and which Artaud lacked.

Ferdière was, perhaps unknowingly, repeating *NRF* editor Jacques Rivière's prescription for Artaud back in 1923 to just work harder to bring his rejected poems into shape. "I have had enough experience reading manuscripts," Rivière tells Artaud, "to feel that this concentration of your resources on a simple poetic object is not at all ruled out by your temperament and that with a little patience, even if it entails only the elimination of divergent images or touches, you will succeed in writing poems that are perfectly coherent and harmonious."[1] To Artaud's complaint about a breakdown in his thought, Rivière responds by suggesting that Artaud just work harder on his craft.[2] Rivière attributes the "oddities" and disconcerting "awkwardnesses" of Artaud's poems to "a certain studied effort on your part rather than to a lack of control over your ideas."[3] In other words, it is the control over the language, not control over the ideas that is the issue.

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[1] SW, 33.
[2] See Deleuze's own discussion of the Artaud/Rivière correspondence in DR, 146-148, where Deleuze accuses Rivière of fundamentally misunderstanding Artaud's true predicament. Deleuze is relying, as a footnote in the original French edition (p. 192) of *Différence et répétition* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968), 192, but somehow omitted in the English translation, on Maurice Blanchot's essay "Artaud," in *Le livre à venir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1986). Derrida also responds to this essay, but more critically, in "La parole soufflée."
[3] SW, 33.

Artaud seems to lack that skill that Humpty Dumpty claims to possess to make his words say just what he means them to say. Carroll's Humpty Dumpty claims to be the master of language:

> 'When *I* use a word,' Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, 'it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less.'
> 'The question is,' said Alice, 'whether you *can* make words mean so many different things.'
> 'The question is,' said Humpty Dumpty, 'which is to be master—that's all.'
> Alice was too much puzzled to say anything; so after a minute Humpty Dumpty began again. 'They've a temper, some of them—particularly verbs: they're the proudest—adjectives you can do anything with, but not verbs—however, *I* can manage the whole lot of them! [1]

It is surely no coincidence that the very chapter Ferdière requests Artaud to translate is about the mastery of language. While Rivière refuses to accept Artaud's self-diagnosis of "a horrible sickness of mind,"[2] and attributes the failure of his poems to a lack of sufficient organization or control over language, both Ferdière and Deleuze find evidence for Artaud's "sickness" in his language. But Ferdière thinks he can make Artaud's hand "relearn to write" by having him translate another poet who makes liberal use of neologisms, paradoxes, and the right sort of nonsense. Rivière, Ferdière, and Deleuze do not see, as Paule Thévenin does, the deliberateness and control of Artaud's language and thus perhaps they miss what Artaud was really up to with his language. Artaud was not interested in translating Carroll but rather in *traducing* him.[3]

It could be said, of course, that Deleuze's reading here is emphasizing a certain Artaud, the schizophrenic one, for his own purposes. If those purposes had been different, perhaps Deleuze would have chosen other aspects of Artaud to highlight. What

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[1] Carroll, *Annotated Alice*, 213.
[2] SW, 31.
[3] See Goodall, *Artaud and the Gnostic Drama*, 177- 178. Goodall suggests that Artaud's rage might also have been directed at language itself which always seemed to betray him.

concerns me here, however, is whether Deleuze's emphasis on a schizophrenic Artaud is central to his claims about language. I am suggesting that they are and that Deleuze (at least in the analysis in *The Logic of Sense*) violates his own principle and turns Artaud into a clinical case based purely on an analysis of language. Deleuze builds his case based on the comparison between Artaud's and Carroll's language.[1] Perhaps the definition of schizophrenia changes or at least becomes more carefully elaborated during the collaboration with Guattari, but it is not clear that the *Anti-Oedipus* or *Thousand Plateaus* definition of schizophrenia is the operative one here.

Deleuze builds his case for Artaud's schizophrenia here precisely through an analysis of language. For example, according to Deleuze, "When Artaud says in his 'Jabberwocky' 'Until rourghe is to rouraghe has rangmbde and rangmbde has rouarghambde,' he means to activate, insufflate, palatalize, and set the word aflame so that the word becomes the action of a body without parts, instead of being the passion of a fragmented organism. The task is that of transforming the word into a fusion of consonants—fusion through the use of soft signs and of consonants which cannot be decomposed."[2] Deleuze finds evidence here for Artaud's creation of the body without organs to protect himself against the harmful explosive force of words. According to Deleuze's analysis, this is the schizophrenic's opposition of the body without organs to the fragmented body. It could just as easily be Artaud's declaration of freedom from Carroll's text.

One of the things that Deleuze does want to highlight about schizophrenic language here is its purely phonetic or tonic value (over any possible semantic value).

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[1] He also includes a significant digression the "schizophrenic student of languages," Louis Wolfson, as another point of comparison to Artaud here.
[2] LoS, 89-90.

But to demonstrate how this works, Deleuze first turns his attention to Louis Wolfson rather than immediately to Artaud. He will later connect the two, all the while maintaining Artaud's superiority in literature. The digression into Wolfson in this series dedicated to Carroll and Artaud perhaps suggests some uneasiness on Deleuze's part with the claims he is making about Artaud's language. He finds it easier to illustrate his claims via Wolfson than Artaud. At any rate, Wolfson's case remains more purely clinical.[1] We will have to question to what extent Wolfson and Artaud display the same symptoms.

The Schizophrenic Student of Languages

The case of Wolfson is an interesting one for our purposes because it provides Deleuze with a perfect clinical example for his analysis of schizophrenic language. Artaud's case, as we will see, is not as straightforward, which is why I think Deleuze spends so much time on Wolfson in his chapter about Artaud.[2] Deleuze in 1970 supplies the foreword to Wolfson's book, *Le Schizo et les langues*, which extends the discussion begun two years earlier in *The Logic of Sense*.[3] This introduction is then significantly revised by Deleuze and included in his 1993 *Essays Critical and Clinical*. For our purposes, the most significant revision is the discussion of the relationship between Wolfson and Artaud that is included in the later revision.[4] As we will see, the Artaud

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[1] LoS, 84.
[2] This is what prompts Morfee's comment about a "disappointing failed encounter," since only about half a page of Deleuze's fifteen page article is actually given to a direct discussion of Artaud. See Morfee, *Writing Bodies*, 6n.
[3] Gilles Deleuze, "Schizologie," preface to *Le schizo et les langues*, by Louis Wolfson (Paris: Gallimard, 1970), 5-23.
[4] Artaud, apart from a single reference in a footnote on page 17, is absent from the original preface. For this discussion, I will be following the ECC version of the essay.

that is added to the 1993 essay is the Artaud of Deleuze's later, more developed understanding.

Wolfson, the self-described "schizophrenic student of languages" adopts a procedure of translating words out of his mother tongue, English, which is physically painful to him, into other languages: French, German, Russian and Hebrew. Wolfson produces his translations based on phonetic rules. "Thus," as Deleuze explains in the preface to Wolfson's book, "an ordinary maternal sentence will be analyzed in terms of its phonetic elements and movements so that it can be converted into a sentence, in one or more foreign languages, which is similar to it in sound and meaning."[1] The English word *tree*, for example, becomes the French *arbre* (emphasizing the *r* sound), then *tere* (emphasizing the *t* sound found in the Hebrew word *etz*), and eventually the Russian *derevo* (whereby the *t* becomes a *d*).[2] Deleuze notes certain parallels here between Wolfson's procedure and those of Roussel and (in the 1993 version) Brisset. In all three cases, phonetic considerations drive the translation choices.[3]

For Wolfson, his mother's voice speaking to him in English (literally his mother tongue) is physically painful. He has developed his ability to rapidly translate her words as a defense mechanism. This even applies to his food choices. From time to time he goes on eating binges, opening cans and containers of food to stuff himself. The problem is that the labels on the cans and packages are in English too. He must either translate these or think of them in terms of their chemical components. Wolfson is quite literally faced with the dilemma between eating and speaking. Both the words of his maternal language and these food items, Deleuze says, constitute potentially harmful partial

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[1] ECC, 8.
[2] Deleuze cites this example in both LoS (85) and ECC (7-8). It is not in the original 1970 preface.
[3] ECC, 9.

objects for him.[1] He thinks the food sometimes contains harmful larvae, insects, and microbes that invade his body.

Both Wolfson and Artaud combat these partial objects. But Deleuze in 1993 notes a contrast here with Artaud:

> In Artaud, the peyote rite also confronts letters and organs, but it makes them move in the other direction, toward inarticulate breaths, toward a nondecomposable body without organs. What it extracts from the maternal language are breath-words that belong to no language, and form the organism, a body without organs that has no generation.[2]

Artaud's language, Deleuze is now careful to point out, is more *creative* than Wolfson's. Artaud is on a whole other level. Deleuze writes in a footnote to the passage quoted above: "In Artaud, the famous breath-words are opposed to the maternal language and to broken letters; and the body without organs is opposed to the organism, to organs and larvae. But the breath-words are supported by a poetic syntax, and the body without organs by a vital cosmology that exceeds the limits of Wolfson's equation on all sides."[3] What makes Artaud's case different form Wolfson's, seen from the vantage point of twenty-three years later, is precisely this creative poetic syntax. In other words, unlike Wolfson (and the 1969 Artaud of *The Logic of Sense*), the 1993 Artaud is no longer simply a clinical case—the critical dimension is now emphasized. Wolfson's "translations" still rely on the resemblances between sound and meaning. His language relies on a mélange of actual languages. Artaud's neologisms do not. They do not belong to any natural language. Unlike Artaud, Wolfson, Deleuze says, "lacks a creative syntax."[4] The combat against the partial objects for both remains the same. Both

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[1] ECC, 15-16.
[2] ECC, 16.
[3] ECC, 186, n.6.
[4] ECC, 16.

Wolfson and Artaud alike are wounded by words. For both, Deleuze writes, "the combat, has the same nature, the same sufferings, and should also make us pass from wounding letters to animated breaths, from sick organs to the cosmic body without organs."[1]

The schizophrenic refuses *mother* tongue, but not for the reasons that psychoanalysis thinks. "Psychoanalysis," Deleuze explains, "contains but a single error: it reduces all the adventures of psychosis to a single refrain, the eternal daddy-mommy, which is sometimes played by psychological characters, and sometimes raised to the level of symbolic functions." He continues:

> But the schizophrenic does not live in familial categories, he wanders among worldwide and cosmic categories… He evolves in things and in words. What he terms 'mother' is an organization of words that has been put in his ears and mouth, an organization of things that has been put in his body. It is not my language that is maternal, it is my mother who is a language; it is not my organism that comes from the mother, it is my mother who is a collection of organs, the collection of *my own* organs.[2]

We have seen with Klein how language literally "comes from on high" for the infant. Artaud will famously claim, "I don't believe in father/ or mother,// don't have/ papa-mama."[3] The schizophrenic refuses the organization of the heights. Artaud refuses the structure of grammar and any known language.

To Eat/ To Speak

We have just seen with Wolfson the conflict between eating and speaking in his procedure of translating the contents of the cans and packages of food into foreign words or chemical equations in order to be able to eat. Carroll's Alice faces similar dilemmas as well. Alice finds it difficult to eat after being introduced to her food and hearing it

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[1] ECC, 16.
[2] ECC, 17.
[3] SW, 550.

speak. Eating and speaking, though the functions of one and the same mouth, constitute different series.[1] There is the bodily series of eating and the incorporeal series of speaking (language). These two series are articulated at the surface for Carroll.[2] This surface of sense in Carroll is exactly the frontier between words and things, or propositions and states of affairs discovered by the Stoics. Here sense is elaborated "both as what is expressed by the proposition and as the attribute of things—the 'expressible' of expressions and the 'attributable' of denotations."[3] Sense is, importantly, not corporeal. It may be the result or effect of the mixtures of bodies and their passions, but it remains immaterial. With Carroll's nonsense of the surface, sense is distributed on both sides—bodies and words. For the schizophrenic like Wolfson or Artaud, however, there is no longer a surface. "The first schizophrenic evidence," Deleuze tells us, "is that the surface has split open. Things and propositions have no longer any frontier between them, precisely because bodies have no surface."[4] The body-sieve surface of the schizophrenic is riddled with holes. There is no longer any clear demarcation between words and things, inside and outside, container and contained. Their entire body, Deleuze explains, is nothing but depth: "everything is body and corporeal."[5]

With the collapse of the surface comes a loss of meaning as well. The word, Deleuze writes, "loses its sense, that is, its power to draw together or express an

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[1] The concept of *series* for Deleuze indicates complex ongoing processes or relationships that are not reducible to a simple linear model of temporal succession (these processes work both forwards and backwards in time). For Deleuze, no event is an absolute break or new beginning. Every event happens in the midst of the already ongoing series of other events. An event is simply an alteration in an ongoing series of mutual variations. Deleuze organizes *The Logic of Sense* into series rather than chapters to indicate the interconnection and concurrence between various worlds created by the series. See Williams, 1-5. Series are relational. The relation of the mouth to food belongs to one series (eating) and the relation of the mouth to speech belongs to another (language). How the mouth functions in each instance depends on its relationship to the other members of the series (food or words).
[2] LoS, 86.
[3] LoS, 86.
[4] LoS, 86-87.
[5] LoS, 87.

incorporeal effect distinct from the actions and passions of the body, and an ideational event distinct from its present realization…Every word is physical, and immediately affects the body."[1] The body is wounded by words. Words are dangerous partial objects that fragment and infest the body. This is why Artaud does not like Carroll's playing with words at the surface, as if they were innocuous. For Artaud, the dual series of speaking/ eating becomes writing/ excrement. Deleuze describes the schizophrenic procedure:

> The procedure is this: a word, often of an alimentary nature, appears in capital letters, printed as in a collage which freezes it and strips it of its sense. But the moment that the pinned-down word loses its sense, it bursts into pieces; it is decomposed into syllables, letters, and above all into consonants which act directly on the body, penetrating and bruising it…The moment that the maternal language is stripped of its sense, its *phonetic elements* become singularly wounding."[2]

While this description directly relates to Wolfson's procedure described above, Deleuze relates it to Artaud as well. He quotes from Artaud's *The Nerve Meter*: "All writing is PIG SHIT [*COCHONNERIE*]" which, Deleuze goes on to explain, is to say that "every fixed or written word is decomposed into noisy, alimentary, and excremental bits."[3] Deleuze also states that, "as for fecality, as Artaud says, it underlies Carroll's work everywhere,"[4] but it seems to me that Artaud's complaint is actually the opposite. What Artaud complains about in his letters to Parisot is the way that Carroll avoids the "shit of being": "When one digs through the shit of being and its language, the poem necessarily smells badly, and 'Jabberwocky' is a poem whose author took steps to keep himself from the uterine being of suffering into which every great poet has plunged, and having been

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[1] LoS, 87.
[2] LoS, 87-88.
[3] LoS, 88 (Deleuze's emphasis).
[4] LoS, 86.

born from it, smells badly. There are in 'Jabberwocky' passages of fecality, but it is the fecality of an English snob who curls the obscene within himself like ringlets of hair around a curling iron."[1] Artaud contrasts Carroll with great poets like Baudelaire and Poe. Carroll, according to Artaud, was a coward who was not willing to suffer for his work.

Artaud's complaints about Carroll in this letter are full of alimentary references to both eating and excreting. When Artaud tells Parisot that he does not like "poems languages of the surface which smell of happy leisures and of intellectual success," it is because, as he goes on to explain, it is as if "the intellect relied on the anus, but without any heart or soul in it. The anus is always terror, and I will not admit that one loses an excrement without being torn from, thereby losing one's soul as well, and there is no soul in 'Jabberwocky.'"[2] To truly write (and writing is excrement), for Artaud, is to lose a part of one's soul. Thévenin comments that when Artaud says *âme*, "il ne songe pas à l'âme immortelle de la civilisation chrétienne, ce principe immatériel (sans matière) de la vie, il parle de cette âme/anima qui est à l'intérieur du corps cette respiration nécessaire à la vie, de cette âme/anemos, ce courant de vent qui traverse le corps, et qui peut être aussi flatulence voulant forcer la porte anale, de cette âme/ana-, ce souffle profond…."[3] When Artaud says that he hates the language of the surface, he means at the surface of the skin "c'est-à-dire cette pellicule brillante, ce vernis qui ne recouvre que du vide."[4] Carroll's nonsense language does not cover the passions and affects of the body so much as it continually curls and folds itself on itself thus covering nothing but an empty void.

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[1] Quoted in LoS, 84.
[2] Quoted in LoS, 84.
[3] Thévenin, *"Entendre/ voir/ lire,"* 211.
[4] Ibid., 212.

"It is permissible to invent one's language and to make the language speak with an extra-grammatical meaning," Artaud tells Parisot, "but this meaning must be valid itself, that is, it must come out of anguish…."[1] Carroll's nonsense language is not driven beyond grammar by necessity, by the inability to give a grammatically correct voice to the anguish and suffering of the body; it is merely play and evasion. To invent a valid language, for Artaud is to be driven beyond existing languages and grammars to give voice to the anguish. Carroll did not *have* to invent his own language. In fact, Lewis Carroll the logician in his *Symbolic Logic* takes a purely nominalist position on language meaning. Carroll sounds a lot like Humpty Dumpty when he states:

> I maintain that any writer of a book is fully authorised in attaching any meaning he likes to any word or phrase he intends to use. If I find an author saying, at the beginning of his book, "Let it be understood that by the word 'black' I shall always mean 'white', and that by the word 'white' I shall always mean 'black,'" I meekly accept his ruling, however injudicious I may think it.[2]

For Artaud, it is Carroll's nonsense that is *sans* sense. Because it has no meaning other than saying its own sense, it does not connect at all to the actions or passions of the body. It spins around in itself in a vacuum. For Artaud, it is Carroll who is the truly obscene one and the pervert.

The only poems that Artaud will accept as poetry are those which are a tetanus of the soul or proceed from a tetanus of the soul like those of Baudelaire and Poe.[3] Carroll's

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[1] SW, 449.
[2] Quoted in Carroll, *Annotated Alice*, 214.
[3] SW, 448. Artaud is likely punning here on *tétanos* which sounds like the combination of *tête* and *anus*. This ties in with the sentence just prior which declares that "L'anus est toujours terreur..." *Tête-anus* returns us to the alimentary connection between eating and speaking as well as highlighting the connection between writing and excrement: "…I cannot accept the idea of someone losing a bit of excrement without coming painfully close to losing his soul, and there is no soul in 'Jabberwocky.'" My thanks to Geoffrey Bennington for this suggestion.

poetry "is the work of a man who ate well—and this makes itself felt in his writing."[1] By contrast, Artaud only likes the poems of "the starving, the sick, the outcast, the poisoned: François Villon, Charles Baudelaire, Edgar Allan Poe, Gérard de Nerval, and the poems of executed criminals of language who suffer ruin in their writing, and not of those who [like Carroll] pretend to be ruined the better to show off their consciousness of and their skill in both ruin and writing."[2]

Perhaps Artaud suspected Ferdière's true motive in the choice of Carroll for him to translate. It is clear that Artaud resented Carroll's pretense to put language in ruins only to better show off his own conscious mastery of it. Carroll is Humpty Dumpty himself. "Those who are [truly] ruined," Artaud says, "do not know it, they bleat or bellow with pain and horror."[3] This is why Artaud early on submitted himself and his works to Rivière's judgment. It becomes quickly apparent in reading their correspondence that Artaud's object is no longer to get the rejected poems published in the *NRF*, but rather, as he puts it, "the question for me is nothing less than knowing whether or not I have the right to continue to think, in verse or in prose,"[4] or elsewhere, "but the question for me is whether it is better to write this than to write nothing at all."[5] Artaud is submitting himself to Rivière for judgment precisely because he does not know if he is ruined. Artaud decides he has the right to speak because of his suffering. "I am a man who has suffered much from the mind," Artaud tells Rivière, "and as such I have the *right* to speak."[6] Because Artaud is one of the truly ruined, not a poser like Carroll, he

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[1] Quoted in LoS, 84.
[2] SW, 449.
[3] SW, 449.
[4] SW, 32.
[5] SW, 36.
[6] SW, 36.

cannot, for all of Ferdière's efforts, write like Carroll. Artaud's problem as he has been saying ever since this early correspondence, is not so much an intellectual one as it is a spiritual one (a problem of the soul). "This scattered quality of my poems," Artaud responds to Rivière, "these defects of form, this constant sagging of my thought, must be attributed not to a lack of practice, a lack of control over the instrument I was handling, a lack of intellectual development; but to a central collapse of the soul, to a kind of erosion, both essential and fleeting of thought, to a temporary non-possession of the material benefits of my development, to an abnormal separation of the elements of thought (the impulse to think, at each of the terminal stratifications of thought, passing through all the stages, all the bifurcations of thought and of form)."[1]

It is not that Artaud has no mastery of language, on the contrary as Thévenin demonstrates in her essay, "Entendre / Voir/ Lire," Artaud is a master of languages every bit the equal of Carroll, Artaud's difficulty is that language is incapable of capturing and expressing his thoughts. "My thought abandons me at every level," Artaud tells Rivière:

> From the simple fact of thought to the external fact of its materialization in words. Words, shapes of sentences, internal directions of thought, simple reactions of mind—I am in constant pursuit of my intellectual being. Thus as soon as I can grasp a form, however imperfect, I pin it down, for fear of losing the whole thought. I lower myself, I know, and I suffer from it, but I consent to it for fear of dying altogether.[2]

Artaud has the sense of debasing himself to pin down his thought in words. Even at that, he is only capturing a part, not the whole, of the thought. For Artaud, coordinating the series of ideation and states of affairs (external facts) through words, precisely Deleuze's logic of sense, is to stop the movement. Words are inadequate to denote, manifest, or signify Artaud's thought, but he consents to their use for fear that neither he nor they can

[1] SW, 34-35.
[2] SW, 31.

exist without them. How else to communicate? How else to write? But Artaud suffers from the mismatch between words as external facts and his own sense of pursuit of intangible thought.

It is not a question of mastering language, it is a question of whether language can master thought. Humpty Dumpty claims that with his mastery of language he can explain "all the poems that ever were invented--and a good many that haven't been invented just yet."[1] But what do his explanations consist in? Just a decomposition of portmanteau words into their constitutive parts as if the words, once properly decoded, adequately convey the thought. There are no bleats or bellows of pain or horror here.

Thévenin and Deleuze

As we have seen, Paule Thévenin, one of Artaud's closest associates in his last years, takes strong exception to Deleuze's characterization of Artaud's language as schizophrenic. In her article "Entendre/Voir/Lire," Thévenin demonstrates how, far from losing their sense, Artaud's words often reclaim forgotten orthographies or connotations of words. She demonstrates how often Artaud's neologisms conform to the same kinds of rules governing Carroll's portmanteau words. As for Artaud's *brimbulkdriquant*, which Deleuze attributes to the sliding into schizophrenic language, Thévenin attributes this to Artaud's humor. "Il faut plutôt voir la une manifestation de l'humour par dérision si particulier à Antonin Artaud," Thévenin writes, "et qu'il a sans doute voulu traduire par cette résistance à la prononciation la résistance à toute traduction du mot *wabe*, mot

[1] Carroll, *Annotated Alice*, 214.

échappé à l'inconscient de Lewis Carroll plus que systématiquement construit."[1] Far from being a manifestation of schizophrenia, Thévenin argues, Artaud's words are even more consciously constructed, even if for humorous effect, than Carroll's are. As for Deleuze's emphasis on the heavy use of consonants and gutturals in Artaud's translation, Thévenin reminds him that Artaud's native Greek is more guttural than French. In addition, she points to other examples of Artaud's glossolalia that are heavy in vowels. It is not my purpose here, nor was it Thévenin's, to give a point by point refutation of Deleuze's article. At issue is simply the clinical diagnosis of Artaud's language.

Thévenin notes that Artaud's title for his translation is l*'Arve et l'Aume*. The first word in the title without the apostrophe this becomes *larve*. Humpty Dumpty is after all an egg—a larval subject to use Deleuze's term, and Alice is a little girl.[2] Thévenin also notes that it could come from the Latin, *arvum* for a ploughed field. As for *l'Aume*, when pronounced it sounds like *l'homme*. She suggests that perhaps the *arvum* is the text and the man is Artaud himself working on the text. Artaud has been sent to the field of Carroll's text but he finds it fallow. Carroll has not ploughed deep enough for the seeds of signification to take.

The Jabberwock

The Jabberwock is a monster that threatens the surface. Deleuze notes in his essay on Carroll in *Essays Critical and Clinical* that Carroll's original title for *Alice in Wonderland* was going to be *Alice's Adventures Underground.* "But why didn't Carroll

[1] Thévenin, *"Entendre/ voir/ lire,"* 206. Thévenin cites Brunius' study of Carroll for the "unconscious" aspect of the word *wabe* based on Carroll's own changing explanations of its meaning.
[2] Later the BwO will also be called an egg. AO, 281; TP, 153.

keep this title?", Deleuze asks, "Because Alice progressively conquers surfaces."[1] Everything flattens out like a playing card. "All the more reason," Deleuze adds, "for *Through the Looking-Glass* to invest the surface of a mirror…." But for all that, the Jabberwock is not really slain. Deleuze continues, "But the world of depths still rumbles under the surface and threatens to break through it. Even unfolded and laid out flat, the monsters still haunt us." The Jabberwock and the Snark are monsters, not of the depths, but of the surface. "We may believe that the surface has its monsters," Deleuze writes in *The Logic of Sense*, "the Snark and the Jabberwock, its terrors and cruelties, which, although not of the depths, have claws just the same and can snap one up laterally, or even make us fall back into the abyss which we believed we had dispelled."[2] Ultimately for Deleuze, Artaud and Carroll never really encounter one another. Artaud is a threat to Carroll's carefully laid out surface. Carroll's attempt is to let nothing pass through sense but to contain everything in nonsense.[3] It is the attempt to avoid the bodily depths that poets like Artaud, Poe, and Baudelaire are mired in. Carroll's nonsense, however, would seem to lose any connection with bodies and thus to fail to establish the border between the incorporeal events and bodies or states of affairs becoming nonsense *sans* sense just as much as Artaud's affective language does on the other side. In other words, it is the connection to the body that gets lost in Carroll and the connection to the heights that gets lost in Artaud.

It is not as clear to me, however, what Artaud's relation to the body is on Deleuze's reading. One the one hand, as we have seen, Deleuze wants to say that Artaud represents the depths of the body: "Artaud is alone in having been an absolute depth in

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[1] ECC, 21.
[2] LoS, 93.
[3] ECC, 22.

literature, and in having discovered a vital body and the prodigious language of this body."[1] On the other hand, however, Artaud is the creator of the body without organs which is not strictly speaking a physical body at all. It becomes a "fluid, glorious, and flamboyant body without organs and without parents"[2]—a strangely incorporeal body. This is Artaud's violent alternative, according to Deleuze, either a fragmented body threatened by exploding words and the mother-tongue, or a body without organs which speaks in a non-decomposable fusion of consonants—"Jusque-là où la rourghe est a rouarghe a rangmbde et rangmbde a rouarghambde…." While Deleuze in some ways seems to want to side with Artaud here—"We would not give a page of Artaud for all of Carroll"—Artaud, *if given his own voice*, would seem to threaten Deleuze's logic of sense as well. Artaud does not so much create an alternative language, but an alternative *to language*. As Alan Lopez notes:

> Unlike Carroll, Artaud's sense of nonsense belongs to the realm of affect and somaticism, its 'enunciations' understood as brute physical gestures that pulverize all traces of the sign and its referents—a nonsense, that is, which pulverizes that difference that makes a difference between the signifier and the signified. Artaud's nonsense is thus not sense *sans* sense, nonsense absent of sense; it is not, insofar as such predicative determinations would merely reinstall those semiological indices of nonsense *already in place, maintaining that frontier between affect and language*. Rather, as Artaud bemoans, the relation between nonsense and schizophrenia is spatio-temporal, exclusive of *all* linguistic formulations: nonsense, if we are to maintain fidelity to Artaud, must more properly be understood as that which is *underneath or behind the syntactic*.[3]

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[1] LoS, 93.
[2] LoS, 93.
[3] Alan Lopez, "Deleuze with Carroll: Schizophrenia and Simulacrum and the Philosophy of Lewis Carroll's Nonsense," *Angelaki* 9, no. 3 (December 2004), 108-109.

Artaud, as Morfee has suggested, is perhaps not so much *sur-réel* as he is *sous-réel*.[1] Deleuze himself seems guilty here of trying to enfold Artaud in his madness to keep him at a safe distance from the fragile surface. If one can label Artaud's language, "it is the language of schizophrenia," it somehow seems to neutralize the threat. It allows one to take one's distance from it. It makes Artaud's language a symptom of his madness rather than his madness being indicative of a fundamental failure of language itself—a failure of the surface to truly connect with the depths—which Artaud experiences as pain. What Artaud's schizophrenic "language" demonstrates is precisely the failure of the surface to express the deep experience of the body's pain and suffering. Carroll's playing on the surface refuses to sully itself with the real "shit of being." He wants above all to keep his hands clean. Deleuze delights in Carroll's playing havoc with the logical structures of propositions, but even this remains too safe, too sterile, too abstract for Artaud. What Artaud seems to be demonstrating is a fundamental distrust of language itself, any language, to capture his sensations. Deleuze himself, as we will now see, shares in a certain ambiguity about or distrust of language, which he picks up, I will suggest, at least in part from Artaud and Nietzsche. It is this ambiguity about language that makes Artaud such an uncomfortable presence in *The Logic of Sense* and why, in spite of the criticisms above, I do not think, nor mean to suggest that Deleuze simply sides with Carroll against Artaud, even given his obvious discomfort there with Artaud's schizophrenia. As I said at the beginning of this study, Deleuze never produces a full-blown philosophy of language. His thinking about language is complex and evolving (as is hardly surprising given his milieu at the cusp between structuralism and post-structuralism). It is to his relationship with language that we now turn.

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[1] Morfee, *Writing Bodies*, 47.

Chapter Three

The Mistrust of Language

We all secretly venerate the ideal of a language which in the last analysis would deliver us from language by delivering us to things—Maurice Merleau-Ponty[1]

If confusion is the sign of the times, I see at the root of this confusion a rupture between things and words, between things and the ideas and signs that are their representation— Antonin Artaud[2]

Deleuze and the Mistrust of Language

In his book, *Deleuze and Language*, Lecercle notes a certain ambiguity or paradox in Deleuze's attitude towards language. Deleuze, he writes, "is an integral part of the linguistic turn that characterises classical French theory, even if he can hardly be accused of 'formalism'. But the paradox is that he is also the heir of a tradition of, if not downright hostility to language, at least a deep distrust."[3] For his part, Bogue writes that, "[I]t is not at all evident that [Deleuze] has even made 'the linguistic turn,' as Rorty has put it. Throughout his work, Deleuze is obsessed with the limits of language."[4] Gualandi, quoting Deleuze and Guattari's assertion in *What is Philosophy?* that "philosophy is not a discursive formation"[5] writes: "Mais c'est justement le langage que Deleuze, héritier de la conception bergsonienne du langage, considère comme la racine de toute illusion, de toute la finitude et de l'asservissement des hommes."[6] Gualandi goes on to note that, "ce pessimisme, cette méfiance par rapport au langage distingue la grande tradition de la philosophie française du XX^{e} siècle," a tradition running from Bergson through Brunschvicg and Bachelard to Deleuze, Foucault, and Lyotard. Following

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[1] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Prose of the World*, ed. Claude Lefort, trans. John O'Neill (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 4
[2] TD, 7.
[3] Lecercle, *Deleuze and Language*, 20.
[4] Ronald Bogue, "Minor Writing and Minor Literature," *Symploke* 5.1 (1997), 102.
[5] WIP, 22.
[6] Alberto Gualandi, *Deleuze* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2003), 107.

Gualandi, Lecercle also attributes Deleuze's attitude towards language at least in part to Bergson:

> Bergson's distrust of language—that is a theme close to the centre of Deleuze's thought—is due to the fact that words freeze concepts, make them dependent on common sense. Language has a social origin: its aim is to create communication so as to foster cooperation. This means that its main function is industrial, commercial and military, always social. It fixes reality as it names it according to the needs of society. But the philosopher has little to do with such common sense: metaphysical questions go far beyond immediate social needs. As a result, the philosopher's task is to go beyond the words, against the grain of language, to discover the problem that he will formulate.[1]

Communication, as its Latin root suggests, renders common. But the philosopher's task is to go beyond the common. Ever since the pre-Socratics the philosopher's task has been to pierce the veil and look beyond the commonplace and accepted explanations to get at how the world "really is." To do this it has often been necessary to introduce a new vocabulary (or at least new meanings to already existing words) to try to express these new insights. One thinks of Anaximander's *apeiron* or Anaxagoras' *nous*, not to mention Plato's *eidos*. Philosophy is at base for Deleuze a response to a problem that ordinary common sense ways of thinking are not adequate to address.

Language and Common Sense

In *Difference and Repetition* (published in 1968, one year prior to *The Logic of Sense*) Deleuze argues, following Nietzsche, that philosophy must renounce *common sense*. Common sense is about what "everybody already knows" and no one can deny. It assumes that everyone thinks and that everyone knows what thinking is.[2] Deleuze uses Descartes' *cogito* as the example, since everyone (including Descartes) presumably

[1] Lecercle, *Deleuze and Language*, 21.
[2] DR, 131.

already knows what a self, thinking, and being are. Thus Descartes can consider his foundation complete when he gets to the *cogito ergo sum* without having to tell us what we (supposedly) already know about thinking and being a self.

Common sense, as Nietzsche demonstrates, is at base essentially moral. It assumes goodwill on the part of the thinker and his or her predilection for the truth. "When Nietzsche questions the most general presuppositions of philosophy," Deleuze explains, "he says that these are essentially moral, since Morality alone is capable of persuading us that thought has a good nature and that the thinker a good will, and that only the good can ground the supposed affinity between thought and the True."[1] Following Nietzsche, philosophy would have to reject this pre-philosophical presupposition as unfounded. It would become the critique of this *unphilosophical* common sense image of thought, which Deleuze calls "the dogmatic image of thought," and oppose to it a more difficult and perilous thought which has no image or "the thought without image." This thought without image does away with the pre-philosophical assumptions about the goodwill of the thinker and his or her natural orientation towards the truth. The dogmatic image of thought, Deleuze contends, actually keeps us from really thinking at all. For Deleuze, thinking is not about finding *the* Answer (*the* Truth) so much as it is confronting problems or problematizing things.[2] The enemy of real thought is not error, but rather stupidity.

What "everybody" really knows, Deleuze writes, is that "men think rarely, and more often under the impulse of a shock than in the excitement of a taste for thinking."[3]

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[1] DR, 132.
[2] See John Marks's entry, "Thought," in *The Deleuze Dictionary*, ed. Adrian Parr (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 278-280.
[3] DR, 132.

In fact we do not really start thinking in the philosophical sense that Deleuze has in mind until we encounter a problem. Some of our perceptions, as Plato points out in the *Republic* (VII 523b), do not provoke thought because our ordinary sense perceptions (simple recognition of forms and objects) can handle them. And for the dogmatic image of thought, thinking simply is recognition, its nemesis is misrecognition (error). But other perceptions, like Plato's example of the ring finger that is at once smaller and bigger at the same time (smaller than the middle finger but bigger than the pinky) cause us to distrust our ordinary perceptions and force us to think. This is a good example of the special power of paradox to force us to think. How can something be both smaller and bigger at the same time? This sort of paradox will return in *The Logic of Sense* where Deleuze draws upon the problem of Alice being larger and smaller at the same time in Carroll's *Alice Through the Looking Glass.*[1]

While the dogmatic image of thought presents a model of representation whereby we try to accurately represent the world to ourselves (the failure to do so accurately being error), the thought without image is non-representational. This kind of thought encounters problems that defy our ability to represent adequately to ourselves. A good example here, and one which is more to the point for our purposes, might be the Kantian notion of the sublime.[2] We encounter something like a great storm at sea that overwhelms our senses. Such things can only be experienced or sensed but never adequately represented. Seeing a news report about the storm is not the same as actually experiencing it. It is the experience of the *unheimlich* or the unfamiliar that gives rise to thought. The encounter with the sublime disrupts the normal harmony among the

[1] LoS, 1.
[2] See DR, 146.

faculties characteristic of commons sense. The imagination is called upon to forge a new harmony out of the discord of thought, but this is beyond common sense.[1] This, Deleuze says, is the experience of the Dionysian. It is just this moment and the difficulty of trying to express in any other form something that can only be sensed or experienced that I wish to investigate.

No sooner does Deleuze make the connection to Nietzsche's Dionysian in *Difference and Repetition* than he turns to Artaud. Artaud exemplifies this pursuit of the thought without image for Deleuze. Alluding to Artaud's correspondence with *La Nouvelle Revue Française* editor, Jacques Rivière, Deleuze writes: "Artaud pursues in all this the terrible revelation of a thought without image…."[2] Deleuze claims that Artaud's inability to capture his thought in words was paradoxically his greatest strength. "Artaud," Deleuze explains, "said that the problem (for him) was not to orientate his thought, or to perfect the expression of what he thought, or to acquire application and method or to perfect his poems, but simply to manage to think something. For him, this was the only conceivable 'work': it presupposes an impulse, a compulsion to think which passes through all sorts of bifurcations, spreading from the nerves and being communicated to the soul in order to arrive at thought."[3] To think, for both Artaud and Deleuze, is not to represent what everybody already knows, but rather it is to create something new. "To think is to create," Deleuze writes, "there is no other creation—but to create is first of all to engender 'thinking' in thought."[4] Creating something new is the opposite of just reiterating what everybody already knows. It breaks with the common

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[1] DR, 146.
[2] DR, 147.
[3] DR, 147.
[4] DR, 147.

place and sets out for new uncharted territory. There are no guarantees of its success. It may very well meet with error and or madness. The extraordinary and unique experiences, the ones Nietzsche and Artaud are interested in, are by definition incommunicable in the common language because it simply lacks the terms for such experiences.

The Nerve Meter

In his 1925 *The Nerve Meter* [*Le Pèse-Nerfs*] Artaud envisions a sort of nerve meter or scale that would allow communication—understood here more as a direct transfer of sensation—from body to body, nerve to nerve without intermediary. "I have always been struck," Artaud writes, "by that obstinacy of the mind in wanting to think in terms of dimensions and spaces, in fixing on arbitrary states of things in order to think, in thinking in segments, in crystalloids, so that each mode of being remains fixed at a starting point, so that thought is not in immediate and uninterrupted communication with things—this fixation and this immobilisation, this tendency of the soul to construct monuments occurring, as it were, BEFORE THOUGHT."[1] This fixation *must* occur "before thought" because rational thought can scarcely proceed without the aid of such mental "monuments". It is not that these constructions take place on the conscious plane. They do not. We have become so accustomed (habituated, Hume might suggest) to link certain states with certain symbols that we do so without consciously thinking about it. Artaud, however, envisions a pure immediacy of communication, without the intermediary of logic (*logos*) or thought—body to body, nerve to nerve. To think in areas of segments or crystalloids is to force an artificial form or organization (figuration) onto

[1] SW, 79. Emphasis in the original.

the raw data of sense experience. Artaud is interested, as he was in his early poems as well, to capture the bare impression, to register it on the nerve meter, before the impression becomes crystallized into a thought by *logos*. The compulsion to think must pass "through all sorts of bifurcations, spreading from the nerves and being communicated to the soul in order to arrive at thought."

But how to capture it and, assuming one can, how to express it? This is Artaud's problem as indicated in his correspondence with Jacques Rivière, the editor of the NRF who had rejected his early poems saying they lacked proper cohesion and poetic form. Rivière tries to encourage Artaud to work harder to get control of the ideas. Artaud, however, replies, as we have seen, that his is a problem of a "sickness of mind." His very thought abandons him.[1]

To write or to speak is to attempt to force sensory impression into the artificial structure of language. Language becomes the intermediary between the experience and thought. Artaud's early attempts at poetry, which he later abandons for the theater, are just such attempts to think the unthinkable and to speak a language of pure sensation, which perhaps cannot exist beyond howls and cries (*mots cris*). When Artaud tries to stay with the experience, the "simple fact of thought", his thought abandons him. He can only find imperfect forms with which to try to capture it, to pin it down. This is why, as we have seen, that Artaud will later declare, "ALL WRITING IS GARBAGE [C*ochonnerie*]."[2] "And I have already told you;" Artaud continues, "no works, no language, no words, no mind, nothing. / Nothing except fine Nerve Meter."[3]

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[1] SW, 31.
[2] SW, 85.
[3] SW, 86.

Artaud's wager is that through this transfer of sensation, the goal of his Theater of Cruelty project, he can "awaken" similar sensations in the other.

Artaud is seeking a universal language of sensation that goes beyond the common. Some twenty years after *The Nerve Meter* Artaud claims to have once written a book that everyone could read no matter what their nationality. "For years," Artaud writes from Rodez to his friend Parisot, "I have had an idea of the consumption, the internal consummation of language by the unearthing of all manner of torpid and filthy necessities. And in 1934 I wrote a whole book with this intention, in a language which was not French, but which everyone in the world could read, no matter what their nationality. Unfortunately, this book has been lost."[1] Artaud wanted a language, a glossolalia in the sense of the reversal of the scattering of languages at Babel in the miracle of the first Pentecost, a sort of *ur*-language, but one that spoke directly to the flesh. He said of his banned radio play, "To Have Done with the Judgment of God" that it "was a search for a language which the humblest road-mender or coal-seller would have understood, a language which conveyed by means of bodily transmission the highest metaphysical truths."[2] For Artaud, philosophy (metaphysics) was going to have to enter through the flesh. "In the state of degeneracy, in which we live," Artaud writes in *The Theater and Its Double*, "it is through the skin that metaphysics will be made to reenter our minds."[3]

In the *Fragments from a Diary in Hell*, Artaud states that it is precisely the difficulty of reconciling the mind and body that he suffers from. "To confront the metaphysics I created for myself, in accordance with the void I carry within me" he

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[1] SW, 450.
[2] SW, 583.
[3] SW, 251(emphasis mine).

writes; "This suffering is driven into me like a wedge, in the centre of my purest reality, at the spot in sensibility where the two worlds, mind and body, meet."[1] Artaud then speaks of his continual search for himself and of his awareness of his flesh [*chair*]. "Things concern me," he writes, "only in so far as they affect my flesh and coincide with it at the very point they arouse it, but not beyond it. Nothing concerns or interests me save what is addressed *directly* to my flesh."[2] Flesh (often capitalized) functions as a technical term for Artaud (and similarly for Deleuze). It is not simply interchangeable with body [*corps*], but is often a third term juxtaposed to the original duality of body and mind. As we will see in the next chapter, it is the zone of sensibility where mind and body, the spiritual and material meet. Sensibility is the point of their intersection and interaction.

In another prose text of this period, "The Situation of the Flesh," Artaud defines what he means by the term:

> I imagine a system in which all of man would participate, man with his physical flesh and the heights, the intellectual projection of his mind.
>
> For me the first consideration is the incomprehensible magnetism of man, what for lack of a more striking expression I am obliged to call his life force.
>
> These unformulated forces which besiege me, the day will come when my reason will have to accept them, the day will come when they will replace higher thought, these forces which from the outside have the shape of a cry. There are intellectual cries, cries born of the *subtlety* of the marrow. This is what I mean by the Flesh. I do not separate my thought from my life. With each vibration of my tongue I retrace all the pathways of my thought in my flesh.[3]

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[1] CW I, 81.
[2] CW I, 83.
[3] SW, 110.

The vitalist Bergsonian resonance of the term "life force" should not be overlooked here. Artaud was familiar with Bergson.[1] This is another common ground for Artaud and Deleuze, who once told an interviewer that "Everything I have ever written is vitalistic, at least I hope it is…."[2] Commenting on this same Artaudian text, Derrida remarks in a footnote, "With the proper precautions we could speak of Artaud's Bergsonian vein. The continuous transition of his metaphysics of life into his theory of Language, and his critique of the word, dictated a great number of theoretical formulations and metaphors of energy that are rigorously Bergsonian."[3] What is important to note here is how Artaud is *besieged* by these outside forces. There is still something very personal here, a struggle to hold on to some sense of a self. He does not rejoice, as Deleuze seems to, in the impersonal nature of these forces. Their attack on the flesh is very personal to Artaud.

The flesh is likened to a magnetic field acted upon by forces.[4] Artaud says these forces have the shape of "cries." Note that these cries come both from without and within ("born of the *subtlety* of the marrow"). The life force is a cry from without acting on the flesh that elicits a response from the intellect. But the "intellect" here is located in the very marrow of our bones. The flesh then is the interaction of these magnetic poles and itself is the magnetic field. Thought and life, intellect and flesh, cannot be separated. "One must have been deprived of life, of the nervous irradiation of existence, of the conscious wholeness of the nerves," Artaud writes, "in order to realize that the Sense, and the Science, of all thought is hidden in the nervous vitality of the marrow, to realize how

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[1] He mentions Bergson by name along with his concept of "pure duration" in his lecture at the University of Mexico in 1936. SW, 358.
[2] N, 143.
[3] Jacques Derrida, "La parole soufflée," 325 n.19.
[4] Perhaps Artaud is thinking here of Breton and Soupault's *Champs magnétiques*, although, as we will see, Artaud rejected the "automatic writing" technique of its authors.

mistaken those persons are who put all their faith in Intelligence or in absolute Intellectuality."[1] The cries (the vibrations of the tongue), of which Artaud will make much in his Theater of Cruelty, merely retrace the pathways of these forces through the flesh. They are the intellect's response to the play of forces, both internal and external. The flesh is the recording surface of these forces.

Artaud makes his metaphysical project more explicit:

> But I must inspect this meaning of flesh which is to give me a **metaphysics of Being**, and the definitive understanding of Life.
>
> For me the word Flesh means above all *apprehension*, hair standing on end, flesh laid bare with all the intellectual profundity of this spectacle of pure flesh and all its consequences for the senses, that is, for the sentiments.
>
> And sentiment means presentiment, that is, direct understanding, communication turned inside out and illumined from within. There is a mind in the flesh, but a mind quick as lightning. And yet the excitement of the flesh partakes of the high substance of the mind.
>
> And whoever says flesh also says sensibility.[2]

Flesh equals sensation. The flesh apprehends directly. The hair stands on end before the intellect has time to process what is occurring. The "mind" in the flesh, which is not the rational intellect, is "quick as lightning." This is the work of the nerve meter. It is the direct understanding *pre*-sentiment before thought can take shape. Communication is "turned inside out." There is no longer any intermediary between things and our apprehension of them, no detour through language crystals or rational thought forms. The communication is direct and instantaneous. To achieve this level of immediate communication, Artaud will suggest the creation of the Body without Organs which is formed precisely by teaching the body to dance "wrongside out."[3] This mind "quick as lightning" is the mind that Artaud is pursuing. It is the mind that is too fast to be

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[1] SW, 110.
[2] SW, 111, bold mine.
[3] SW, 571.

captured in words. Words only crystallize or mummify[1] these flashes. This is why Artaud will so often favor cries to words for his theater.

"I believe only in the evidence of what stirs in my marrow," Artaud writes in the prose piece, *Manifesto in Clear Language* (also from 1925):

> not in the evidence of what addresses itself to my reason. I have found levels in the realm of the nerve. I now feel capable of evaluating the evidence. There is for me an evidence in the realm of pure flesh which has nothing to do with the evidence of reason. The eternal conflict between the reason and the heart is decided in my very flesh, but in my flesh irrigated by nerves. In the realm of the affective imponderable, the image provided by my nerves takes the form of the highest intellectuality, which I refuse to strip of its quality of intellectuality.[2]

Artaud has found at the level of nervous sensation, the flesh "irrigated by nerves", an intellectuality. It is at this level that the conflict of head and heart is resolved. This affective stimulation is imponderable by the intellect. It is only accessible to the subtle mind of the flesh that is located in the marrow. But this is not a simple anti-intellectualism on Artaud's part. He insists that there is an intellectuality to this sensibility, just not a bloodless or abstract one divorced from the flesh and its irrigation of nerves. "No image satisfies me," Artaud goes on to say, "unless it is at the same time *Knowledge*, unless it carries with it its substance as well as its lucidity."[3] The affective imponderable must bear knowledge, but this is a subtle knowledge not accessible to the discursive intellect. "My mind," he writes, "exhausted by discursive reason, wants to be caught up in the wheels of a new, absolute gravitation. For me it is like a supreme

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[1] Artaud refers to the image of the mummy in his "The Chained Mummy" (CW, I, 164), "The Mummy Correspondence" (CW, I, 168-169) and "Invocation to the Mummy" (CW, I, 188). Nietzsche uses the image to speak of the "concept-mummies" of the philosophers in *Twilight of the Idols* ("'Reason' in Philosophy"). See Frida Beckman on the connection with Deleuze in her "The Idiocy of the Event," *Deleuze Studies* (3:1, 2009), 59.
[2] SW, 108.
[3] SW, 108.

reorganization in which only the laws of Illogic participate, and in which there triumphs the discovery of a new Meaning."[1]

Mind is caught in a gravitation just like the magnetism that Artaud mentions in the *Situation of the Flesh*. It is important to note that there are laws to this illogic. It is not just anything goes. What we are after is meaning and knowledge. It should be borne in mind that both of these 1925 prose texts were written during Artaud's Surrealist period (prior to his expulsion from the group in December 1926). At this point Artaud is the head of the *Bureau de Recherches Surréaliste*. But in spite of what he says here about illogic and discursive reason, Artaud never seems to have participated in the "automatic writing," so touted by Breton, Eluard, and others of the group. Artaud still wanted the image to have a meaning. For Artaud, as Morfee suggests, it is not so much embracing the a-rational as the Surrealists would have it, as it is the pre-rational.[2] Morfee goes on to explain:

> Whatever the respective merits of Artaud's writings and that of his Surrealist poetic companions, Artaud is the greater and more adventurous theorizer. Artaud drops down from what he regards as the too high level of 'esprit', for it is not by liberating previously repressed forces of the psyche that he will attain a state of poetic rebellion that would celebrate the vast complexity of life. Instead he chooses to situate himself on the level of bodily awareness and develops what might be called a corporeal mysticism. Of course mysticism is always corporeal in the sense that the mystic yearns for a fusion with the absent Divine body, but Artaud's corporeal mysticism does not seek fusion between him and an absent transcendent body but instead seeks a state of simple reciprocity between his sensing body and other material bodies in the world. Whereas the direction in which the mystic seeks to move is in some sense 'upwards', Artaud's ideas suggest instead a movement 'downwards'. The 'sur-réel' is for Artaud the 'sous-reel'.[3]

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[1] SW, 108.
[2] Morfee, *Writing Bodies*, 47.
[3] Ibid.

One of the important differences between Artaud and Deleuze, to which we will return in the final chapter, is the relationship to the individual lived body. For Deleuze, as we have seen, the individual body is still a "paltry thing."[1] He is far more interested in impersonal forces. For Artaud, any separation between his body and mind is a false abstraction. Artaud is struggling to regain his body from God and the various forces that have purloined it from him.[2] Artaud's metaphysic is very much one of the flesh. It is personal and it is embodied. While it is true that both Deleuze and Artaud resist the standard philosophical and psychological models of subjectivity, Artaud lacks Deleuze's valorization of the impersonal.

Nietzsche and the Mistrust of Language

Deleuze could just as well have picked up this suspicion of language from Nietzsche as from Bergson. For Nietzsche, language is similarly related to the *commonness* of the social:

> What ultimately is commonness?—Words are sounds designating concepts; concepts, however, are more or less definite images designating frequently recurring and associated sensations, groups of sensations. To understand one another it is not sufficient to employ the same words; we have also to employ the same words to designate the same species of inner experiences, we must ultimately have our experiences *in common*.[3]

It is this latter thought that in order for words to signify we must have experiences in common, which is really to say that *we must have only common* experiences, that galls Nietzsche. He continues:

> Now supposing that need has at all times brought together only such human beings as could indicate similar requirements, similar experiences

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[1] FB, 32.
[2] God is, for Artaud, "le voleur éternel," OC, XV, 177. See Morfee, *Writing Bodies*, 162.
[3] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evi*l, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin Books, 1990), §268.

> by means of similar signs, it follows that on the whole the easy *communicability* of need, that is to say ultimately the experiencing of only average and *common* experiences, must have been the most powerful of all the powerful forces which have disposed of mankind hitherto. The more similar, more ordinary human beings have had and still have the advantage, the more select, subtle, rare and harder to understand are liable to remain alone, succumb to accidents in their isolation and seldom propagate themselves. Tremendous counter-forces have to be called upon to cross this natural, all too natural *progressus in simile*, the continuing development of mankind into the similar, ordinary, average, herdlike—into the *common*!

What I want to note here, because I will return to it later on, is the linkage Nietzsche makes here between language and experience or sensation of forces. The best part of our thinking according to Nietzsche takes place at an unconscious level (in the depths). It is only the most superficial that rises to consciousness and that can be captured in words. "Man, like every living being," Nietzsche writes, "thinks continually without knowing it; the thinking that rises to *consciousness* is only the smallest part of all this—the most superficial and worst part—for only this conscious thinking *takes the form of words, which is to say signs of communication*, and this fact uncovers the origin of consciousness."[1] As to the relation then between these word signs and the "real world," Nietzsche continues in this same section: "Owing to the nature of *animal consciousness*, the world of which we can become conscious is only a surface- and sign-world, a world that is made common and meaner; whatever becomes conscious *becomes* by the same token shallow, thin, relatively stupid, general, sign, herd signal; all becoming conscious involves a great and thorough corruption, falsification, reduction to superficialities, and generalization." To say that language is a surface-effect, for Nietzsche, is no

[1] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), §354. When Deleuze above claims to the contrary that we only rarely think, he is referring to a specifically philosophical mode of thought, a very conscious sort, a response to a shock that precisely disrupts the more unconscious and ordinary sort to which Nietzsche is referring.

compliment to language. His suspicion of language perhaps runs even deeper than Deleuze's. Only common thoughts can be put into a language which is by definition a common one. Here Nietzsche and Artaud will agree.

In his early work, "On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense," Nietzsche offers a physiological account of the origin of language in nerve stimuli. "What is a word?" he asks, "It is the copy in sound of a nerve stimulus."[1] Language for Nietzsche is essentially metaphorical. He describes the process of how language works:

> To begin with, a nerve stimulus is transferred into an image: first metaphor. The image, in turn, is imitated in a sound: second metaphor. And each time there is a complete overleaping of one sphere, right into the middle of an entirely new and different one.[2]

For Nietzsche the Kantian thing-in-itself is inaccessible to language except via metaphor. Metaphor essentially describes how this thing = x affects us humans. It is metaphor because of the carrying over from one sphere, from physiological nerve impulses, to another, mental images. Note that for Nietzsche, as for Deleuze, our tendency is to immediately turn the nerve stimulus into an image for thought. Thinking (understood in the common sense fashion) cannot remain at the level of the nerve stimulus. In order to communicate, that is to render an experience common, we must produce the image. This image then must be assigned a tonal value for speech communication. For Nietzsche, as for Artaud as we will see, once we get to the image and to speech (sounds which are words) we have already lost or at least seriously altered the original nerve stimuli. It passes from what Erwin Straus called *sensation* to *perception*, which is always mediated

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[1] Friedrich Nietzsche, "On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense," in *Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's*, ed. and trans. Daniel Breazeale (New York: Humanities Books, 1999), 81.
[2] Ibid., 82.

through second-order mental processes. The "most superficial and worst" part of our thinking, according to Nietzsche.

"With each vibration of my tongue," Artaud writes, "I retrace all the pathways of my thought in my flesh."[1] For Artaud the flesh is always "irrigated by nerves."[2] Artaud's project is to trace thought back to the original nerve impulse that gave rise to it. "And yet," he writes, "whoever says flesh also says sensibility. Sensibility, that is, assimilation, but the intimate, secret, profound, absolute assimilation of my own pain, and consequently the solitary and unique knowledge of that pain."[3] This sensibility for Artaud is ultimately a very private as opposed to common affair. It is knowledge of his *own* pain, not the common experience of the herd. There are cries that are born of the "*subtlety* of the marrow"[4] that defy the sort of language that allows for the communication of the common experience.

Language seems to function satisfactorily for all practical purposes to express *common* sensations (what everybody already knows). It seems inadequate however to capture the rarer, subtler ones. As Lecercle notes, "This is where the philosopher is naturally sympathetic to the poet, who like him, is trying to take language to its limit. The difference is that, for the poet, beyond the limit lies silence, towards which he paradoxically strives; whereas for the philosopher, there is life outside language, in problems and concepts.[5] Of course Lecercle is aware that philosophical problems and concepts are formulated in language. What he has in mind here is the difference between a Wittgensteinian approach which holds that philosophical problems are really only

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[1] SW, 110.
[2] SW, 108.
[3] SW, 111.
[4] SW, 110, emphasis in the original.
[5] Lecercle, *Deleuze and Language*, 21.

grammatical ones, and a Deleuzian approach for which problems and the concepts that address them arise from that which is unthinkable in ordinary language. This unthinkable-in-language is the subject of Artaud's early correspondence with Rivière. What makes something a problem in the first place, in the Deleuzian sense, is that it defies our ability to capture it in neatly formed propositions. Philosophy, Deleuze and Guattari maintain *contra* more analytically oriented approaches, uses "sentences of standard language" to express things that do not belong to propositions.[1]

It is the propositional use of language that Deleuze has in mind when he and Guattari assert, in the passage from *What is Philosophy?* cited by Gualandi above that "philosophy is not a discursive formation, because it does not link propositions together."[2] Philosophy for Deleuze and Guattari is about the *creation* of concepts, and concepts are not discursive formations either. Concepts are intensional (i.e. related to *sense*) rather than extensional (i.e. denotative). Propositions are extensional—they are meant to pick out actual things (to denote)—usually "medium-sized dry goods" as J. L. Austin has noted. Concepts relate to the virtual while propositions relate to the actual. In other words, concepts relate to the Event while propositions relate to bodies or states of affairs. "Propositions," Deleuze and Guattari write, "are defined by their reference, which concerns not the Event but rather a relationship with a state of affairs or body and with the conditions of this relationship. Far from constituting an intension, these conditions are entirely extensional."[3] Intension thus refers to the meaning or *sense* of the expression, while extension is its *denotation*. Frege's famous morning star and evening star, for example, have the same extension (it turns out they both refer to the same planet)

[1] WP, 80.
[2] WP, 22.
[3] WP, 22.

but different intensions (the senses are different such that someone might not know, as for a long time no one did, that they were referring to the same planet when they were talking about the morning star versus the evening star). The point Deleuze is trying to make, and this goes all the way back to *The Logic of Sense*, is that language does not just represent or refer to bodies or states of affairs. It is not just propositional. The sense (or intension) of what one is saying is not reducible to an empirical investigation of actual bodies or states of affairs. Astronomy may have shown that the morning star and evening star are both the planet Venus, but that does not account for the different senses associated with Hesperus and Phosphorus.[1] As we have already noted, Deleuze will ultimately side with Meinong on the *Sosein*, or extra-being, of virtual entities. Not every meaningful statement has an actual referent. Some things, Deleuze will insist, following Proust, are "real without being actual, ideal without being abstract."[2] This is why, as we have seen, Deleuze will follow the Stoics in insisting on the *subsistence* rather than the *existence* of meaning. Subsistence is the category for the virtual (sense), existence is for the actual (bodies and states of affairs).

Artaud and the Mistrust of Language

Deleuze also could just as well have inherited his mistrust of language directly from Artaud. "It has not been definitively proved," Artaud contends, in *The Theater and Its Double*, "that the language of words is the best possible language." Artaud is arguing here in a series of Letters on Language for a new language of theater which would be a language of signs and of the *mise en scène*. "For I make it my principle," Artaud writes

[1] For the *locus classicus* here see Gottlob Frege, "On *Sinn* and *Bedeutung*," trans. Max Black in *The Frege Reader*, ed. Michael Beaney (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, Ltd., 1997), 151-171.
[2] Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Zone Books, 1991), 96.

"that words do not mean everything and that by their nature and defining character, fixed once and for all, they arrest and paralyze thought instead of permitting it and fostering its development."[1] Artaud is here echoing Bergson's and Nietzsche's concerns above. Artaud insists that, "far from restricting the possibilities of theater and language, on the pretext that I will not perform written plays, I extend the language of the stage and multiply its possibilities."[2] He goes on to explain that: "When I say I will perform no written play, I mean that I will perform no play based on writing and speech, that in the spectacles I produce there will be a preponderant physical share which could not be captured and written down in the customary language of words, and that even the spoken and written portions will be spoken and written in a new sense." Artaud is searching for a new, more authentic language for his theater. "Here is what seems to me an elementary truth that must precede any other:" Artaud writes, "namely, that the theater, an independent and autonomous art, must, in order to revive or simply to live, realize what differentiates it from text, pure speech, literature, and all other fixed and written means."[3] "Here is what is really going to happen;" Artaud writes in a second letter, "It is simply a matter of changing the point of departure of artistic creation and of overturning the customary laws of the theater. It is a matter of substituting for the spoken language a different language of nature, whose expressive possibilities will be equal to verbal language, but whose sources will be tapped at a point still deeper, more remote from

[1] TD, 110.
[2] TD, 111.
[3] TD, 106.

thought."[1] While Artaud admits that the "grammar of this new language is still to be found,"[2] gesture will be primary in it.

Beyond Words

Nietzsche makes a similar criticism of speech based theater. But where Artaud turns to the theater, Nietzsche turns to music. In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche quotes approvingly from Schopenhauer for whom music is the universal language. It expresses the world of forces. It is a direct copy of the will. It is the "thing-in-itself to every phenomena" or the "innermost kernel preceding all forms."[3] For Nietzsche, language can "never, under any circumstances, externalize the innermost depths of music."[4] He complains of (pre-Wagnerian) opera that "genuinely un-artistic listeners demanded that they should be able, above all, to understand the words" so that music took on a subservient role to the lyrics.[5] The transition of the chorus from a mainly musical role to a speaking one (and worst of all commenting on and explaining the action as in Euripides) marks the end of the tragic and the birth of the Socratic theater. "It is certain," Nietzsche writes, "that tragedy perishes with the disappearance of the spirit of music."[6]

Nietzsche shares Artaud's distrust of spoken theater. For him it is music that reconnects us with the Dionysian depths. We should not forget that the full title of Nietzsche's first book is *The Birth of Tragedy: Out of the Spirit of Music*. For Nietzsche music and the true Athenian tragic drama (before its suicide brought on by Euripides[7])

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[1] TD, 110.
[2] TD, 110.
[3] Quoted in Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, ed. Raymond Geuss and Ronald Speirs, trans. Ronald Speirs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), §16.
[4] Ibid., §6.
[5] Ibid., §19.
[6] Ibid., §16.
[7] Ibid., §11.

were indissolubly linked: "Thanks to the pre-established harmony which exists between fully realized drama and its music, drama achieves a supreme degree of visual intensity which is unattainable by spoken drama." Nietzsche continues in many ways prefiguring Artaud's own discussions of his ideal theater:

> While music forces us to see more, and in a more intensely inward manner than usual, and to see events on stage spread out before us like some delicate tissue, our spiritualized eye, gazing into the interior of things, sees the world of the stage both as infinitely enlarged and as illumined from within. What could the poet of the *word* hope to offer that is analogous to this, as he strives vainly, with the much more imperfect mechanism of *word and concept*, to achieve that inward enlargement of the visible world of the stage and its illumination from within? Although musical tragedy makes use of the word, it can also set alongside it the *depths* from which the word is born, and clarify for us, from within, the *genesis of the word*.[1]

For Nietzsche, the proper relationship would be for the words to be subject to the music. Earlier in *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche observes that in early Greek folk song (the poetic tradition of Archilochus not Homer) we can see "language straining to its limits *to imitate music*."[2] "With this observation," Nietzsche continues, "we have defined the only possible relationship between music, word, and sound: the word, the image, the concept seeks expression in a manner analogous to music and thereby is subjected to the power of music."

I take this slight excursus through Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy* for several reasons. First, because it is a seminal text for the discussion of surfaces and depths, themes so important to *The Logic of Sense*. Second, because of the striking similarities between Nietzsche's and Artaud's conceptions of theater. Third, because I want to argue that the Deleuzian distinction between sense and sensation is in many ways Nietzsche's struggle between the Apollonian and Dionysian as he presents them in *The Birth of*

[1] Ibid., §21 (emphasis mine).
[2] Ibid., §6.

Tragedy. There, dialogue is the surface or Apollonian mask which arises necessarily from the gazing into the Dionysian depths (§9). Nietzsche's championing of music here is not just a juvenile infatuation with Richard Wagner (one which he will outgrow soon enough), but rather a more fundamental philosophical and aesthetic argument that music allows us access to *depths* that words and verbal concepts simply cannot reach. What will happen to the Apollonian and Dionysian, Nietzsche wonders, where "music is regarded as the servant and the libretto as master, where music is compared to the *body* and the words to the *soul*?"[1]

Nietzsche posits the following series: one that runs from music to depth to inner states to bodies to Dionysus, and the other that runs from words to surfaces to masks to mind to Apollo. The Dionysian is the Real (in Lacan's sense) and the Apollonian is the appearance (the symbolic). *The Birth of Tragedy* can be seen as a work on how these series resonate. Artaud will connect the Dionysian with the Body without Organs. For him, theater, which includes music, is a total art.

For Artaud the series would run from the Theater of Cruelty to the Body without Organs to the Nerve Meter to Flesh, *versus* the other series running from words to the psychological theater to masterpieces to mind and ultimately to the judgment of God. By contrast, for Artaud these series do not resonate. Rather the latter must be combated and replaced with the former. The early Artaud, under more Gnostic influences, would likely place the body in the latter series as well. Artaud's relationship with the bodily and the material is a complex one as I hope to show. He comes to adopt a more explicitly materialist position during his internment at the asylum of Rodez.

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[1] Ibid., §19.

For Nietzsche Dionysian music (which finds its modern expression via Beethoven[1] and Wagner) is related to the power of myth. And myth, Nietzsche writes, "is certainly not objectified adequately in the spoken word."[2] Nietzsche evokes the more modern tragedy of Shakespeare's Hamlet whose words, Nietzsche observes, are more superficial than his actions. The lesson of Hamlet for Nietzsche cannot be gotten from the words of the play, but rather a contemplation of the whole which includes the action.[3] The problem for our understanding of the real power of ancient Greek tragedy, according to Nietzsche, is that all we have left are the written texts or word-dramas [*Wortdrama*]. We now have to try to reconstruct through scholarly means what the music would have been like that accompanied them.[4]

Myth, for Nietzsche, has a special status as a *mode of thinking*: "The myth is not founded on a thought, as the children of an artificial culture believe, it is itself a mode of thinking; it communicates an idea of the world, but as a succession of events, actions, and sufferings."[5] Wagner does for Nietzsche what Artaud and Bacon will do for Deleuze. In his early (1876) essay, "Richard Wagner in Bayreuth," Nietzsche writes of Wagner's own mythic saga:

> *Der Ring des Niebelungen* is a tremendous system of thought without the conceptual form of thought. Perhaps a philosopher could set beside it something exactly corresponding to it but lacking all image or action and speaking to us merely in concepts: one would then have presented the same thing in two disparate spheres, once for the folk and once for the antithesis of the folk, the theoretical man. Thus Wagner does not address himself to the latter; for the theoretical man understands as much of the

[1] Beethoven is credited by Nietzsche with beginning the discovery of "the language of pathos, of passionate desire, of the dramatic events which take place *in the depths* of man." Friedrich Nietzsche, "Richard Wagner in Bayreuth," in *Untimely Meditations*, ed. Daniel Breazeale, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), §9 (emphasis mine).
[2] Nietzsche, *Birth of Tragedy*, §17.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Nietzsche, "Richard Wagner in Bayreuth," §9.

> poetical, of the myth, precisely as much as the deaf man does of music, that is to say both behold a movement which seems to them meaningless.[1]

Socrates is Nietzsche's exemplar of the theoretical man, whose distrust, if not downright antipathy, towards the arts is well known. Nietzsche continues, "Now, if the gods and heroes of such mythological dramas as Wagner writes are to communicate also in words, there is no greater danger than that this *spoken language* will awaken the theoretical man in us and thereby heave us over into the other, non-mythical sphere: so that in the end we should not through the employment of words have understood more clearly what is taking place before us but, on the contrary, have failed to understand it at all." Between the theoretical and the mythic there is a chasm fixed which no one may cross over.

None of Wagner's dramas, Nietzsche reminds us (and the same would go for the Greek tragedies in *The Birth of Tragedy*) are meant to be *read*. They are not *Wortdrama*. Wagner, Nietzsche argues, was the first [German] to recognize the "inner deficiencies of the spoken drama." Accordingly, Wagner presents everything through a threefold rendering of words, gestures, and music. As Nietzsche explains it: "the **music** transmits the fundamental impulses *in the depths* of the persons represented in the drama directly to the souls of the listeners, who now perceive in these same person's **gestures** the first visible form of those *inner events*, and in the **words** a second, paler manifestation of them translated into a more conscious act of will."[2] In Freudian terms, music and gesture would relate to primary processes, while words are secondary processes. Music and gesture relay the depths and the inner states which are primary states upon which the words are dependent. Music communicates directly to the soul, while the words have to

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[1] Ibid.
[2] Ibid. (emphasis mine).

go through an act of mental "translation." Artaud, as we will see, is also looking for a language that communicates directly from soul to soul or nerve to nerve.

This distrust of the powers of verbal language to access the depths is common to Nietzsche, Artaud, and Deleuze. While Artaud and Deleuze do not give music exactly the same pride of place that Nietzsche does, both look to the arts in general for a means of expression that goes beyond words, beyond sense to sensation.

Nietzsche's Discovery

Nietzsche's crucial discovery, according to Deleuze in *The Logic of Sense*, and his triumph, at least at this point, over Artaud, was the impersonal and pre-individual world of forces. "[H]aving liberated himself from Schopenhauer and Wagner," Deleuze writes, "[Nietzsche] explored a world of impersonal and pre-individual singularities, a world he then called Dionysian or of the will to power, a free and unbound energy."[1] While Artaud remains trapped at the level of his own schizophrenic body, Nietzsche is able to transcend the individual body to discover the impersonal realm of forces. Nietzsche becomes a vitalist, which well accords with Deleuze's own vitalist leanings. Deleuze sees a development in Nietzsche's thought here. Early on, under the influence of Schopenhauer and Wagner, Nietzsche attempts to let the Dionysian as the groundless abyss speak. In *The Birth of Tragedy* Nietzsche contrasts this form of the Dionysian with the individuation of the Apollonian. The difficulty, however, is that the voice of this groundless abyss does not communicate (i.e. does not carry sense). It offers nothing to the understanding. It remains trapped in the metaphysical construction of the individual. Deleuze explains: "But even if the formless ground or undifferentiated ground is made to

[1] LoS, 107.

speak, with its full voice of intoxication and anger, the alternative imposed by transcendental philosophy and by metaphysics is not left behind: beyond the person and the individual, you *will discern* nothing."[1] Metaphysics and transcendental philosophy from Plato to Descartes to Kant have bound truth to the individual (whether human or divine). Whether God or the human in place of God (Kant's revolution of the *I-think* according to Deleuze), some Individual is needed to guarantee meaning and truth. Beyond the bounds of this Person (divine or human), as the old navigational charts used to say of uncharted territories, "there be monsters." "What is common to metaphysics and transcendental philosophy," Deleuze writes, "is, above all, this alternative which they both impose on us: *either* an undifferentiated ground, a groundless, formless nonbeing, or an abyss without differences and without properties, *or* a supremely individuated Being and an intensely personalized Form. Without this Being or this Form, you will have only chaos… In other words, metaphysics and transcendental philosophy reach an agreement to think about *those determinable singularities only which are already imprisoned inside a supreme Self or a Superior I*."[2] In the groundless, formless, undifferentiated abyss of the Dionysian there can be no meaning. There can be no holy linguistic trinity of manifestation, denotation, and signification. Grammar and words fall away.[3]

We are now paused at the edge of the abyss that has opened up with the Dionysian tearing of the surface of sense. Nietzsche and Artaud have been preparing us for the move from a logic of sense to a logic of sensation. The language of sense has

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[1] LoS, 107.
[2] LoS, 106.
[3] Nietzsche notes the connection between the *Superior I* of God and grammar when he famously states: "I am afraid we are not rid of God because we still have faith in grammar." Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, in *The Portable Nietzsche*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Penguin Books, 1982), 483.

proven insufficient to express the depths. It is thus to art, and especially to painting this time, that Deleuze will turn. Just after the publication of *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980) with all of its discussions of Artaud and the body without organs, Deleuze looks to the paintings of the Irish painter, Francis Bacon (1981), to continue to work out the transition from sense to sensation.

Chapter Four

Logics of Sensation

I tell you: one must have chaos in one, to give birth to a dancing star—Friedrich Nietzsche[1]

My lucid unreason is not afraid of chaos—Antonin Artaud[2]

Logic of Organized Sensation

"It's a very, very close and difficult thing," the painter, Francis Bacon, tells his interviewer, David Sylvester, "to know why some paint comes across directly onto the nervous system and other paint tells you the story in a long diatribe through the brain."[3] In his book on Bacon, Deleuze treats him as an artist in the line descended from Cézanne—as a painter of sensations. In fact, Deleuze borrows the subtitle of his *Francis Bacon* book, *The Logic of Sensation*, from Cézanne himself. "There are two things in the painter," Cézanne tells his friend, Emile Bernard, in a letter, "the eye and the mind; each of them should aid the other. It is necessary to work at their mutual development, in the eye by looking at nature, in the mind by the *logic of organized sensations*, which provides the means of expression."[4] Deleuze drops the *organized* from his title presumably because of his preference for the body without organs over the organized body, but as we will shortly see, he does not drop his preference for some degree of organization. But neither, for that matter, does Artaud (a point which I am not sure that Deleuze adequately appreciates). Painting for Cézanne requires both *une optique* and *une*

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[1] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, I, §5, in *The Portable Nietzsche*, p. 129.
[2] SW, 108.
[3] David Sylvester, *Francis Bacon: Interviewed by David Sylvester* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1975), 18.
[4] Quoted in Lawrence Gowing, "Cézanne: The Logic of Organized Sensations" in *Conversations with Cézanne*, ed., Michael Doran (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 194, emphasis mine.

logique, a logic of organized sensations.[1] In another letter, Cézanne expresses his "mistrust of any movement in which the eye would direct the hand without reason intervening."[2] A painting is not a simple snapshot of the scene it depicts. There is an active process of interpretation involved in the painting. "When one of his visitors was puzzled to find him painting a grey wall green," Lawrence Gowing writes, "[Cézanne] explained that a sense of color was developed not only by work but by reasoning. In fact the need was both emotional and intellectual."[3]

According to Cézanne, it is the logic that provides the means of expression. Without the logic there would be no way for him to communicate the sensation. This is similar to what we have already seen in Deleuze's analysis of sense in *The Logic of Sense*. Without some degree of logic or organization mere bodily sensations cannot be expressed or communicated at the level of sense. We would be left merely with screams or cries of pain. But it is precisely these screams and cries that Artaud will elevate to an art form, the language of his theater. "There is no doubt," Deleuze writes later in his *Francis Bacon* book, "that Artaud's theater elevated scream-breaths to the state of language."[4] Allowing Artaud's scream-breaths the status of a language here represents a major shift in Deleuze's appreciation of Artaud. In *The Logic of Sense*, language is of the surface and Artaud's scream-breaths were the rumblings of the depths. Note that even here, however, Artaud has to "elevate" his scream-breaths to the level (surface) of language. It would appear that by the time of the Bacon book, Deleuze has begun to see

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[1] Gowing, "The Logic of Organized Sensations," 194.
[2] Quoted in Gowing, "The Logic of Organized Sensations," 196.
[3] Ibid., 186.
[4] A language, as Deleuze explains, "of relations, which consists of expressive movements, paralinguistic signs breaths and screams, and so on," (FB, 79). This indicates a shift in Deleuze's thinking about Artaud from *The Logic of Sense*. Since as we saw language is of the surface in *The Logic of Sense*, it would now appear that Artaud's theatrical language has achieved at least some degree of surface for Deleuze.

something more of the method behind Artaud's madness and to move away from his earlier more clinical diagnosis. Whether he entirely abandons the clinical diagnosis is something this study will question.

The emphasis on logic notwithstanding, Cézanne still describes sensations as the "foundation of my business."[1] For Cézanne, art is "simply the way of making the public feel what we feel ourselves."[2] According to Deleuze and Guattari in *What is Philosophy?*, Cézanne is correct in this assessment of his business as an artist. "The work of art," they write, "is a being of sensation and nothing else: it exists in itself."[3] It is the province of art to create and preserve blocks of sensation. The work of art gives to fleeting sensations a duration. According to Deleuze and Guattari's *trivium*, philosophy creates concepts, art creates sensations, and science creates functions. Deleuze and Guattari deny there is any implied hierarchy in terms of these three modes of thought; they are each equally valid and valuable modes of thinking. Reaching back to the language of *The Logic of Sense*, they describe the relationship as follows: "With its concepts, philosophy brings forth events. Art erects monuments with its sensations. Science constructs states of affairs with its functions."[4] Thus art with its blocks of sensation would relate to what Deleuze there called the depths and philosophy to the surface of sense (the Event), and science to states of affairs. The schema of *The Logic of Sense*, however, would seem to suggest that philosophy is still somehow privileged. Sense as the Event is certainly privileged in *The Logic of Sense* over both bodily depths

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[1] Ibid., 195.
[2] Ibid., 212.
[3] WP, 164.
[4] WP, 199.

and mere states of affairs. Returning to this language now, in a much later work (1991), would seem to indicate that Deleuze has not completely changed his views on the matter.

Organized Sensation

Sensation, yes, but *organized* sensation. It is this organization of sensation that allows for a *logic* of sensation. Without this logic of organization, sensation would remain chaotic. It was, however, precisely the organization of sensations that, according to Rivière, Artaud's early poems lacked. To his mind, that is what constituted their fatal flaw. While Deleuze by no means sides with Rivière here, in spite of the valorization of the body without organs as the enemy of organization, Deleuze and Guattari still seem to fault Artaud for going too far with the dismantling of his organism. Artaud, they write in *A Thousand Plateaus*, "did not succeed for himself," whatever his benefits for the rest of us.[1] It would seem like the difference is between entering the chaos (Artaud) and remaining on the edge of it (Deleuze), or in other words, remaining in the depths or achieving the surface.[2] But that is not quite right either. Deleuze does seem to think that Artaud is ultimately swallowed up by chaos of the depths. What he does not realize is that Artaud only enters the chaos, as Nietzsche would have it, in order to "to give birth to a dancing star." For Artaud, one returns to the primal chaos not to remain there but in order to recreate the world (this time in his own image). There are two indissoluble aspects to the Theater of Cruelty, destruction and (re)creation. Artaud wants to recreate what God (as the Gnostic demiurge) has botched.

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[1] TP, 164.

[2] Jeffrey Bell has written an excellent study of Deleuze's philosophy which he aptly titled, *Philosophy at the Edge of Chaos* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006). For Deleuze philosophy is still a protection against complete chaos.

Chaos

The Theater of Cruelty is not just chaos. "My plays," Artaud tells a critic, "have nothing to do with Copeau's improvisations. However thoroughly they are immersed in the concrete and external, however rooted in free nature and not in the narrow chambers of the brain, they are not, for all that, left to the caprice of the wild and thoughtless inspiration of the actor, especially the modern actor who, once cut off from the text, plunges in without any idea of what he is doing. I would not care to leave the fate of my plays and of the theater to that kind of chance. No."[1] Artaud saw his role as director as that of a creator. As Bettina Knapp explains, "The director, according to Artaud, is like a magician, a master of 'sacred ceremonies', a 'Demiurge'. He is high priest, a God, a type of 'unique creator' who brings about the fusion of all the disparate theatrical elements (music, lighting, etc.), thereby creating a unity from disunity. The director, therefore, animates the spectacle and the action—all the world which comes to life, even *matter*, and weaves it into a dramatic pattern which acts directly upon the spectator."[2] Artaud carefully choreographed the action of his plays, and, as we will hear from Paule Thévenin below, coached his actors relentlessly on their breathing and vocal inflections.

One of the forces that Artaud complains modern Western theater has lost touch with is the "underlying menace of a chaos as decisive as it is dangerous."[3] One of the things that attracted him to the Balinese Theater performance he witnessed at the Colonial Exhibition in Paris in August of 1931 was its sense of "the power which nature has of suddenly hurling everything into chaos."[4] Artaud describes the Balinese dances he

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[1] TD, 109-110. As we have noted, Artaud did not participate in the "automatic writing" experiments of many of his fellow Surrealists.
[2] Bettina L. Knapp, *Antonin Artaud: Man of Vision* (New York: David Lewis, Inc., 1966), 94.
[3] TD, 51.
[4] TD, 62.

witnessed as the "ritual of a hermetic formula which an unforeseen gesture of the hand completes." He continues:

> These howls, these rolling eyes, this continuous abstraction, these noises of branches, noises of the cutting and rolling of wood, all within the immense area of widely diffused sounds disgorged from many sources, combine to overwhelm the mind, to crystallize as a new and, I dare say, concrete conception of the abstract.
>
> And it must be noted that when this abstraction, which springs from a marvelous scenic edifice to return in thought, encounters in its flight certain impressions from the world of nature, it always seizes them at the point at which their molecular combinations are beginning to break up: a gesture narrowly divides us from chaos.[1]

Thus Balinese theater with its gestures narrowly divides us from chaos. Western theater, as Nietzsche demonstrates, once had this effect, the Apollonian form to counterbalance Dionysian force. Note that for Artaud chaos is menacing and dangerous as well. He is not advocating a nonproductive abandon to chaos, but rather a recognition of its power and necessity for the creative act. The abstract here is the impersonal force of nature (Lacan's Real) which only the work of art (theater) can crystallize and convey as a concrete conception. This is not the crystallization of logical abstraction in thought. Rather, this abstraction enters the mind from without (from the scenic edifice) through the senses as the mind is overwhelmed (thus short-circuiting our ready-made rational categories) as an experience of the sublime that gives us something to think. It is a whole metaphysic conveyed directly to the flesh, an Artaudian sublime. Gesture, which is the language of Artaud's theater, saves us from nature's molecular dissolution.

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[1] TD, 64.

Bacon and Artaud

While Deleuze takes the term *Body without Organs* from Artaud, he attributes Bacon as being the painter of the BwO. "Bacon," he writes, "has not ceased to paint bodies without organs…"[1] Concerning the affinities he sees between Bacon and Artaud, Deleuze writes in his typical summary fashion:

> Bacon and Artaud meet on many points: the Figure is the body without organs (dismantle the organism in favor of the body, the face in favor of the head); the body without organs is flesh and nerve; a wave flows through it and traces levels upon it; a sensation is produced when the wave encounters the forces acting on the body, an 'affective athleticism,' a scream-breath. When sensation is linked to a body in this way, it ceases to be representative and becomes real; and cruelty will be linked less and less to the representation of something horrible, and will become nothing other than the action of forces upon the body, or sensation (the opposite of the sensational) (FB, 33).

While Artaud, not Bacon, is my primary interest here, in unpacking Deleuze's quick comparison here between these two artists, I hope to highlight how Artaud's concept of the BwO influenced Deleuze's own notions of embodiment and subjectivity and to raise some questions about Deleuze and Guattari's appropriation of Artaud's image.

Insofar as Artaud too is an artist (actor, poet, playwright, and visual artist) he certainly does produce sensations (this is, after all, the prime directive of his Theater of Cruelty), but Artaud is also a theoretician and, I would argue, a philosopher in his own right. Artaud was trying to articulate his own metaphysical system. If Artaud was anti-philosophical, and in many ways he was (at least in terms of a standard history of philosophy approach), it was in a similar way to that of Nietzsche and even Deleuze

[1] FB, 33.

himself to a certain extent.[1] I want to suggest that Artaud has his own "logic of sensation" and that the Body without Organs, even though he uses this exact term only once and very late (1947), is already a concept for Artaud prior to Deleuze's appropriation of it. Deleuze claims that, "the body without organs is flesh and nerve."[2] If this is so, then, as we will see, already in his early works like "Manifesto in Clear Language" and "Situation of the Flesh" (both 1925), Artaud was beginning to articulate his concept of the BwO even if he does not name it yet.

Bacon's Figures

We must begin with a little *explication de texte* for the quotation above. Deleuze takes the term *Figure* from Lyotard. Lyotard, as Deleuze explains in a footnote, uses the term *figural* in opposition to the *figurative*.[3] In contradistinction to the figurative, the figural is non-narrative and non-representational. Figure is directly linked to sensation. "The Figure," Deleuze writes, "is the sensible form related to a sensation; it acts immediately upon the nervous system, which is of the flesh, whereas abstract form is addressed to the head, and acts through the intermediary of the brain, which is closer to the bone."[4] Deleuze prefers Bacon's figural art to, say, Mondrian's abstract art, because abstract art is addressed to the brain rather than the flesh.[5] Rather than coming across directly to the nervous system, it takes, in Bacon's terms above, "a long diatribe through the brain." Ronald Bogue, providing a link back to Nietzsche, describes the figural as a

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[1] "I belong to a generation, one of the last generations, that was more or less bludgeoned to death with the history of philosophy. The history of philosophy plays a patently repressive role in philosophy, it's philosophy's own version of the Oedipus complex: 'You can't seriously consider saying what you yourself think until you've read this and that, and that on this, and this on that." N, 5.
[2] FB, 33.
[3] FB, 125 n. 1. Lyotard's discussion is found in his *Discours, Figure* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1972).
[4] FB, 25.
[5] For the discussion of how Mondrian's abstract art reduces chaos to a minimum and leaps over it see FB, 73.

"domain of Dionysian anti-form that can play through the images of figurative and abstract art alike."[1] Both Bacon's figural art and Mondrian's abstract art are attempts to overcome figuration and the figurative, but Bacon's figures are more closely tied to sensation. As Daniel Smith explains in his translator's introduction to *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, "Whereas 'figuration' refers to a form that is related to an object it is supposed to represent, the 'Figure' is the form that is connected to a sensation, and that conveys the violence of this sensation directly to the nervous system."[2] Bacon's figures are not supposed to *represent* bodies, but rather to directly (and often violently) convey a sensation of body to our bodies. Bacon's figures are thus visual instantiations of Artaud's "Nerve Meter," which would allow communication directly from body to body, nerve to nerve without intermediary. Paraphrasing Deleuze, one could say that Bacon and his predecessor, Cézanne, have never ceased painting Artaud's Nerve Meter.

Artaud's Figural

Artaud's "concrete language" of the theater is the linguistic form of the figural. Artaud declares: "I say that this concrete language, intended only for the senses and independent of speech, has first to satisfy the senses, that there is a poetry of the senses as there is a poetry of language, and that this concrete physical language to which I refer is truly theatrical only to the degree that the thoughts it expresses are beyond the reach of the spoken language."[3] Artaud's theater was intended to be sensory not sensational (in the sense that this would imply a separation or distancing between the audience and the

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[1] Ronald Bogue, "Gilles Deleuze: The Aesthetics of Force" in Deleuze: A Critical Reader, ed. Paul Patton (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 259-260.
[2] Daniel W. Smith, "Deleuze on Bacon: Three Conceptual Trajectories in *The Logic of Sensation*," in FB, xiii.
[3] TD, 37.

action). To call something "sensational" implies a sort of secondary rational judgment (Straus's perception rather than sensation).[1] Such a judgment is not required to have a sensory experience. This is why, according to Deleuze, in his 1953 *Study After Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X*, Bacon's pope screams behind a curtain. We do not see what he is screaming about, only the sensation of the scream.[2] "As soon as there is horror," Deleuze writes, "a story is reintroduced, and the scream is botched."[3] The point is not the object of horror but rather the sensation of it. Once the object itself is introduced then representation and figuration follow and the pure sensation is botched. "It is the same with Artaud;" Deleuze claims a few lines down, "cruelty is not what one believes it to be, and depends less and less on what is represented."

On the other hand, Bacon remained dissatisfied with his scream portraits precisely because he gave too little consideration to the object of the horror, to that which makes people scream. As Bacon tells David Sylvester, "You could say that a scream is a horrific image; in fact I wanted to paint the scream more than the horror. I think, if I had really thought about what causes somebody to scream, it would have made the scream I tried to paint more successful. Because I should in a sense have been more conscious of the horror that produced the scream. In fact they were too abstract"[4] Bacon's desire to paint the scream itself rather than the object of horror is similar to Artaud's use of screams in a Theater of Cruelty performance. Artaud wants to convey the horror directly to the audience through the live performance of the screams. Perhaps Bacon's failure to adequately convey the sensation of the horror behind the scream is due in part to a

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[1] Deleuze claims that sensation is the opposite of the sensational (FB, 25).
[2] FB, 43.
[3] FB, 28.
[4] Sylvester, *Francis Bacon*, 48.

difference between mediums, that of paint, which does create a monument or freezes an instant in time, and that of theater which can convey the sensation more immediately, *viva voce*. In his description of his imagined Theater of Cruelty, Artaud writes:

> A cry uttered at one end of the room can be transmitted from mouth to mouth with amplifications and successive modulations all the way to the other. The action will unfold, will extend its trajectory from level to level, point to point; paroxysms will suddenly burst forth, will flare up like fires in different spots. And to speak of the spectacle's character as true illusion or of the direct and immediate influence of the action on the spectator will not be hollow words.[1]

The Theater of Cruelty is designed to be a direct assault on the audience's senses. To convey the sense of horror directly to the senses without engaging the mind in representation or figuration. Artaud's Theater of Cruelty is, like Bacon's art, non-representational (indeed it is anti-representational). Cruelty for Artaud, as we have seen, is the means to make metaphysics enter our minds "through the skin."[2] Artaud's Theater of Cruelty is not a representation of life. It is its truth. Life is the theater's double, not the other way round. As we have seen, the image of a crime, according to Artaud, "when presented in the requisite theatrical conditions is something infinitely more terrible for the spirit than that same crime when actually committed."[3] The actual crime is only a pale copy or double for the more spiritually real crime on stage. "One can very well imagine," Artaud writes, "a pure cruelty, without bodily laceration."[4] For Artaud at any rate, "Cruelty is not synonymous with bloodshed, martyred flesh, [or] crucified enemies."[5] Recall Deleuze's words in the quotation with which we began, "When sensation is linked to a body in this way, it ceases to be representative and becomes real; and cruelty will be

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[1] TD, 97.
[2] SW, 251.
[3] TD, 85.
[4] TD, 101.
[5] TD, 102.

linked less and less to the representation of something horrible, and will become nothing other than the action of forces upon the body, or sensation (the opposite of the sensational)." Artaud's theater was designed to communicate directly to the body, to wake up heart and nerve.[1] Bacon's screams, for all their affective power, remain by his own admission too abstract.

"No one in Europe knows how to scream any more," Artaud laments in a note at the end of his chapter "An Affective Athleticism" in *The Theater and Its Double*:

> — and particularly actors in a trance no longer know how to cry out. Since they do nothing but talk and have forgotten they ever had a body in the theater, they have naturally also forgotten the use of their windpipes. Abnormally shrunk, the windpipe is not even an organ but a monstrous abstraction that talks: actors in France no longer know how to do anything but talk.[2]

Speech and text have taken over the theater. The direct experience of the body and of sensations, screams and cries, have been forgotten. Actors no longer understand how to connect with their passions. Words, pale copies, have replaced more vibrant sensations. All of this logorrhea, according to Artaud, is directed towards the head not the nerves. Artaud contrasts the "physical language" of the theater with ordinary "speech." Artaud's physical language "consists of everything that occupies the stage, everything that can be manifested and expressed materially on a stage and that is addressed first of all to the senses instead of being addressed primarily to the mind as is the language of words."[3]

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[1] TD, 84.
[2] TD, 141. In his journal that he kept at the time, Jacques Prevel relates an incident that occurred during one of his many visits to Artaud at Ivry. Artaud asked Prevel to join him in screaming. According to Prevel, Artaud told him "'you will not leave this room alive if you do not answer me.' And he struck his knife straight into the table. So I started to shout with him. It relieved me, since I had been hearing him do it for two hours and I felt the need to do it myself. 'You have done something very remarkable,' he told me immediately afterwards, 'If we had been on stage, we would have been a great success.'" Quoted in Stephen Barber, *Blows and Bombs*, 128.
[3] TD, 38.

Artaud wants to reverse the traditional order in Western theater that sees the *mise en scène*, the staging, lighting, set, costuming, in short, everything other than the text, as secondary to the main dialogue. "And why not," Artaud asks, "conceive of a play composed directly on the stage, realized on the stage—it is the mise en scène that is the theater much more than the written and spoken play."[1] In the chapter on "Metaphysics and the Mise en Scène" from which the above quotations are taken, Artaud turns to what it would mean to make spoken language truly metaphysical:

> To make metaphysics out of a spoken language is to make the language express what it does not ordinarily express: to make use of it in a new, exceptional, and unaccustomed fashion; to reveal its possibilities for producing physical shock; to divide and distribute it actively in space; to deal with intonations in an absolutely concrete manner, restoring their power to shatter as well as really manifest something; to turn against language and its basely utilitarian, one could say alimentary, sources, against its trapped-beast origins; and finally to consider language as the form of *Incantation*.[2]

Truly metaphysical language in Artaud's sense of the term would move beyond the ordinary and communicable (the *common* as Nietzsche would say). Rather than frozen or static concepts, it would deliver a physical shock to the system. Rather than utilitarian or pragmatic (Artaud calls it "alimentary," reminding us of the later conflation of eating and speaking in the analysis of Carroll) it would be above all performative.

Metaphysical language does not serve to communicate but to cast spells, to perform incantations. This is Artaud's version of Deleuze and Guattari's "order-words,"[3] or J. L. Austin's "performatives."[4] It is also important to note here the physicality of this

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[1] TD, 41.
[2] TD, 46.
[3] See TP, 75ff..
[4] See J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, 2nd ed., ed. J. O. Urmson and Marina Sbisà (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975). Deleuze and Guattari discuss Austin's performatives in TP, 77.

metaphysical language. Artaud stresses the intonation of this language, the physical sound of words. Artaud constantly focused on the physical resonance and vibration of the sound of words in the actor's body. Paule Thévenin who read one of the parts for Artaud's radio play, "To Have Done with the Judgment of God," recalled how exacting he was about intonations and vocal inflections. Artaud coached her on vocal technique using poems of Baudelaire and Gérard de Nerval. As she describes it:

> I had to invent a melody and sing the verse. I could, in this way, understand the importance of the words in general and also sense the relationship between one word and another. I tried to read a poem after having practiced this technique for a while. I did not always succeed in satisfying Artaud. I had to begin all over again and work until he was satisfied... I had to learn to scream, to let this scream die out only when it reached the point of annihilation, to go from the over-shrill to the deep tones to prolong a syllable until my breath was exhausted. I believe I understood during the course of those sessions that the 'theater of cruel purgation' really was.[1]

This first-hand account gives us a glimpse of the director at work and of his insistence on intonation and breath work. Artaud had a large block of wood in his room at Ivry upon which he used to literally hammer out the rhythms of the poems he was working on.[2] Hence, we can understand Artaud's preference, noted by Deleuze above, for "affective athleticism" (a phrase Deleuze takes directly from another chapter heading in Artaud's *The Theater and Its Double)* and "scream-breaths" to *logocentric* rationalization and abstraction.

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[1] Quoted in Knapp, *Antonin Artaud*, 190.

[2] According to Barber, "Delmas [the doctor in charge of the clinic at Ivry to which Artaud was released from Rodez] became aware of the gestures and cries with which Artaud punctuated his writing, and installed a huge block of wood in his room. Artaud struck it with hammers, pokers and knives, finally reducing it to splinters as he tested the rhythms for the poems he was working on." Barber, *Blows and Bombs*, 126.

The Affective Imponderable: Artaud's Logic of Sensation

"In art, and in painting as in music, it is not a matter of reproducing or inventing forms," Deleuze writes, "but of capturing forces."[1] Deleuze likes to quote another painter, Paul Klee, whose dictum runs: "Not to render the visible, but to render visible."[2] It is not a matter of representing the already visible. Art, whether painting or music, is the attempt to render otherwise invisible forces visible (or in the case of music, non-sonorous forces sonorous). For Artaud, according to Allen Weiss:

> All expression is informed by language *and* the body, bounded by signs *and* the libido. The figuration of force—in what might be termed the 'visceral imagination'—always attempts to escape the hermeneutic circle within which force is transformed into form, into meaning. This significative evasion, beneath the threshold of sense, is precisely the level at which Artaud's texts must be read.[3]

Deleuze and Guattari's "Artaud the Schizo," as we have seen, resists the Oedipalization of the signifier—the being forced in to meaning. On what they term the *schizorevolutionary pole*, Deleuze and Guattari write in *Anti-Oedipus*, "the value of art is no longer measured except in terms of the decoded and deterritorialized flows that it causes to circulate beneath a signifier reduced to silence, beneath the conditions of identity of the parameters, across a structure reduced to impotence; a writing with pneumatic, electronic, or gaseous indifferent supports, and that appears all the more difficult and intellectual to intellectuals as it is accessible to the infirm, the illiterate, and the schizos, embracing all that flows and counterflows, the gushings of mercy and pity knowing nothing of meanings and aims (the Artaud experiment, the Burroughs

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[1] FB, 40.
[2] Quoted in FB, 40.
[3] Allen S. Weiss, *Phantasmic Radio* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995), 22.

experiment)."[1] The danger with this approach is that it risks reducing Artaud's work to the non-productive type of nonsense that Deleuze identifies in *The Logic of Sense*. It is very close to a clinical diagnosis.

Deleuze claims that Artaud's experiment "knows nothing of meanings and aims." But Artaud writes in his "Manifesto in Clear Language":

> My mind, exhausted by discursive reason, wants to be caught up in the wheels of a new, an absolute gravitation. For me it is like a supreme reorganization in which only the laws of Illogic participate, and in which there triumphs the discovery of a new Meaning…This Meaning is a victory of the mind over itself, and although it is irreducible by reason, it exists, but only *inside the mind*. It is order, it is intelligence, it is the signification of chaos. But it does not accept this chaos as such, it interprets it, and because it interprets it, it loses it. It is the Logic of Illogic. And this is all one can say. My lucid unreason is not afraid of chaos.[2]

The important point is that there is a logic here even if it is a Logic of Illogic. There are laws for this Illogic. Artaud stresses the discovery of meaning. The mind itself provides the signification or interpretation to the chaos. This signification is by no means a subjection to the Signifier because it is supplied by the mind itself, it is the "victory of the mind over itself." Just as Nietzsche will argue in "On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense," it is only through imposing our "truths" (metaphors) onto the world (and then promptly forgetting they are only metaphors) that we can "live with any repose, security, and consistency…."[3] Humans for Nietzsche are essentially "artistically creating" subjects. It is only our artistic creations that save us, according to both Nietzsche and Artaud, from chaos. It is the thin veil of the Apollonian that separates us from the

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[1] AO, 370.
[2] SW, 108.
[3] Friedrich Nietzsche, "On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense," 86.

Dionysian depths, but without the force and energy of the Dionysian underneath this veil of form would be a lifeless shroud.

Artaud's logic of sensation is what he calls the "affective imponderable." Immediately before the passage quoted above, Artaud writes:

> In the realm of the affective imponderable, the image provided by my nerves takes the form of a concept which carries within it the actual fulguration of things, a concept which arrives upon me with the sound of creation. No image satisfies me unless it is at the same time *Knowledge*, unless it carries with it its substance as well as its lucidity.

Here we move from image to concept. It is the image that gives knowledge. This is not a rational but rather an affective knowledge. The concept is formed in the nerves. It is not reducible by reason. It is a force which takes on a form and becomes intelligible. *Fulguration* and *lucidity* both denote bringing to light or rendering visible. Both Artaud and Bacon render visible the invisible forces, but they do so by means of sensations rather than ratiocination. Contrary to Weiss and Deleuze, however, these forces do take a form in Artaud. The difference is that the form is one idiosyncratically assigned by Artaud himself which does not conform to any notion of the "common" or socially acceptable meanings. It does resist the Oedipalization of the Signifier, but that does not render it chaotic and formless. It generates its own meaning. There is a conscious and often playful sense of revolt against the common in Artaud that is often overlooked by his commentators. There is no simple transformation of force into form but rather a dynamic tension between the two, the same as Nietzsche recognized between the Apollonian and Dionysian. It is only in forgetting the Dionysian "*and* the body" or "*and* the libido" that crystallizes the form and renders it lifeless.

Dismantling the body

To return to our explication of the quote from Deleuze with which we started, we still need to unpack some terms. Deleuze speaks there of dismantling the "organism in favor of the body, the face in favor of the head." Dismantling the organism in favor of the body is the construction of the BwO. The assembly instructions are given in the Artaud-inspired chapter of *A Thousand Plateaus*.[1] To understand the dismantling of the face in favor of the head we need to carefully define these terms. In the chapter, "Body, Meat and Spirit, Becoming-Animal" in *Francis Bacon*, Deleuze defines the *body* as the material of the Figure, but not its structure.[2] *Bones* are the material and spatial structure of the body.[3] *Flesh* is the material of the Figure.[4] It is the body revealed as unsupported and unstructured by bone. Flesh and bone exist for one another, but each on its own terms. Deleuze compares the bones to the trapeze apparatus upon which the flesh is the acrobat.[5] *Meat*, then, is the zone of confrontation between flesh and bone. According to Deleuze, "Meat is the state of the body in which flesh and bone confront each other locally rather than being composed structurally…In meat, the flesh seems to *descend* from the bones, while the bones rise up from the flesh."[6] Meat then is at the cusp between the chaos of the flesh and the structure of bone. It is the edge of chaos that prevents the complete deterritorialization into the BwO.

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[1] "November 28, 1947: How Do You Make Yourself a Body without Organs?", TP, 149-166. The date was the scheduled date for the transmission of Artaud's radio play, "To Have Done With the Judgment of God" before it was banned. It is in this play that the term *body without organs* first appears.
[2] FB, 15.
[3] FB, 16.
[4] FB, 16.
[5] FB, 17.
[6] FB, 16.

Deleuze does not seem to like bones. "Of course, the body has bones as well," he writes, "but they are *only* its spatial structure."[1] "The body," he continues, "is only revealed when it ceases to be supported by the bones…." And still further, "For both Bacon and Kafka, the spinal column is nothing but a sword beneath the skin, slipped into the body of an innocent sleeper by an executioner."[2] Finally, bone belongs to the face (which again is structure) not the head (we will see shortly below the problems related to the face). But for Artaud, bone has a more positive sense. As Bettina Knapp comments, "The 'bone' as used by Artaud in this work ['To Have Done with the Judgment of God'] symbolizes the hard fight each individual must wage with himself, between *being* and *living*. Only the latter force paves the way for rebirth into a more profound realm"[3] Artaud's body without organs is the resurrected body (formed on the autopsy table). The body of flesh and organs must die in order to be resurrected into the new and glorious body without organs. In his notebooks and drawings during the Rodez period Artaud's descriptions of this new body focus more and more on the bones and skeleton. In one of his drawings from the Rodez period entitled, "The Projection of the True Body," Artaud depicts himself as being shot by a firing squad. Connected to his likeness, however, is a skeletal body (presumably the True Body) which appears to be erupting with forces shooting out from the skull and just below the rib cage.[4] While Bacon and Deleuze prefer meat, Artaud writes in his notebook, "je suis […] un cliquetis d'os particuliers *sans viande*."[5] Part of Artaud's motivation to do away with the organs and bodily fluids was

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[1] FB, 16 emphasis mine.
[2] FB, 17.
[3] Knapp, *Antonin Artaud*, 195.
[4] Reproduced in *Antonin Artaud: Works on Paper*, ed., Margit Rowell (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1996), 129.
[5] Quoted in Morfee, *Writing Bodies*, 200 emphasis mine.

that they were what the "beings" (vampires and succubae) which attacked him at night fed on. Stripping the body down to the skeleton would protect him from these attacks. "Un os dur dans le front, /" Artaud says of this body, "un os dans la colonne, / un os du diaphragme, / un os au pectus, / avec l'idée d'os au milieu."[1] The body without organs eventually becomes just wood.[2]

In the passage of "To Have Done with the Judgment of God" that Knapp refers to above Artaud writes:

> To exist one need only let oneself be,
> but to live,
> one must be someone,
> to be someone,
> one must have a BONE,
> not be afraid to show the bone,
> and to lose the meat in the process.[3]

To assert one's own nature and right to live (rather than merely exist) one must both have and be willing to show some bone. A few lines later, Artaud equates meat with shit. Being is linked to meat and thus to shit. Living is linked to bone. Even God, if he is a being, Artaud reasons, must be shit. If God is not a being, Artaud's parody of syllogism demonstrates, then he does not exist except as a void. Artaud imagines creation as being the result of God's defecation: "And god, god himself squeezed the movement." In order to be man took on meat. By taking on this meat, that also means taking on all the bodily functions like defecation. "Man," writes Artaud, "has always preferred meat / to the earth of bones." Man had to "earn his meat." But the meat makes us vulnerable. When man finally revolts against the judgment of God, who is now linked to meat and shit, he

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[1] Quoted in Morfee, *Writing Bodies*, 200.
[2] For this discussion see Adrian Morfee, *Writing Bodies*, 191 ff.. Artaud writes to Pierre Loeb on April 23, 1947: "The time was when man was a tree without organs or function, / but possessed of will, / and a tree of will which walks / will return. / It has been, and it will return." SW, 515.
[3] SW, 560.

is armed with "steel, with blood, with fire and with bones." He has then lost the meat and become the body without organs. For the spirit to exist, Artaud will suggest elsewhere, it has to take on a body.[1] That is why Artaud felt himself assaulted by spiritual beings that needed his body in order to exist. Without the meat, man is far less vulnerable to these vampiric beings. To show the bone is to revolt against the judgment of God who lives in and off of our meat. To lose the meat is to lose the kind of being that was forced on us and to recreate our bodies as bone. Deleuze himself acknowledged in a footnote in *The Logic of Sense* that the BwO is made of "bone and blood alone."[2] But it is the meat, as Deleuze observes, that is "undoubtedly the chief object of Bacon's pity." Unlike the meat, bone refuses to merge with the ground. There is something resistant about bone. It is this hard element in Artaud that I think Deleuze does not adequately appreciate. Artaud's body without organs does not want to "become imperceptible" or fade into the ground.[3] It wants to become bone, to harden and resist. It wants to assert itself and remake the world in its image.

Faciality

To return to Deleuze's text, figures have *heads*, because heads are part of the body, but they do not have *faces*. "For the face," Deleuze explains, "is a structured, spatial organization that conceals the head, whereas the head is dependent upon the body, even if it is the point of the body, its culmination."[4] We know from the chapter on

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[1] "I'm certainly not for the Spirit-Matter duality;" Artaud writes in *Heliogabalus* (1933), "but between the proposition that's all in favor of the spirit and the other one all in favor of matter, I say there's no conciliation possible, for as long as one lives in a world where spirit can become some thing only if it consents to materialise. Matter exists only *through* the spirit, and the spirit only *in* matter." Antonin Artaud, *Heliogabalus or, the Crowned Anarchist*, trans. Alexis Lykiard (Solar Books, 2006), 65-66.
[2] LoS, 342 n. 8.
[3] The process of "becoming-imperceptible" can be found in TP, 279 where it is discussed in terms of the reduction of the self. It is to "become like everyone else" or to fade into the background.
[4] FB, 15.

faciality in *A Thousand Plateaus* that the face is Christ, perversely understood as the typical European, the White Man.[1] When Deleuze claims that the head but not the face is part of the body in *The Logic of Sense*, he is repeating a claim made earlier in *A Thousand Plateaus*. Artaud makes a similar point in his "The Human Face" [*Le Visage Humain*] written for a gallery exhibition of his art work in 1947. In this piece, Artaud writes, "The human face / is an empty power, a / field of death. / The old revolutionary / claim to a form / that's never corres- / ponded with its body, goes off / to be something other / than the body."[2] In striking similarity to Bacon's animal-becomings, Artaud says of his own artwork: "Occasionally I have summoned / objects trees / or animals to come near / the human heads because / I'm still not sure / of the limits by which the / body of my human / Self may be stopped."[3]

In the chapter on faciality Deleuze makes it clear that the face only appears at the expense of the head. According to Deleuze and Guattari, "The face is produced only when the head ceases to be a part of the body, when it ceases to be coded by the body, when it ceases to have a multidimensional, polyvocal corporeal code—when the body, head included, has been decoded and has to be *overcoded* by something we shall call the Face."[4] To dismantle the face in favor of the head is to undermine this process of overcoding by signification and subjectification. It is to produce the BwO.

Organisms and Organization

In the chapter, "November 28, 1947: How Do You Make Yourself a Body Without Organs?" Deleuze and Guattari point out the dangers inherent in the process of

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[1] TP, 176.
[2] AA, 229.
[3] AA, 232.
[4] TP, 170.

finding one's body without organs. The process of making the body without organs described there is a process of freeing oneself from the three strata of organism, signifiance and subjectification. The organism is the articulated body, the lived body. Signifiance is the reign of the signifier whereby everything must be interpretable and interpreted. It is the view of language that posits a "real" but noumenal world that is only mediated to us through signs which simply re-present this world to us.[1] Subjectivity is the notion of a stable *I*-position (whether Descartes' *cogito* or Kant's *I think*) that constitutes a point of view on the world and passes judgments on it. Deleuze and Guattari recommend "tearing consciousness away from the subject in order to make it a means of exploration," "tearing the unconscious away from signifiance and interpretation in order to make it a veritable production," and "tearing the body away from the organism."[2] All three of these tearings are processes of depersonalization or desubjectification. Depersonalizing consciousness is going from an *I*-think to an *it*-thinks where thought is an event that takes place rather than the activity of a subject who thinks à la Descartes. The individual thinker is merely a constellation or temporary medium for Thought. Depersonalizing the unconscious means that we no longer have to subject its affections to rational interpretation. Depersonalizing the body is moving beyond the phenomenological lived body to the larger plane of all becoming (what Deleuze and Guattari call "the plane of immanence").

Yet Deleuze and Guattari advise caution. If one dismantles these strata too quickly one risks death, falsehood, illusion, hallucination and psychic death. "You have to keep enough of the organism for it to reform each dawn;" they advise, "and you have

[1] See Claire Colebrook's helpful discussion in her *Gilles Deleuze* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 106ff.
[2] TP, 160.

to keep small supplies of significance and subjectification, if only to turn them against their own systems when the circumstances demand it, when things, persons, even situations, force you to; and you have to keep small rations of subjectivity in sufficient quantity to enable you to respond to the dominant reality."[1] Or again, "if you free it [the BwO] with too violent an action, if you blow apart the strata without taking precautions, then instead of drawing the plane [of immanence] you will be killed, plunged into a black hole, or even dragged toward catastrophe."[2] "This is how it should be done;" they conclude, "Lodge yourself on a stratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers, find an advantageous place on it, find potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight, experience them, produce flow conjunctions here and there, try out continuums of intensities segment by segment, have a small plot of new land at all times." Complete destratification is not possible. The full body without organs is never attained. One must always have a little solid ground beneath one's feet, a little bit of self to hold on to, a home base from which to venture out and explore. Otherwise one risks a complete break with the "dominant reality" which would plunge one into madness (psychosis) or even death.

Interestingly, Deleuze and Guattari turn to Artaud at this point for support. They quote from his description of his experience with peyote among the Tarahumara of Mexico. Artaud, they write, "weighs and measures every word:

> '[the consciousness] knows what is good for it and what is of no value to it: it knows which thoughts and feelings it can receive without danger and with profit, and which are harmful to the exercise of its freedom. Above all, it knows just how far its own being goes, and just how far it has not yet gone or does not have the right to go without sinking into the unreal, the illusory, the unmade, the unprepared…a *Plane* which normal

[1] TP, 160.
[2] TP, 161.

> consciousness does not reach but which *Ciguri* [the Tarahumaran name for god] allows us to reach, and which is the very mystery of all poetry. But there is in human existence another plane, obscure and formless, where consciousness has not entered, and which surrounds it like an unilluminated extension or menace, as the case may be. And which gives off adventurous sensations, perceptions. There are also those shameless fantasies which affect an unhealthy consciousness…I too have had false sensations and perceptions and I have believed in them.'[1]

Artaud visited the Tarahumara in 1937 and participated in their peyote ritual, which he came to see as an ideal type of Theater of Cruelty performance. Deleuze and Guattari take this to be an experiment on Artaud's part for expanding his consciousness, of carefully experimenting with destratification. But Artaud is not as careful as Deleuze and Guattari about the threat of death accompanying a too rapid destratification. In an early piece, "On Suicide," Artaud writes:

> If I kill myself , it won't be to destroy myself, but to rebuild myself. For me, suicide would only be a means of violently reconquering myself, of brutally invading my being, of anticipating God's unpredictable approach. I would reintroduce my designs into nature through suicide. For the first time I would give things the shape of my will. I would free myself from the conditioned reflexes of my organs which are so badly correlated with my ego.[2]

For Artaud as well as Deleuze and Guattari, destratification is a means to go beyond the ego-self. Artaud speaks of freeing himself by suicide of the conditioned reflex of his organs. But note that for Artaud the construction of a body without these conditioned organs is not to destroy himself but precisely to rebuild himself. It would be to remake all of creation according to his will (and not God's).

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[1] Quoted in TP, 160. The quote [modified for TP] is taken from Antonin Artaud, *The Peyote Dance*, trans. Helen Weaver (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1976), 38-39.
[2] CW, I, 157.

Artaud speaks of the remaking of his body again in "To Have Done with the Judgment of God" when he talks about placing man on the autopsy table to "remake his anatomy":

> Man is sick because he is badly constructed.
> We must make up our minds to strip him bare in order to scrape
> off that animalcule that itches him mortally,
>
> god,
> and with god
> his organs.
>
> For you can tie me up if you wish,
> but there is nothing more useless than an organ.
>
> When you will have made him a body without organs,
> then you will have delivered him from all his automatic reactions
> and restored him to his true freedom.
>
> Then you will teach him again to dance wrong side out
> as in the frenzy of dance halls
> and this wrong side out will be his real place.[1]

This is Artaud's first and only use of the term "body without organs." Artaud's body without organs is his attempt to remake his own body (and subsequently all other bodies). It is an attempt at *autopoiesis*. According to Artaud's Gnostic leanings, the material world is the work of a malevolent god. Man as an organism is badly constructed and must be remade. It is god that created the organism. The body without organs is the search for "true freedom" beyond "conditioned reflexes" and "automatic reactions." It is not complete disorganization but rather a new self-organization. According to Artaud, "the same body, my body, was remade a hundred times until it became perfect."[2]

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[1] SW, 570-571.
[2] Quoted in Allen S. Weiss, *Breathless: Sound Recording, Disembodiment, and the Transformation of Lyrical Nostalgia* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2002), 136.

"Beyond the organism," Deleuze writes, "but also at the limit of the lived body, there lies what Artaud discovered and named: the body without organs".[1] Deleuze describes the BwO thus:

> It is an intense and intensive body. It is traversed by a wave that traces levels or thresholds in the body according to the variations of its amplitude. Thus the body does not have organs, but thresholds or levels. Sensation is not qualitative and qualified, but has only an intensive reality, which no longer determines with itself representative elements, but allotropic variations. Sensation is vibration.[2]

According to Deleuze, the BwO still has organs—just indeterminate ones. As Deleuze understands it, "the BwO is opposed less to organs than to that organization of organs we call an organism."[3] Determinate organs are formed by the forces they encounter. Thus they are only *temporarily* and *provisionally* determinate.[4] Any seemingly fixed organization is only temporary and provisional. "The BwO is the egg," according to Deleuze and Guattari, *before* determinate organization.[5] "That is why," Deleuze and Guattari write in *A Thousand Plateaus*, "we treat the BwO as the full egg before the extension of the organism and the organization of the organs, before the formation of strata; as the intense egg defined by axes and vectors, gradients and thresholds, by dynamic tendencies involving energy transformation and kinematic movements involving group displacement, by migrations: all independent of *accessory forms* because the organs appear and function here only as pure intensities."[6] The BwO will have organs but only in terms of temporary formations and intensities. The form that the organ takes is dictated by the play of external forces. Just as carbon can be expressed allotropically

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[1] FB, 32.
[2] FB, 32.
[3] FB, 32.
[4] FB, 34.
[5] TP, 164. They also call the BwO an egg in AO, p. 19. See also FB, 32.
[6] TP, 153.

as either coal or diamonds depending on the forces that act on it, so too the organs are merely provisional responses to the play of external forces.

In *Anti-Oedipus* the BwO is a recording surface.[1] It is not produced and it produces nothing (it is the principle of anti-production). Deleuze and Guattari refer to the "nonproductive stasis of the body without organs"[2] which sounds like the catatonic schizophrenic body in *The Logic of Sense*. It is also referred to as the point of intensity = 0. Intensities pass through it and form the temporary organs on its surface, but the BwO itself is "zero intensity."[3] The notion of zero intensity links the BwO here to the Freudian death drive from his metapsychology as the point where the level of excitation returns to zero.

Artaud, however, is more radical. "Les corps," he writes in *Suppôts et Supplications*, "ne viennent pas de l'évolution du temps, / mais de la volonté au milieu du temps."[4] The body is produced by a will. It is this text among others that prompts Umberto Artioli to declare, "Artaud's conception of the subject in his later work, whilst in no way assimilable to the fiction of the 'I', is something quite other than the identity 'homo-natura' postulated in Anti-Oedipus."[5] Artioli then quotes a passage from Artaud's "Notes pour une 'Lettre aux Balinais'" where he writes, "It is not nature but myself who acts in the depths of everything, myself who captures the wandering impersonal energies

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[1] AO, 10.
[2] AO, 9.
[3] AO, 19.
[4] OC, XIV**, 73.
[5] Umberto Artioli, "From 'Production of reality or hunger for the impossible?'", 142. Deleuze and Guattari write, "We make no distinction between man and nature…man and nature are not like two opposite terms confronting each other—not even in the sense of bipolar opposites within a relationship of causation, ideation, or expression (cause and effect, subject and object, etc.); rather, they are one and the same essential reality, the producer-product. Production as process overtakes all idealistic categories and constitutes a cycle whose relationship to desire is that of an immanent principle. That is why desiring-production is the principal concern of a materialist psychiatry, which conceives of and deals with the schizo as *Homo natura*" (AO, 4-5).

and through the bilious pain of hepatitis restores them to my own will, after which I push my way forward."[1] The subject in *Anti-Oedipus* is de-centered and peripheral. "[S]omething on the order of a *subject*," Deleuze and Guattari write, "can be discerned on the recording surface. It is a strange subject, however, with no fixed identity, wandering about over the body without organs, but always remaining peripheral to the desiring-machines, being defined by the share of the product it takes for itself, garnering here, there, and everywhere a reward in the form of a becoming or an avatar, being born of the states that it consumes and being reborn with each new state."[2] Rather than defining itself through its own production, the subject here is defined by its consumption. Desiring machines are just productive desires that form connections with other "machines" like the mouth that connects to the breast. Desiring machines are the enemies of the BwO because they organize and break the continuous flow of its otherwise seamless surface.[3] Artaud's vision to the contrary, as Artioli explains, is not that of a "decentered subject always beside the desiring machines, yielding his own activity to them and parasitically enjoying their productions."[4] Artaud experienced being de-centered and placed in a peripheral state of limbo (or Bardo as he sometimes referred to it alluding to *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*) during the electroshock treatments at Rodez. Artaud experienced these with tremendous pain and fright. It is significant that during this time, Artaud gave up using his own name and began to refer to himself by various childhood names, Neneka, or by his mother's maiden name, Nalpas. Artaud became l'*aliéné* alienated from himself. But as Camille Dumoulié points out, "Ainsi, le

[1] Quoted in Artioli, "From 'Production of reality or hunger for the impossible?'", 142.
[2] AO, 16.
[3] AO, 9.
[4] Artioli, "From 'Production of reality or hunger for the impossible?'", 142.

premier geste de désaliénation fut le réinvestissement du nom propre."[1] Thus on his return to Paris, Artaud writes, *The Return of Artaud, Le Môm*o. The old Artaud was buried[2] and now the new Artaud is back to have done once and for all with the judgment of God and to remake his anatomy. He is ready to show his bone.

In *Anti-Oedipus*, the subject is linked to enjoyment or *jouissance*. Consumption is jouissance.[3] For Artaud, however, as Artioli points out, there is only suffering and never jouissance. Artioli connects Artaud and Nietzsche at this point. He quotes Nietzsche's passage from *Beyond Good and Evil*:

> Do you know what it is, this discipline of suffering that has led man to the summits of being? In man, creator and creature are united—man is at once creator, sculptor, the hard hammer, the divine spectator who on the seventh day contemplates his work. Do you understand this contradiction? Do you understand that your own pity addresses the creature in man, the one who must be paralysed, broken, forged, engraved, burned, dissolved, purified of all his excrescence; it addresses all that, of necessity, *will suffer and must suffer*?[4]

For both Nietzsche and Artaud it is his suffering that propels him to (re)create himself. It is out of the suffering of being badly formed that Artaud will recreate human anatomy. "It is tempting," Jane Goodall writes, "to do as Deleuze and Guattari have done and to posit this body as the other of the organic body, to give it a name—the 'BwO' (the 'Body without Organs')—and to celebrate its potentialities in a discourse that refuses the gravitational tendencies of interpretation."[5] Goodall, however, wants to resist this

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[1] Camille Dumoulié, *Antonin Artaud* (Paris: Seuil, 1996), 108. See also Lorenzo Chiesa, "Lacan with Artaud: j'ouïs-sens, jouis-sens, jouis-sans," in *Lacan: The Silent Partners*, ed. Slavoj Zizek (London and New York: Verso, 2006), 360.
[2] SW, 527: "Old Artaud / is buried…."
[3] AO, 16.
[4] Quoted in Artioli, "From 'Production of reality or hunger for the impossible?'", 144.
[5] Goodall, *Artaud and the Gnostic Drama*, 191.

temptation. Her disagreement with Deleuze and Guattari is that their Body without Organs "does not know travail."[1] She continues:

> The *Cahiers* [Artaud's *Cahiers de Rodez*] do not underestimate the system of the judgment of God by proposing a panacea in answer to it. It can be combated only through a work of correction that is both hermeneutic and teleological. What the revolutionary body knows, above all, is its continuing engagement with the system of the judgment of God. And this knowledge is lodged in the very organs, functions, and articulations of the organized body. Knowledge is pain and pain is correction at work; the conscious body is by definition the body in pain. Where the BwO is all surfaces traversed by 'pain waves', pains as 'population packs' [Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 152], the revolutionary body is experienced as an anatomical articulation of pain and it is the body's interiority that is an inescapable theatre of cruelty.[2]

Goodall sees Deleuze and Guattari's BwO as offering a sort of panacea for bodily suffering and the judgment of God. Deleuze himself will write in *Essays Critical and Clinical* that "The way to escape judgment is to make yourself a body without organs, to find your body without organs."[3] On Goodall's reading, for Artaud there is no clean escape. In her view, Deleuze and Guattari enthuse over potentialities, planes, and assemblages and forget about the pain. Far from the catatonic body described in *The Logic of Sense*, Artaud's body without organs is not disarticulated and fluid.[4] It is a body of bones. Rather than fleeing the pain, Artaud embraces it in order to create something out of it—in order to recreate himself.

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[1] Ibid., 192.
[2] Ibid.
[3] ECC, 131.
[4] LoS,

Chapter Five

To Have Done with the Judgment of Deleuze

Perhaps some day we will no longer really know what madness was…Artaud will belong to the foundation of our language, not to its rupture –Michel Foucault[1]

And what is an authentic madman? It is a man who preferred to become mad, in the socially accepted sense of the word, rather than forfeit a certain superior idea of human honor—Antonin Artaud[2]

Artist-Philosopher and Philosopher-Artist?

In her recent essay dealing with Deleuze's reading of Artaud, "Why is Deleuze an Artist-Philosopher?," Julie Kuhlken argues that, "[Deleuze and Guattari] draw a line that places Artaud and his madness on one side, and his works—his BwOs—on the other. Such an operation ostensibly sacrifices the artist to save the work of art, but more accurately, denounces Artaud's continued focus on the artistic ego…to transform his artwork into the impersonal BwO as concept."[3] In separating Artaud from his works Deleuze and Guattari make an exemplary case of Artaud the man, Artaud the Schizo, and then freely appropriate his works for their own ends regardless of their very personal context in Artaud's life. This manoeuvre on Deleuze and Guattari's part is, however, something that Artaud expressly forbids. Artaud states quite explicitly: "I do not separate my thought from my life."[4] Deleuze and Guattari's appropriation goes beyond the celebrated "death of the author." It causes them to be highly selective with their texts and to downplay the continual self-referential qualities of Artaud's work.[5] While I certainly

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[1] Michel Foucault, "Madness, the Absence of Work," trans. Peter Stastny and Deniz Şengel, *Critical Inquiry*, 21 (Winter 1995): 290.
[2] SW, 485.
[3] Kuhlken, "Why is Deleuze and Artist-Philosopher," 212.
[4] SW, 110.
[5] There are similar problems, as Michael Hardt points out, with the "impersonal" reading of Nietzsche. See Michael Hardt, *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota

do not want to suggest a privileging of something like authorial intent here, the very personal, confessional, and almost biographical character of Artaud's works are part of what makes them so unique and powerful.[1] It is the personal nature of Artaud's works, his bodies without organs, versus their impersonal appropriation by Deleuze and Guattari that is at issue here. I have been trying throughout this study to resist making Artaud into an exemplary case by allowing his own voice to emerge independently of Deleuze and Guattari's appropriation of his texts.

Kuhlken goes on to state very concisely what she takes to be the difference between Artaud's and Deleuze and Guattari's conceptions of the body without organs:

> Whereas Artaud conceives of the BwO as having some link, even if sometimes tenuous, to that actual experience of physical bodies—most importantly his own—Deleuze and Guattari state quite clearly that '[a]bove all, [the BwO] is not a projection; it has nothing at all to do with the body itself' [AO, 8]. The reason for the difference is straightforward: As long as the BwO remains attached to the personal experience of an actual body, it cannot be a philosophical concept. Unlike art, whose precepts and affects touch directly on materiality, philosophical concepts – such as the BwO becomes in Deleuze and Guattari's hands—'survey' states of affairs.[2]

According to Deleuze and Guattari in *What is Philosophy?*, "the concept is an incorporeal, even though it is incarnated or effectuated in bodies."[3] The concept here

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Press, 1993), 31. Nietzsche after all writes in *Beyond Good and Evil*: "It has gradually become clear to me what every great philosophy has hitherto been: a confession on the part of its author…" (BGE §6).

[1] Allen Weiss warns of the intentional fallacy that he detects in the exchange of letters between Artaud and Rivière to which we will shortly turn: "Rivière, like Artaud, fell into the critical trap of the intentional fallacy, but from the other side of the equation; the irony is that Artaud believes that his suffering authenticates his writing, but that writing is always inadequate to life; Rivière, to the contrary, believes that the writing is an exceptional expression of the illness, rendering Artaud's suffering eminently communicable, although stylistic weaknesses remain." Allen S. Weiss, "Artaud's Anatomy," in *The Senses in Performance*, ed. Sally Banes and André Lepecki (New York and London: Routledge, 2007), 201. While Rivière does believe that Artaud's *letters* are extraordinarily clear and insightful in terms of his self-diagnosis, he does not see that same precision in the *poems*. For Artaud the poems themselves are expressions of his inner state. In my view, the fallacy here is Rivière's attempt to separate the letters and the poems as if they expressed different things.

[2] Kuhlken, "Why is Deleuze an Artist-Philosopher," 211.

[3] WP, 21.

sounds very much like Sense in the description from *The Logic of Sense* as the incorporeal border that subsists on bodies and states of affairs but is not contained in them. To make *sense* of Artaud's image of a body without organs then, Deleuze and Guattari had to separate it from Artaud's own body, even though it was he who discovered it.

In *Anti-Oedipus* Deleuze and Guattari deny that the BwO has anything at all to do with an image of the body. "It is the body without an image," they write.[1] It was precisely this body without an image, according to Deleuze and Guattari that "Antonin Artaud discovered…one day, finding himself with no shape or form whatsoever, right there where he was at that moment."[2] But Artaud does have an image, as we saw above, for his "true body" which is the skeletalized body in his drawing entitled "The Projection of the True Body" (note that it is even a *projection*). The Deleuzian concept as Event or as Sense cannot be limited to the physical body, and certainly not a particular body (i.e. Artaud's), if it is to become a philosophical concept, a universal. If Kuhlken is correct, then Deleuze and Guattari do not take Artaud's image of the body without organs to have been a concept for him. It is, after all, not the business of the artist to create concepts. That particular privilege is reserved for the philosopher. But inasmuch as Kuhlken wants to argue for a special status for Deleuze as an Artist-Philosopher, I am trying to argue for a similar status for Artaud as a Philosopher-Artist. Artaud's own concept, which I am arguing that he does have, of the body without organs is part of his own metaphysical system. He did not need Deleuze and Guattari to come along and make his body without organs into a concept for him.

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[1] AO, 8.
[2] AO, 8.

The Artaud Rivière Correspondence Revisited

The problem with trying to separate Artaud's life, even his madness, and his works as Deleuze has tried to do is that it skews the encounter with Artaud.[1] It separates his thought from his life (in spite of Artaud's own statement to the contrary above that he never separates his life and his thought). This is however precisely what Deleuze attempts to do in his analysis of the Artaud Rivière correspondence. "Artaud does not simply talk about his own 'case,'" according to Deleuze, "but already in his youthful letters shows an awareness that his case brings him into contact with a *generalized* thought process…."[2] It is clear from this exchange of letters, however, that Artaud is, at the beginning at least, primarily concerned with gaining access to the literary world—he is after all a young poet trying to get published—but Artaud soon surrenders himself *together with his work* to Rivière's judgment. It quickly becomes apparent that what Artaud really wants above all is personal validation. As one of Artaud's intimates, Marthe Robert, writes, "Upon his entrance into Letters through the narrow door of the 'sacrosanct N.R.F. [*Nouvelle Revue Française*],' he wrote to [its editor] Jacques Rivière, less for the purpose of showing his poems to him than to reveal himself; and it is clear that he was not driven by banal sincerity, even less by a juvenile desire to attract attention, but by the urgent need to be accepted as he was, the sole proof of his worth being the enormous weight of his singularity."[3] Moreover, when Rivière eventually suggests the publication of their exchanges under fictitious names and with the necessary alterations to make them "less personal," Artaud objects. "Why lie," he asks, "why try to

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[1] Adrian Morfee goes so far as to suggest a "missed encounter" between Deleuze and Artaud. See Morfee, *Writing Bodies*, 16n.
[2] DR, 147 emphasis mine.
[3] Marthe Robert, "I am the body's insurgent…," trans. Jeanine Herman in *Antonin Artaud: Works on Paper* ed. Margit Rowell (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1996), 25.

put on a literary level something which is the cry of life itself…I do not insist on signing the letters with my name [although that is the way they are eventually published]. But it is absolutely necessary for the reader to feel that he has in his hands the elements of a true story."[1] Artaud is perhaps playing it coy with regards to his own name being signed to the letters, but he is absolutely adamant that it be presented as a real and singular case.

Artaud will make the point even more strongly towards the end of his life in his (1946) "Letter about Lautréamont" where he considers the implications of Isidore Ducasse's writing under the *nom de plume*, Comte de Lautréamont.[2] Artaud amazingly argues that it was the adoption of this pseudonym that led to Ducasse's early death:

> And I say that there was in Isidore Ducasse a spirit which always wanted to drop Isidore Ducasse in favor of the unthinkable Comte de Lautréamont, a very beautiful name, a very great name. And I say that the invention of the name Lautréamont, although it may have provided Isidore Ducasse with a password to clothe and introduce the unusual magnificence of his product, I say that the invention of this literary patronym, like a suit of clothes one can't afford, brought about, by its rising above the man who produced it, one of those foul collective obscenities in which the history of letters abounds and which in the end caused the soul of Isidore Ducasse to flee from life. For it was certainly Isidore Ducasse who died, and not the Comte de Lautréamont, and it was Isidore Ducasse who gave the Comte de Lautréamont the means to survive, and it would take little, I would even say that it would take nothing to convince me that the impersonal unthinkable Count of heraldic Lautréamont was in relation to Isidore Ducasse a kind of indefinable assassin.[3]

This spirit, Artaud imagines, tells a dying Isidore Ducasse on his deathbed, "You are a genius, but I am that genius that inspires your consciousness, and it is I who write your poems through you, before you, and better than you." "And so it was," Artaud concludes, "that Isidore Ducasse died of rage because he wanted like Poe, Nietzsche,

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[1] SW, 43.
[2] It also bears remembering that Charles Dodgson wrote his Alice books under the pseudonym Lewis Carroll.
[3] SW, 472.

Baudelaire, and Gerard de Nerval, to preserve his inherent individuality instead of becoming, like Victor Hugo, Lamartine, Musset, Pascal, or Chateaubriand, a funnel for the thinking of everybody." This would have been a sensitive issue for Artaud at the time as he struggled to reclaim his own name during the period of interment in the asylums in which he, for a time, refused his own name. This was also the period in which Artaud felt he was battling God and other parasitic beings for his own body. But it is precisely this "funnel for the thinking of everybody" that Deleuze and Guattari want to reduce Artaud the man to: "Even if Artaud did not succeed for himself, it is certain that through him something has succeeded for us all."[1] We have already seen in the 1945 letter to Parisot that Artaud identifies with the likes of Poe, Baudelaire, and Nerval, who precisely want to preserve their inherent individuality.[2]

There is certainly a misunderstanding on Rivière's part, but it is not as Deleuze suggests his defense of "the image of an autonomous thinking function, endowed in principle with its own nature and will."[3] Rather, it was his failure to understand the particularity of Artaud's case. Rivière passed a literary judgment on Artaud's poems while Artaud kept insisting on a personal judgment regarding his case. Rivière thought that with a little more effort on Artaud's part he could learn to write like everyone else. "I have had enough experience in reading manuscripts," Rivière tells Artaud, "to feel that this concentration of your resources on a simple poetic object is not at all ruled out by your temperament and that with a little patience…you will succeed in writing poems that are perfectly coherent and harmonious."[4] The "impersonal unthinkable" which becomes

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[1] TP, 164.
[2] SW, 449.
[3] DR, 146.
[4] SW, 33.

an assassin in Ducasse's case is like the "something which destroys my thought," "or the something furtive which robs me of the words *that I have found*" in Artaud's case.[1] In the correspondence with Rivière, Artaud is not seeking *a* thought or *an* intellectual being but rather *my* thought, *my* intellectual being.[2] Artaud grasps the thoughts and pins them down for fear of losing the thought and of not being able to write which for him is the equivalent of "dying altogether." "The question for *me*," Artaud writes, "is nothing less than knowing whether *I* have the right to continue to think, in verse or in prose."[3]

Artaud himself casts the correspondence in terms of a confession on his part.[4] Artaud tells Rivière that he is less interested in a literary judgment about the value of his poems as he is with a judgment about his own "*distinctive* mental case."[5] There is a shift that Rivière fails to pick up on. Artaud ceases to talk about the literary value or quality of his poems and begins to talk about his difficulties in writing or thinking anything at all. Artaud is talking about himself at this point and not just about his poems except insofar as they are evidence of his mental state. The poems are symptoms of an underlying dis-ease: "a central collapse of the soul."

Artaud insists on the uniqueness of his suffering. The difference between him and people like Tristan Tzara, André Breton, and Pierre Reverdy [and one could add Lewis Carroll here as well] is that "they do not suffer and I do suffer, not only in the mind but in the flesh and in my everyday soul."[6] In his final letter to Artaud, Rivière realizes his failure: "Perhaps I rather indiscreetly substituted myself, with my ideas and prejudices,

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[1] SW, 35.
[2] SW, 31.
[3] SW, 32 emphasis mine.
[4] SW, 34.
[5] SW, 34 emphasis mine.
[6] SW, 44.

for your suffering and your singularity."[1] Rivière realizes only at the end that he has failed to engage Artaud on his own terms, in the singularity of *his* suffering. Rivière thought that he could separate the artist and his works. "One thing strikes me," he had told Artaud, "the contrast between the extraordinary precision of your self-diagnosis and the vagueness, or at least the formlessness, of your creative efforts." How can you be capable of such clarity about your sickness, he wants to ask, but so incapable of bringing that same sort of clarity to your poems? What he does not understand is that the poems from Artaud's perspective are saying nothing other than what he is telling Rivière about himself. They only say that he is incapable of saying anything. It is not that he just needs to work harder to apply the same kind of focus he has for his self-diagnosis to his poems. His mind is as incapable as his poems of achieving focus. The poems themselves are the proof or demonstration of what Artaud is saying in the letters. He tells Rivière as clearly as he can:

> And here, monsieur, is the whole problem: to have within oneself the inseparable reality and the physical clarity of a feeling, to have it to such a degree that it is impossible for it not to be expressed, to have a wealth of words, of acquired turns of phrase capable of joining the dance, coming into play; and the moment the soul is on the point of coming forth, a superior evil will attacks the soul like a poison, attacks the mass consisting of word and image, attacks the mass of feeling, and leaves me panting as if at the very door of life.[2]

It is not that Artaud lacks words or turns of phrase, it is that he cannot hold onto the words and phrases long enough to bring them into focus before they are stolen from him. It is this theft of which the poems themselves are the evidence. No amount of extra effort on his part can make up for this theft.

Marthe Robert summarizes the correspondence well:

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[1] SW, 46.
[2] SW, 45.

> Clearly, the critic was in an awkward position: what does one say to a man who puts so much passion and talent into declaring himself incapable of everything, of thought and literature as well as life? Instinctively, Rivière got himself out of the situation by using a common tactic; he generalized the all-too-singular nature of the case.[1]

Unwilling or unable to deal with the all-too-singular nature of Artaud's case, Rivière responds by speaking about the mind in general: "That the mind has an existence of its own, that it has a tendency to live on its own substance, that it grows over the personality with a kind of egoism and with no concern for keeping the personality in harmony with the world, is something which apparently can no longer, in our time, be debated."[2] Rivière tries to stick to the poems themselves or just general observations about the mind in general, often, as we have seen from his own confession, putting aspects of himself and his own struggles in place of Artaud's uniqueness. What I am suggesting here is that Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition* by denying that Artaud is speaking about his own case and insisting that he is speaking of a more general notion of thought itself (thought without image) unwittingly repeats Rivière's own mistake. As Kuhlken suggests above, Artaud is held at arm's length. Deleuze, like Rivière, quite understandably is more comfortable generalizing Artaud's case by talking about thought in general rather than trying to empathize (in the sense of entering into) Artaud's pain. As Robert says of Rivière:

> In this he unknowingly played the role of all those who, in the immediate circle of the sick child, then of the tormented adolescent, no doubt attempted to deny the importance of his illness, as much as to appease his suffering as to relieve themselves of an intolerable responsibility. 'You always exaggerate, you only suffer because you think too much about it, calm down, you're not the only one in this situation, everyone suffers, etc.' One can imagine how Artaud took these arguments, which parents and teachers use in an attempt to break the rebellion of every sensitive

[1] Robert, "I am the body's insurgent…," 26.
[2] SW, 39.

> child. At bottom, Rivière doesn't say anything else. To this fundamental state, which Artaud presented as unique and incomparable, Rivière contrasted the malady of the epoch, the malaise of contemporary literature, and more generally, the impossibility of all thought to account for itself absolutely. Through this, he very simply cancelled out the singularity that bothered him, and that was indeed bothersome, since no recourse to generalization ever manages to abolish it.[1]

Deleuze takes Rivière to misunderstand that Artaud's difficulties with thought are unfortunate rather than "fortunate difficulties."[2] "The difficulties [Artaud] describes himself as experiencing," Deleuze continues, "must therefore be understood as not merely in fact but as difficulties in principle, concerning and affecting the essence of what it means to think." But this is exactly what Artaud does not want. He insists to Rivière that the reader be given the facts, "the elements of a true story," not a literary abstraction. Deleuze, like Rivière, prefers to deal with the sense of what Artaud is saying rather than the sensation he is trying to express. The sense of what Artaud says rises above his own body and its state of affairs, his neurasthenia. To deal with the sensation that Artaud was expressing in both the letters and the poems would be to descend with him into the corporeal depths.

From Schizo to Mômo[3]

By the time we move from *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense* to *Anti-Oedipus*, Artaud the Schizo becomes the "fulfillment of literature, precisely because he is schizophrenic and not because he is not."[4] Deleuze and Guattari note the debate as to whether Artaud as a schizophrenic belongs to literature or not, which in essence is a debate, as we noted earlier, over whether to read Artaud *critically* or *clinically*. They

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[1] Robert, "I am the body's insurgent…," 26.
[2] DR, 147.
[3] This section, as its title indicates, is indebted to Tomiche's article.
[4] AO, 135.

note that both groups err in their subscription to "the same puerile and reactionary conception of schizophrenia, and the same marketable neurotic conception of literature."[1] Artaud is now credited with breaking down the "wall of the signifier." "From the depth of his suffering and his glory," they write, "[Artaud] has the right to denounce what society makes of the psychotic in the process of decoding the flows of desire (*Van Gogh, the Man Suicided by Society*), but also what it makes of literature when it opposes literature to psychosis in the name of a neurotic or perverse recoding (Lewis Carroll, or the coward of belles-lettres)."[2] Artaud is now primarily one who resists the Oedipalization of the signifier. His language now is not so much that of the depths of the body as it is a language of protest and rebellion against societal constraints. The BwO in the two volumes of the Capitalism and Schizophrenia project becomes the locus of deterritorialization and resistance to social constructions of subjectivity and desire. The post-Rodez Artaud who denounces psychiatry, as he does in *Van Gogh, the Man Suicided by Society* (1947), takes center stage. Carroll is now cast in the role of the neurotic as opposed to the schizophrenic, and we know from the opening pages of Anti-Oedipus that "a schizophrenic out for a walk is a better model than a neurotic lying on the analyst's couch."[3] Now Deleuze seems to agree with Artaud's criticism of Carroll for not being willing to suffer for his work. Gone is the valorization of Sense from The *Logic of Sense*. The scales seem tipped in favor of Artaud's nonsense of the depths over Carroll's nonsense on the surface. Because he suffered, Artaud now has the right to critique society and its institutions which contributed to that suffering. In *Anti-Oedipus* the BwO is opposed to any structural organization that society seeks to place upon it, especially the

[1] AO, 134-135.
[2] AO, 135.
[3] AO, 2.

triangulation into the Oedipal family structure of mommy-daddy-me. Artaud is now the hero who decodes language (i.e. dissolves rigid syntactical and grammatical structures that guarantee its *meaning*) and resists its subsequent recoding by society. In *A Thousand Plateaus* as we have seen the BwO is produced by a process of the destratification of the three strata of organism, signifiance and subjectification. As we have seen in the *Francis Bacon* book, there the BwO is the intensive body. For Deleuze and Guattari the BwO is above all the enemy of social, psychological, or linguistic organization. It resists being coded, stratified, organized from the outside, whether it be the signifier, the socius, or Oedipus. What organs it does possess are only ever temporary and provisional organizations of flows. It is the virtual body. It is the body in process, a perpetual and never arrived at becoming (becoming animal, becoming woman, etc…).

In the essay entitled, "To Have Done with Judgment," in *Essays Critical and Clinical*, Artaud becomes the *Môm*o or child. The combat he wages against judgment, in particular the system of the judgment of God, is compared with the vital force of the baby. "Combat," Deleuze writes, as opposed to warfare, "is a powerful, nonorganic vitality that supplements force with force, and enriches whatever it takes hold of. A baby displays this vitality, this obstinate, stubborn, and indomitable will to live that differs from all organic life."[1] It is "nonorganic" because it is not yet personal; "organic" implies a higher level of organization or even socialization. Unlike the personal relationship one can have with a child, "with a baby," Deleuze explains, "one has nothing but an affective, athletic, impersonal, vital relationship." Once again Deleuze emphasizes the impersonal aspect of this nonorganic vitalistic force. This is the impersonal force that as we saw Deleuze credits Nietzsche with discovering. It is the impersonal Dionysian

[1] ECC, 133.

flow of force beneath the Apollonian surface of form. It is the life force that animates the dramatic *persona* of the mask, the pre-personal (Lacan's infant prior to the identification with the Symbolic order of the Mirror Stage).

According to Deleuze, this combat is the process of the "miniaturization" or the "minorization" of force. It is at this point that he identifies Artaud as "Artaud *le Môm*o, 'a child's ego, a little child consciousness.'" Artaud becomes for Deleuze Nietzsche's "child-player" from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.[1] This image of the child-player is linked to Dionysian affirmation, laughter, play, and dance.[2] Another connection between Nietzsche and Artaud becomes apparent. Artaud's new man with his body without organs is to be taught to dance,[3] just as Zarathustra's higher men are to learn to laugh and dance.[4] For Nietzsche laughter is the ultimate means of destruction: "Not by wrath does one kill but by laughter."[5] Artaud's humor, as Dumoulié suggests, is also apparent in his image of the body without organs.[6] This laughter is the ultimate combat against the judgment of God, which is why creating or finding the body without organs is, according to Deleuze, the ultimate means to escape judgment.[7]

Once we get the more formal critical/clinical distinction of the late *Essays Critical and Clinical*, we see even more clearly why Artaud's language is the "fulfillment of literature." Literature, according to Deleuze, presents three aspects:

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[1] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, I, "On the Three Metamorphoses" in *The Portable Nietzsche*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Penguin Books, 1982), 137-140.
[2] Deleuze discusses this section of *Zarathustra* in N, 193-194.
[3] SW, 571.
[4] Nietzsche, *Zarathustra*, IV, "On the Higher Man," §§ 17- 20.
[5] Nietzsche, *Zarathustra*, I, "On Reading and Writing."
[6] "On peut dire du « corps sans organes » qu'il est la reprise humoristique d'un motif religieux: celui du corps pur des mystiques, du corps glorieux de certains gnostiques ou bien du corps neuf d'après la résurrection." Dumoulié, *Antonin Artaud*, 120.
[7] ECC, 131.

> through the creation of syntax, it brings about not only a decomposition or destruction of the maternal language, but also the invention of a new language within language…Language seems to be seized by a delirium, which forces it out of its usual furrows. As for the third aspect, it stems from the fact that a foreign language cannot be hollowed out in one language without language as a whole in turn being toppled or pushed to a limit, to an outside or reverse side that consists of Visions and Auditions that no longer belong to any language…They are not outside language, but the outside of language.[1]

Deleuze then proceeds to show how Artaud's language exemplifies all three aspects. "These three aspects," he writes, "which are in perpetual movement, can be seen clearly in Artaud: the fall of letters in the decomposition of the maternal language (R, T…); their incorporation into a new syntax or in new names with a syntactic import, creators of a language ('eT$_R$eTé'); and, finally, breath-words, the asyntactical limit toward which all language tends." This is in part the minorization of literature described in Deleuze and Guattari's *Kafka* book, where language is made to stutter and one writes like a foreigner in one's own language—Kafka the Jew in Prague writing in German.[2] This is also, they write, "what Artaud did with French—cries, gasps."[3] We have already seen that Artaud claims to have produced a book which was not in French but in a sort of universal language which anyone could read. "I don't give a damn," Artaud writes at one point, "if my sentences sound French or Papuan…."[4]

As Tomiche observes, in *Essays Critical and Clinical* Deleuze is careful not to reduce the term clinical to a clinical state. Literature is no longer placed under the sign of schizophrenia or psychosis but rather under the sign of *délire* which is not that of a psychotic subject but the writer. Tomiche writes, "si l'on retrouve le postulat d'une

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[1] ECC, 5.
[2] K, 16ff.
[3] K, 26.
[4] Quoted in Weiss, *Phantasmic Radio*, 26.

proximité entre littérature et schizophrénie, formulé dans *L'Anti-Œdipe*, ce n'est plus tant parce que Artaud (ou Hölderlin) sont « schizos » et délirent mais parce qu'ils font délirer la langue."[1] In his study, *Philosophy through the Looking-Glass*, Lecercle glosses the word *délire* to indicate the intersection of language, nonsense and desire. He defines *délire* as "a form of discourse, which questions our most common conceptions of *language* (whether expressed by linguists or by philosophers), where the old philosophical question of the emergence of sense out of *nonsense* receives a new formulation, where the material side of language; its origin in the human body and *desire*, are no longer eclipsed by its abstract aspect (as an instrument of communication or expression)."[2] As Foucault has suggested: "By the end of the nineteenth century…literature had become utterance that inscribed in itself its own principle of decipherment."[3] In other words, literature is a language, like madness, that says its own sense. It has become nonsense, or *délire*. Artaud's nonsense, thus, is no less "meaningful" than is Carroll's. Artaud's madness lies, according to Foucault's analysis, precisely in his transgressive use of language.[4] It is not so much that he is delirious as that he makes language itself delirious.

Artaud unites in the body the substance and form of expression. In Artaud's theater, speech will be made use of "in a concrete and spatial sense, combining it with everything in the theater that is spatial and significant in the concrete domain;--to manipulate it like a solid object, one which overturns and disturbs things, in the air first of all, then in an infinitely more mysterious and secret domain but one that admits of

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[1] Tomiche, "L'Artaud de Deleuze," 160.
[2] Lecercle, *Philosophy through the Looking-Glass*, 6.
[3] Foucault, "Madness, the Absence of Work," 296.
[4] "Such utterance is transgressive not in its meaning, not in its verbal property, but in its *play*." Foucault, "Madness, the Absence of Work," 294.

extension, and it will not be very difficult to identify this secret but extended domain with that of a formal anarchy on the one hand but also with that of continuous formal creation on the other."[1] Words as things—solid objects. The form is the substance and substance is the form. This is why Artaud was so adamant about breath-work (the disturbance of the air) and vocal inflection for his actors. We heard from Paule Thévenin Artaud's method for working with the actor on establishing the rhythm and inflection for reading poetry, and how he himself literally pounded out his poems on a block of wood. "When I write,/" Artaud tells us, "I generally write,/ a note all/ at once/ but that/ is not enough for me,/ and I try to extend/ the action of what/ I have written/ into the atmosphere, so/ I get up/ I look for/ consonances/ aptnesses/ sounds,/ for attitudes of the body/ and limbs/ that testify,/ that call upon/ surrounding spaces/ to arise/ and speak/ then I come back/ to the printed/ page/ and/…/ but I am forgetting/ to say that these/ consonances/ have meaning/ I blow, I sing,/ I trill/ but not at random/ no/ I always have, say,/ a wondrous object/ or a world/ to create, to call forth."[2] Both the words and the drawings of these notebook texts (and Artaud did not consider the words separate from the drawings) from 1948, Artaud tells us are simply "the reproduction on/ the paper/ of a magical action/ that I have performed/ in true space/ with the breath of my/ lungs/ with my hands/ with my head/ with my 2 feet/ with my torso and my/ arteries, etc.—" Artaud's language, whether spoken or written (and he often dictated his writings towards the end) are expressions of the body. They are, as we have seen, primarily incantations or performatives. His glossolalia, as Weiss points out:

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[1] TD, 72.
[2] Antonin Artaud, *50 drawings to murder magic*, ed. Évelyne Grossman, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (London, New York, Calcutta: Seagull Books, 2008), 16-20.

> is the manifestation of language at the level of its pure materiality, the realm of pure sound, where there obtains a total disjunction of signifier and signified. As such, the relation between sound and meaning breaks down through glossolalic utterance; it is the image of language inscribed in excess, at the threshold of nonsense. Thus, as a pure manifestation of expression, the meaning of glossolalia depends upon the performative, dramatic, contextual aspects of such utterances within discourse and action; meaning becomes the function of the enthusiastic expression of the body, of kinetic, gestural behavior.[1]

Artaud's Body with or without Organs

As Morfee observes:

> The mould-breaking *corps sans organes*, if less widely known than Proust's time-bridging madeleine or Sartre's world-disintegrating tree root, has, like these, migrated from French literary studies to general cultural discourse. Nevertheless, what Artaud has to say about the *corps sans organes* has been only hastily examined, even by Artaud criticism. It has outgrown its author and the specific environment of his late poems, which are selectively interpreted in order to tally with the iconoclastic work the image is made to do.[2]

While it is beyond the purview of the present study to give a complete accounting of the whole of Artaud's late poems, spread as they are across more than sixteen volumes of his *Œuvres complètes* when one includes the *cahiers* from Rodez and after, I do want to highlight certain differences between Deleuze's (and Guattari's) appropriation of the BwO and what Artaud may have been trying to do with it. It is surprisingly difficult these days to find any extended discussions of Artaud's concept of the body without organs independent of its Deleuzian appropriation. Of course there are the hugely influential studies of Blanchot, Derrida, Foucault, and Kristeva, (to name a few), but it seems that when it comes to the BwO, so ubiquitous in Deleuze's work, that his vocabulary has come to define this concept for Artaud's readers. It is to try to sketch out

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[1] Weiss, *Phantasmic Radio*, 19-20.
[2] Morfee, *Writing Bodies*, 173.

at least in broad outline what Artaud may have been trying to do with this concept (and to argue that it was in fact a concept for him) that we now turn.

In his study of Artaud, Camille Dumoulié lists at least four possibilities for understanding Artaud's image of the body without organs.[1] One, as we have just seen, is a humoristic attempt to rewrite the Gnostic "glorious body" or the post-resurrection body. Here there is a connection to both Christ and his glorious body (Phil. 3:20-21) and to Dionysius dismembered by the Titans and resurrected. Another possibility is the Lacanian "corps pulsionnel antérieur à la constitution imaginaire." This would perhaps accord most closely with Deleuze's BwO in *The Logic of Sense*. A third possibility that Dumoulié lists is the Deleuzo-Guattarian "corps de pur désir." This is the BwO that gets worked out in the Capitalism and Schizophrenia volumes. Finally, one may consider the body without organs as one that "n'existe que par l'écriture, qu'il est une sorte de corps transférentiel entre le sujet de l'écriture et de le lecteur…." Ultimately for Dumoulié the body without organs is indefinable because it exists outside the confines of thought: "C'est un lieu « hors cadre », échappant à la vie qui a toujours voulu « encadrer » le corps, et c'est un mode d'ex-sistence qui refuse l'être." It is, he concludes, not so much a thing or a state as a dynamic process.

In his unfortunately neglected article, "'The Catastrophe of Heaven': Modernism, Primitivism, and the Madness of Antonin Artaud," Louis Sass disagrees with Deleuze and Dumoulié that Artaud's body without organs can be considered a "body of pure desire." On the contrary, for Sass, "the body without organs is a body without desire."[2] Sass also denies that Artaud has in mind any sort of simple unification of body and soul.

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[1] Dumoulié, *Antonin Artaud,* 120-122.
[2] Louis A. Sass, "'The Catastrophes of Heaven': Modernism, Primitivism, and the Madness of Antonin Artaud," *Modernism/Modernity* 3.2 (1996), 88.

"To reconcile the psychical with the physical in the form of the organic," he writes, "would, for Artaud, be tantamount to creating a psycholascivious parasite, the loathsome creature who combines the dependencies inherent in both knowing mind and yearning body. Artaud's 'body without organs,' his 'tree without organs or function,' implies a strange coming-together of spirit and substance—a denaturing of both mind and body in which each element is purified to the point of self-negation that is also a point of convergence between the two." Artaud does not want to just collapse the mind into the body nor the body into the mind. What he seeks is to "denature" or remake them both into a new and impossible union (a union which as we will see does not do away with all difference but is rather a unity-in-difference).

The association of the body without organs with the tree comes from a letter that Artaud wrote to Pierre Loeb (April 23, 1947): "The time was when man was a tree without organs or function, / but possessed of will, / and a tree of will which walks / will return. / It has been, and it will return."[1] We have seen how Artaud's body without organs becomes more and more tree- or bone-like. Artaud continues:

> For the great lie has been to make man an organism, / ingestion, / assimilation, / incubation, / excretion, / thus creating a whole order of hidden functions which are outside/ the realm of the/ *deliberative* will; / the will that determines itself at each instant; / for it was this, that human tree that walks, / a will that determines itself at each instant, / without functions that were hidden, underlying, governed/ by the *unconscious*.

Artaud's vision is of a purely self-conscious self-possession. His opposition to the organism here is based precisely on its unconscious physical (mainly alimentary) aspects. He wants a being of pure volition. "Artaud's body without organs is, after all," Sass

[1] SW, 515.

writes, "a pure and worldless will—self determining, self-identical, and self-aware."[1] As he said in his earlier "On Suicide"(1925), "If I kill myself , it won't be to destroy myself, but to rebuild myself... I would reintroduce *my designs* into nature through suicide. For the first time I would give things the shape of *my will*. I would free myself from the conditioned reflexes of my organs which are so badly correlated with *my ego*.[2] For Artaud, to combine the mind as we currently know and experience it with the body as we currently know and experience it would be to get the worst of both worlds. The whole anatomy has to change.

For Artaud it is because the body was badly made (this is part of Artaud's Gnostic metaphysics) that it experiences desires. He complains in *The Return of Artaud, Le Môмo* that: "The anchored mind, / screwed into me/ by the psycho-lubricous/ thrust/ of heaven/ is the one that thinks/ every temptation, / every desire, /every inhibition."[3] Artaud blames God (understood in the Gnostic sense as the evil demiurge) for botching creation, hence the need to have done with the judgment of God in both senses: God's judgment of us, and our judgment of God. "Dieu," Artaud writes, "…a fait cet ignoble corps traître qui m'empoisonne depuis toujours."[4] According to Derrida, for Artaud "God is… the proper name of that which deprives us of our own nature, of our own birth…He is the difference which insinuates itself between myself and myself as my death."[5] God is the Other that is living inside and off of him. "Au-dessus de la psychologie d'Antonin Artaud," Artaud writes, "il y a la psychologie d'un autre/ qui vit,

[1] Sass, "'The Catastrophes of Heaven,'" 88.
[2] CW, I, 157 emphasis mine.
[3] SW, 523.
[4] OC, XVI, 202, quoted in Morfee, *Writing Bodies*, 175.
[5] Derrida, "La parole soufflée", 181.

boit, mange, dort, pense et rêve dans mon corps."[1] Common to many of the names that Artaud uses for God is the image of the parasite.[2] God is a Being and as such does not exist, cannot exist except by taking physical form. "Qu'est-ce que c'est pour un être que d'être ?" Artaud asks, "C'est avoir corps et se sentir corps dans l'espace."[3] This form he steals from Artaud: "Dieu n'a jamais rien fait pour moi que de m'enlever la vie pour la donner à ses passions."[4] God is, for Artaud, "le voleur éternel."[5] Now, according to Artaud, everyone has the right to ask, "*ET QU'AS-TU FAIT DE MON CORPS, DIEU*?"[6] God's presence in Artaud's body prevents Artaud from achieving the perfect coincidence with himself that he desires. As Weiss explains, "From this comes the need to kill God, to be done with his judgment, in order to gain one's own autonomy in order to conquer the work of the negative by means of life's creative forces." That is why Artaud needs his own immaculate conception, his own autopoiesis.

The real problem is seeing the mind as something other thrust or "screwed into" the body, or thinking that the body does not already have a mind of its own. "There is a mind in the flesh…," Artaud writes.[7] The reason that humanity is malformed is precisely because there is a gap in consciousness between the body and the mind. There is an inner void that Artaud's body without organs is designed to eliminate. That is why Artaud's body without organs is already a concept for him, part of a metaphysical plan, prior to Deleuze's appropriation of it. It is also why Artaud's conception of the body without organs is not entirely compatible with Deleuze's. As Artioli points out, "Without

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[1] OC, XIV**, 71, quoted in Morfee, *Writing Bodies*, 160.
[2] See Morfee, *Writing Bodies*, 165.
[3] OC, XV, 160, quoted in Morfee, *Writing Bodies,* 160.
[4] OC, XV, 211, quoted in Morfee, *Writing Bodies,* 162.
[5] OC, XV, 177, quoted in Morfee, *Writing Bodies*, 162.
[6] Quoted in Goodall, *Artaud and the Gnostic Drama,* 212.
[7] SW, 111.

denying the value of *Anti-Oedipus*, stress needs to be laid on how the myth of liberation, obsessive for Artaud, continues to be linked with the Gnostic 'matrix' of his thought and on how for the author of Van Gogh the crime of society is nothing but the infinite repetition of a metaphysical crime."[1] It is God, as we have just seen, who Artaud claims introduced (or is himself) this internal void. For Deleuze God is just a shorthand for the system of transcendental judgment (socius, signifier, Oedipus, etc…) while for Artaud God is the Gnostic demiurge who is experienced internally as a painful void or barrier preventing complete coincidence between the body and soul. Artaud's struggle with God is being played out in a very personal struggle for complete conscious self-possession. Artaud does not want to dissolve his *moi* into an impersonal plane of consistency, he wants to become fully himself and to *experience himself*, both body and mind, without the internal void separating him from himself.

Artaud writes in *Suppôts et supplications* :

> Entre le corps et le corps il n'y a rien,/ rien que moi./ Ce n'est pas un état,/ pas un objet,/ pas un esprit,/ pas un fait,/ encore moins le vide d'un être,/ absolument rien d'un esprit, ni de l'esprit,/ pas un corps,/ c'est l'intransplantable moi./ Mais pas un moi,/ je n'en ai pas./ Je n'ai pas de moi, mais il n'y a que moi et personne,/ pas de rencontre possible avec l'autre,/ ce que je suis est sans différenciation ni opposition possible,/ c'est l'intrusion absolue de mon corps, *partout*.[2]

Artaud desires to be completely co-extensive with his body, without any intrusive Other.

Artaud is completely anti-Cartesian in his rejection of body/mind dualism. In one of his most philosophical passages, he meditates upon the experience of burning his hand. "Quand ma main brûle, elle brûle;" Artaud observes:

> Il y a le fait que ma main brûle, lequel déjà, si j'y pense, est,/ comme fait, très menacé,/ avoir le sentiment que ma main brûle, c'est entrer dans un/

[1] Artioli, "Production of reality or hunger for the impossible?", 147.
[2] OC, XIV**, 76.

> autre rayon,/ si j'ai l'idée que ma main brûle, je ne suis déjà plus dans ma/ main mais en état de supervision, cet état où l'esprit espion/ m'a fait venir pour que je lui cède plus que ma main et sa/ douleur, mais un monde de conceptions.[1]

Artaud wants to be in the hand and not be the separate consciousness that observes as if from a distance the fact that the hand, a part of the extended body, is burning. For the mind to spy on the body is to introduce a separation or distance between them. In one of his earliest dramatic works, *Paul the Birds*, Artaud writes:

> Picture [Paul] as you like, standing, in front of a window or an easel or even without any sort of appearance, shorn of his body, as he would have liked to be. With nowhere in space to mark the location of his mind.
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> He is probing an inconceivable problem. To make up his mind as if it were not he who was making it up, seeing himself with his mind's eye, without it being his mind's eye. Retaining the benefit of his personal judgment by alienating the very individuality of that judgment. Seeing himself unaware that it is he who sees himself. But this survey of himself should extend and take form before him like a measurable, composite landscape.
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> Yet as he continues to pursue this problem, it shifts. At times he is the container, at other times the contents.[2]

Against this dualism of container and contents, Artaud wants to remake both body and mind so that the container and contents are perfectly coextensive. "The body," Morfee comments, "is something that is lived and felt, it frames and informs all consciousness, but, once the fundamental experience of being body is verbalized and conceptualized, then the most important thing about bodily existence, the fact that in lived experience Artaud has an unmediated awareness that he *is* his body and that he is co-extensive with his body, is lost."[3] As Morfee, Sass, and Artioli all point out in slightly different ways, Artaud wants the impossible. As Morfee puts it, "If Artaud complains about the impossibility of living, and claims he is prevented from living, he is referring to the

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[1] OC, XIV**, 80-81.
[2] CW I, 147.
[3] Morfee, *Writing Bodies*, 177.

almost impossible task of just living, of having bodily experiences and sensations and not having them in such a way as to perceive them as in any way distinct from him." These are the only kinds of sensations that Artaud wants—pure sensations not second-order perceptions. "What Artaud's texts are doing with the image-concept of the *corps sans organes*," Morfee suggests, "is not so much suggesting that the body be changed as that the way it is conceived be rethought from a very different perspective. Instead of being thought of as an assemblage of parts, it needs to be taken as an irreducible whole, as this is…the prerequisite for full identity."[1]

Anti-Cartesian Artaud

The sort of self-identity that Artaud is seeking is the overcoming of Cartesian dualism. In his article, "Remembering Artaud," written for a special edition commemorating the centenary of Artaud's birth, Gautam Dasgupta observes:

> It is this nexus of thinking and its physicalized attributes that distinguishes Artaud from other theorist-practitioners in the theatre, for even though he was emphatic in valuing the physical over the literary on stage, he was far from denying to spectacle the attributes of serious mystical, mythical, and philosophical import. *Resolution of Cartesian dualism was integral to his thinking… Artaud was, finally, a metaphysical thinker*….[2]

In fact, Dasgupta argues, it is precisely this *philosophical* element in Artaud that has been lost in his translation into American theater which has been more interested in the experimental performance aspects of Artaud's theater than in the philosophical theory behind it. Artaud's whole body of work, from his early poems, the Théâtre Alfred Jarry pieces, to his final radio play and notebook writings, reveals his attempt to overcome the Cartesian dualism that separated mind and body. Olivier Penot-Lacassagne also notes

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[1] Morfee, *Writing Bodies*, 190.
[2] Gautam Dasgupta, "Remembering Artaud," *Performing Arts Journal*, 19: 2 (May, 1997), 2 (emphasis mine).

"l'anticartésianisme d'Artaud" when he writes that for Artaud, "Le monde n'est pas *res extensa*, il est à la fois *cosmos* et *mundus corpus*, là où 'je suis' et le lieu de ma venue, l'espace de la responsabilité du sens et le sens s'engendrant. Cette conception non dualiste de la chair et de la pensée récuse l'hétérogénéité du signe et du sens, du dedans et du dehors, de l'humain et de l'universel."[1] Artaud is against all dualisms of sign and sense, interior and exterior, body and spirit. His attempts to bridge the gap separating body and spirit are a constant theme from the beginning of his work to its end.

Artaud attempted, as Derrida notes, to destroy the history of dualist metaphysics.[2] Matter exists only *through* the spirit, and the spirit only *in* matter."[3] For Artaud, neither spirit nor matter can exist without the other. For spirit to actually exist, as we have seen, it must take on body. Body, however, never exists without spirit. Artaud refuses either reduction of body into spirit or spirit into body. There is no final reconciliation of such an absolute opposition (no dialectical synthesis of the Hegelian variety possible).[4] The only way out is to denature both the body and the mind and replace them with the new and glorious body of the body without organs. As Dasgupta comments:

> The absented body in Artaud is not a formal principle but a necessary rite of passage that leads to a body of thought. Artaud's body decomposes into thought; for him, the body encases thought, entombs it, and it is only by making the body transparent and by giving up its ghost that its innate knowledge can be made self-evident. *The sole purpose in Artaud to eviscerate the body, to tear limb from limb, to turn it inside out is to make visible the ceaseless activity of thought that lies buried within*. To understand the nature of thought and thinking is to

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[1] Olivier Penot-Lacassagne, *Antonin Artaud : 'Moi, Antonin Artaud, homme de la terre*,' (Paris : Éditions Aden, 2007), 64.
[2] Derrida, *"La parole soufflée,"* 175. The adjective *dualist* is key here. Later, I will explore some important differences between the Derridean and Deleuzian readings of Artaud.
[3] Artaud, *Heliogabalus*, 65-66.
[4] In an important footnote referring to Artaud's *Heliogabalus* in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari write: "It is true that Artaud still presents the identity of the One and the Multiple as a dialectical unity, one that reduces the multiple by gathering it into the One. He makes Heliogabalus a kind of Hegelian. But that is a manner of speaking, for from the beginning multiplicity surpasses all opposition and does away with dialectical movement." TP, 532 n.16.

> understand the body and all its varied functions. Hence Artaud's relentless emphasis on the body and its parts in his writings and drawings. *To be cruel to the body is not, in Artaud, an act of sado-masochism or an artistic ploy; it is an existential act with grave metaphysical consequences*.[1]

Artaud's various attempts, from *The Nerve Meter*, *Manifesto in Clear Language*, and *The Situation of the Flesh*, to formulate his "metaphysics of the flesh" will eventually culminate in his concept-image of the body without organs in his 1947 radio play, "To Have Done with the Judgment of God."

The struggle with and for the body becomes evident from the very beginning in the young poet's correspondence with *NRF* editor, Jacques Rivière and continues throughout Artaud's work. It is the sought for physicality of ideas and language itself that prompts Artaud's turn towards theatre as a space for the physical embodiment of ideas. "In Artaud's work," Stephen Barber writes, "the body is everything: to transform or transmit the body is the intention of all his work."[2] According to Barber this is as true of the early cinema work as it is of the late radio play.

Susan Sontag notes that "Artaud's writings on the theater may be read as a psychological manual on the reunification of mind and body. Theater became his supreme metaphor for the self-correcting, spontaneous, carnal, intelligent life of the mind."[3] This search for reunification, however, is experienced with much pain by Artaud. According to Sontag, Artaud held a principle of "psychological materialism" by which is meant that "the absolute mind is also absolutely carnal." Sontag goes on to explain:

> Indeed what causes Artaud's incurable pain is precisely his refusal to consider the mind apart from the situation of the flesh. Far from being disembodied, his

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[1] Dasgupta, "Remembering Artaud," 4.
[2] Stephen Barber, *Artaud: The Screaming Body*, (Creation Books, 1999), 23.
[3] SW, xxxvi.

> consciousness is one whose martyrdom results from its seamless relation to the body. In his struggle against all hierarchical or merely dualistic notions of consciousness, Artaud constantly treats his mind as if it were a kind of body—a body that he could not 'possess,' because it was either too virginal or too defiled, and also a mystical body by whose disorder he was 'possessed'… The difficulties that Artaud laments persist because he is thinking about the unthinkable—about how the body is mind and how mind is also a body.[1]

Artaud's interest in spirituality, both his native Catholicism and the esoteric traditions (including Gnosticism and alchemy), is part of his obsession with the process of transforming the body, ridding it of its organ-ization, and turning it inside out. As Naomi Greene observes, Artaud "constantly sought spiritual and metaphysical realities in which the duality he saw between matter and mind, body and soul, fact and idea, could be reconciled. His desire to find a principle transcending the duality is at the base of his fascination for various mystical doctrines and esoteric religions."[2] Artaud, not unlike his fellow modernist, D. H. Lawrence, journeyed to Mexico precisely to escape European rationalism and its Cartesian heritage. Both men were interested in the *pre*-Columbian cultures of the Americas before their contamination by European settlers and missionaries.

"The theater Artaud wants to create," Sontag writes, "enacts a secularized Gnostic rite."[3] It is a program for the spiritual and alchemical transformation of humanity. It is to produce the "redeemed" body divested of the organs which defile it. Sontag goes on to say, however, "Artaud's basic ideas are crude; what gives them their power is the intricacy and eloquence of his self-analysis, unequaled in the history of the Gnostic

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[1] SW, xxiv, xxv.
[2] Naomi Greene, "Antonin Artaud: Metaphysical Revolutionary," *Yale French Studies*, 39 (1967), 189. Where I differ with Greene is that she sees a radical shift in Artaud's later writings away from his interest in spirituality towards a more violently reductive materialism. While it is certainly true that Artaud's relation with religion changes in his last years, I think that his metaphysical preoccupation with transforming the body is consistent throughout his works and that even his later expressions of materialism need not be taken as eliminative.
[3] SW, xlvii.

imagination. And, for the first time, the Gnostic themes can be seen in evolution. Artaud's work is particularly precious as the first complete documentation of someone *living through* the trajectory of Gnostic thought."[1] Even for Sontag, however, Artaud is ultimately a failure.[2] Unlike Greene, however, Sontag sees the consistency between the early and late works:

> As Artaud reaches toward the unspeakable, his imagination coarsens. Yet his last works, in their mounting obsession with the body and their ever more explicit loathing of sex, still stand in a direct line with the early writings, in which there is, parallel to the mentalization of the body, a corresponding sexualization of consciousness. What Artaud wrote between 1946 and 1948 only extends metaphors he used throughout the nineteen-twenties—of mind as a body that never allows itself to be 'possessed,' and of the body as some kind of demonic, writhing, brilliant mind. *In Artaud's fierce battle to transcend the body, everything is eventually turned into the body.*"[3]

With final irony, Artaud the Gnostic eventually becomes Artaud the absolute materialist:

> Non, les choses ne sont pas venues d'un esprit infinitésimal qui parti du néant
> s'est épaissi et rassemblé jusqu'à l'être.
> Elles sont venues d'un corps existant, qui a tiré de toutes pièces,
> du néant même,
> avec son souffle,
> des corps, des objets et des choses qu'il a
> façonnés avec la main. –
> Et c'est cela le matérialisme absolu.—[4]

In this posthumously published late notebook entry from the post-Rodez period, Artaud seemingly reverses his earlier Gnostic leanings and embraces an absolute materialism.

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[1] SW, li.
[2] "As Artaud's life suggests, all schemes for ending dualism, for a unified consciousness at the Gnostic level of intensity, are eventually bound to fail—that is, their practioners collapse into what society calls madness or into silence or suicide," SW, liii. To which Deleuze and Guattari will add: "Even if Artaud did not succeed for himself, it is certain that through him something has succeeded for us all." TP, 164.
[3] SW, lii (emphasis mine).
[4] Antonin Artaud, "Notes pour une 'Lettre aux Balinais,'" *Tel Quel*, 46 (1971), 12. This text was found in the notebooks dated February 1947. See Évelyne Grossman's editorial note in *Artaud: Oeuvres*, ed. Évelyne Grossman, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2004), 1468.

Everything comes not from an infinitesimal spirit but from an always already existing body. The spirit would not exist without the body. It might seem that Artaud's solution to Gnostic dualism is to simply to reject the spiritual and to embrace materialism. He would thus overcome the Cartesian dualism by rejecting the *res cogitans* in favor of everything simply being *res extensa*. But this is, as we have seen, to move to fast. Artaud wants to hold on to a sort of Heraclitan unity-in-tension rather than opt for a Hegelian synthesis. As Nietzsche might suggest, "Between ourselves, it is not at all necessary…to get rid of 'the soul' itself and thus forgo one of the oldest and most venerable of hypotheses: as is often the case with clumsy naturalists, who can hardly touch 'the soul' without losing it."[1] Artaud would certainly agree with Nietzsche that "Put briefly, perhaps the entire evolution of the spirit is a question of the body; it is the history of the development of a higher body that emerges into our sensibility. The organic is rising to yet higher levels…In the long run, it is not a question of man at all: he is to be overcome."[2] Artaud wants to create a new body, the body without organs, that is at once physical and spiritual, but one in which the parts even while remaining distinct perfectly coincide with one another without any separating void or lack.

All of this raises the question as to whether Derrida's reading of Artaud as longing for a lost sense of presence is not a more accurate reading of Artaud's project than is Deleuze's.[3] If it turns out that Artaud's metaphysical project is at heart nostalgia for a lost presence, or even a future-oriented attempt to establish a perfect self-presence,

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[1] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1990), §12.
[2] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, ed. Walter Kaufmann, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), §676.
[3] I am thinking primarily here of Derrida's two early essays on Artaud in *Writing and Difference*: "La parole soufflée" and "The Theater of Cruelty and the Closure of Representation."

then that would cast serious suspicion on Deleuze's appropriation of Artaud for his own metaphysical project of thinking difference. Morfee has already suggested that it is precisely a "self-conscious self-possession" that Artaud wants. Indeed, Frida Beckman has recently raised just such concerns about the appropriateness of the choice of Artaud for Deleuze's project.[1] She too characterizes Artaud's project as one of nostalgia not ultimately helpful for Deleuze's own project. Jeffrey Bell, on the other hand, has tried to defend Deleuze's reading against this possible Derridean objection.[2] But what Bell succeeds in doing is showing that Deleuze's reading of Artaud is different from Derrida's and that Deleuze's *reading* of Artaud's body without organs is not *itself* open to Derridean critique. What Bell does not entertain, however, is whether Deleuze's (or Derrida's for that matter) reading of Artaud agrees with Artaud's own project. In other words, he does not attempt to give Artaud an independent voice nor does he consider what Artaud's own conception of the body without organs might be independent of Deleuze's and Derrida's readings.

Bell, like other Deleuzian commentators, simply follows Deleuze and Guattari's contention that what Artaud opposes is not so much the organs themselves but their organization.[3] Deleuze and Guattari posit the existence of "true organs" to which the BwO is not opposed. But there is no textual evidence in the only text where Artaud mentions the body without organs by name, "To Have Done With the Judgment of God," that any sort of organ will remain once man is reconstructed on the autopsy table.[4]

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[1] See Beckman, "The Idiocy of the Event."
[2] See Bell, *Philosophy at the Edge of Chaos*, pp. 153ff. In what follows I am drawing heavily on Bell's account.
[3] "The BwO is opposed not to the organs but to that organization of the organs called the organism," TP, 158. This claim is repeated in FB, 32.
[4] SW, 570.

Furthermore, the tree-man image mentioned earlier would seem to indicate a non-differentiated (even by "true organs") anatomy.[1] Bell acknowledges that the way Deleuze's BwO escapes from a Derridean critique is precisely because it has the inner-differentiation of these "true organs."[2] Deleuze needs there still to be organs so that everything does not just collapse into an undifferentiated One. Even when he calls the BwO an egg, he is careful to stipulate that even the egg is "…not undifferentiated, but is where things and organs are distinguished solely by gradients, migrations, zones of proximity."[3] So for Deleuze, even eggs must have organs of sorts. If, however, Artaud really does mean to do away with organs and inner-differentiation (which is closer to Derrida's reading in "La parole soufflée") that would cause serious problems for Deleuze.

Deleuze's reading is based on the slippage from *organs* to *organisms* in Artaud's phrase: "*The body is the body. Alone it stands. And in no need of organs. Organism it never is. Organisms are the enemies of the body*."[4] The mention of *organism* here allows Deleuze to suggest that the real enemy of the BwO is not the organs but the organism. This seems scant evidence to build a whole reading of Artaud's metaphysical project upon. Artaud repeats his assessment of the uselessness of organs in "To Have Done with the Judgment of God."[5] There is, to my knowledge, no distinction in Artaud between ordinary organs and "true" organs. As we have seen with the example of the burning hand, Artaud wants the impossible—he wants his consciousness to be fully coextensive without any internal impediment with his body. Organs are closed-off and

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[1] Artaud refers to the tree-man as precisely "without functions *or organs*…," SW, 517 emphasis mine.
[2] Bell, *Philosophy at the Edge of Chaos*, 159.
[3] TP, 164.
[4] Quoted in TP, 158.
[5] "…there is nothing more useless than an organ." SW, 570.

function unconsciously for the most part. Artaud does not want there to be such pockets of unconscious activity. All is to be made conscious.

Deleuze is right to think that Artaud combats the organization of the body by the judgment of God. But for Artaud, God is an internal, not an external, enemy. The socius with its doctors and psychiatrists are the external enemies (and here he and Deleuze agree). But God is not just a principle of transcendence for Artaud. He is, as we saw above, that which causes the inner void, the internal "other" that prevents complete coincidence with the self.[1] God and Artaud are battling to inhabit the same body. Artaud does not just want to have done with judgment, but with God as well.[2] Artaud wants to explode his badly constructed body because it is a body of pain, the site of contention between him and God. His new body without organs will be sealed off and impervious to invasion. There will be nothing left that is not Artaud, no inner voids or differentiations. Rather than becoming-imperceptible, Artaud will become unforgettable:

> Who am I?
> Where do I come from?
> I am Antonin Artaud
> and if I say it
> as I know how to say it
> immediately
> you will see my present body
> fly into pieces
> and under ten thousand
> notorious aspects
> a new body
> will be assembled
> in which you will never again
> be able

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[1] "Au-dessus de la psychologie d'Antonin Artaud il y a la psychologie d'un autre/ qui vit, boit, mange, dort, pense et rêve dans mon corps." Quoted in Morfee, *Writing Bodies*, 160.

[2] Deleuze drops the reference to God in his title, "To Have Done with Judgment" in ECC. Alan Weiss has pointed out the amphibology in Artaud's title as to whether Artaud wants to have done with God's judgment of him or with his judgment of God. See Weiss, *Phantasmic Radio*, 14. Deleuze seems to opt for the first option. I am suggesting that Artaud is opting for the second.

to forget me.[1]

"Becoming-imperceptible" is a process of reduction or shrinkage.[2] Artaud wants to explode. He does not want to "become like everyone else," he wants to become unforgettable.

[1] Antonin Artaud, *Watchfiends & Rack Screams*, ed. and trans. Clayton Eshleman with Bernard Bador (Boston: Exact Change, 1995), 323.
[2] TP, 279ff.

Conclusion

Eric Alliez also sees the development in Deleuze's thought that I have been attempting to trace whereby, "the Logic of Sense becomes a Logic of Sensation."[1] Alliez argues that, "The aporetic lot of *The Logic of Sense* is fixed in its last paragraph, when the question of a 'something else' remains as the fact of the Stoic-Carrollian logic of sense, and which *must await the work of art to come which will only give an answer*."[2] This "something else," Alliez suggests, is "a sequence of intensive states forming a collective becoming which limits Sense to the direction of its 'lines of flight'… *An asignifying, intensive use of language*, 'speaking *on the same level as* states of things (*parlant à même les choses*),' *which gives to the syntax the forces' cry, and makes it a machine of expression in an intense matter = energy*." [3] This is the Event that Deleuze seeks, "which communicates the univocity of being to language."[4] In other words, that which would create the fragile surface of sense that reunites words and things. Sense must constantly flee being captured in signifying structures. What Deleuze is after is not relations of objects (where words merely represent objects or states of affairs to our minds) but rather relations of intensive states, not of static being but of perpetual becoming. This line of flight from structuralism is what Carroll's nonsense to a lesser degree, and Artaud's schizophrenic language will to a greater degree, help him to achieve. The Stoic-Carrollian logic of sense has not yet rendered fully visible the affective forces that are seeking expression. It has not yet made visible the equation of matter = energy, or the rendering of the virtual in the actual and *vice versa*. That is

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[1] Eric Alliez, "The BwO Condition or, The Politics of Sensation," 21.
[2] Ibid., emphases in the original. See LoS, 248-249.
[3] Ibid., emphases in the original.
[4] LoS, 248.

something that awaits the work of art yet to come, and which will require a shift from a logic of sense to a logic of sensation.

In the *Kafka* book, which, as Alliez notes, is a sort of appendix to *Anti-Oedipus*, coming as it does in between that collaboration and *A Thousand Plateaus*, sense is now relegated to lines of flight. "Of sense," Deleuze and Guattari now write, "there remains only enough to direct the lines of escape [from the reterritorialization of the signifier]." Minor literature, like that of Kafka or Artaud, deterritorializes language, meaning that it frees it from its signifying structures. It is a subversive language that challenges the structures of the master-language. The minorization of language is a process of becoming a foreigner *within one's own language*. It is what Kafka does with German and what Artaud does with French.[1] Sound becomes deterritorialized from the language of sense:

> Since articulated sound was a deterritorialized noise but one that will be reterritorialized in sense, it is now sound itself that will be deterritorialized irrevocably, absolutely. The sound or the word that traverses this new deterritorialization no longer belongs to a language of sense, even though it derives from it, nor is it an organized music or song, even though it might appear to be… Everywhere, organized music is traversed by a line of abolition—just as a language of sense is traversed by a line of escape—in order to liberate a living and expressive material that speaks for itself and has no need of being put into a form. This language torn from sense, conquering sense, bringing about an active neutralization of sense, no longer finds its value in anything but an accenting of the word, an inflection….[2]

This is exactly what Artaud's *mots-cris* and *mots-souffles* do to his French. Deleuze noted in *The Logic of Sense* how Artaud's language becomes one of pure tonality and inflection. He has torn language from sense. But now, post *Anti-Oedipus*, this is celebrated as liberatory, rather than (clinically) diagnosed as schizophrenia. Minor

[1] "It's what Artaud did with French—cries, gasps…," K, 26
[2] K, 21.

language expresses itself and has no need of grammar, syntax, or form. It becomes the expression of intensity rather than form. Here, as Alliez writes, "Kafka (the becoming-animal of Kafka) meets Artaud (a world of pure intensities) when Art has no other question than '*to capture forces' (capter des forces) because force is the constitutive condition of sensation for a body; because sensation reaches the body by breaking through the organism which imprisons life.*"[1]

By the time we come to the *Bacon* book, as we have seen, painting is now privileged as the art form that renders visible the invisible forces. Alliez suggests that Artaud discovered the body without organs through the painter Van Gogh and through his own "action drawings" (to borrow Derrida's phrase).[2] "There is no other reason," Alliez writes, "for the *Logic of Sense to be substituted with the Logic of Sensation, and to be associated with painting*, once painting, *action painting hysterically presents* ('by an excess of presence') the sequence Expression = Construction = Becoming—and does so without the concept of 'sign'…."[3] This is what Artaud's own drawings do. It is unfortunate that Deleuze never considers Artaud's drawings, because I think they, even more so than Bacon's paintings, would have illustrated his logic of sensation.

Artaud says of his drawings, "My drawings are not drawings but documents."[4] What they document are certain emotions or intensive states. "An emotion is added thus," Artaud writes, "something like the framework of the hair of an emotion naturally produced (as one says: there's a hair in there), of the emotion generating the drawings, I

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[1] Alliez, "The BwO Condition or, The Politics of Sensation," 22. Emphases in the original.
[2] Ibid., See Jacques Derrida, *Artaud le Moma* (Paris : Galilée, 2002), 98. In the title Derrida is punning on The MoMA (New York's Museum of Modern Art where this paper was delivered) and Artaud's nickname of Le Môm o.
[3] Alliez, "The BwO Condition or, The Politics of Sensation," 22. Emphases in the original.
[4] Artaud, *Works on Paper*, 61.

mean, whoever looks at my drawings must superadd this primal emotion subordinated by nature on pain of becoming no more than an incompetent illiterate."[1] Thus, Artaud's drawings are direct expressions of affective intensities. One does not look at the drawing to see what it is supposed to represent, but rather to experience its intensive effect. Harkening back to his early correspondence with Rivière concerning his *writing* ability, Artaud says now of his *drawing* ability evidenced in his artwork: "Judge them only from the standpoint of art or truthfulness as you would a telling and consummate object and you'll say: This is all very well, but there is a lack of manual and technical training and as a draftsman Mr. Artaud is only a beginner, he needs ten years of personal apprenticeship or at the polytechnic of fine arts."[2]

In another notebook entry in February 1947, Artaud writes of his drawings:

> …knowing no more about drawing than about nature, I had made up my mind to coax out those forms, lines, outlines, shadows, colors, features that, as in modern painting, would represent nothing and would moreover not claim to be integrated in accordance with whatsoever visual or material law, but would create, as it were, above the paper a kind of counter-figure that would be a protest against the laws of the created object.
>
> The goal of all these drawn and colored figures was to exorcize the curse, to vituperate bodily against the exigencies of spatial form, of perspective, of measure, of equilibrium, of dimension and, via this vituperative act of protest, to condemn the psychic world which, like a crab louse, digs its way into the physical, and, like an incubus or succubus, claims to have given it shape… And the figures I thereby made were spells—which, after so meticulously having drawn them, I put a match to.[3]

Artaud says his drawings are "spells." In 1937, before his departure for Ireland, Artaud began sending these "spells" (*sorts* or *gris-gris* as he sometimes called them) to select correspondents. They were texts coupled with drawings on pages which he tore and

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[1] Artaud, *Works on Paper*, 62.
[2] Artaud, *Works on Paper*, 61.
[3] Artaud, *Works on Paper*, 42.

burned cigarette holes in. As Artaud says of the texts and drawings in *50 Drawings to Murder Magic*, "So they are mixed up / with pages / laid down on pages / where writing is at the forefront / of vision, / writing, / feverish notes / effervescent, / ardent / blasphemy / imprecation. / From imprecation / to imprecation / these pages progress / and like bodies of / new / sensibility / these drawings / are there / to comment upon them, / the aerate / and clarify them." They are not even drawings, properly speaking, Artaud says.[1] They are "magical first and foremost."[2] Both the text and the drawing functioned as performatives.

For Artaud the notion of magic serves as "a form of communication from within to without, from the act to the thought, from the thing to the word, from matter to mind…." As Grossman comments, "Magic is thus a link for Artaud, an awesomely effective form of 'communication'. It is no doubt the only way to heal that 'painful split' between things and words…."[3] It is through this magical transformation of language and art that Artaud seeks to bring together the sign and sense whereby the words or the images merely say, or express, their own sense. They are not dependent on an external grammar or syntax to render their meaning.

The drawings are, as we have already seen, the reproduction on paper of real bodily movements.[4] Artaud's drawings, like his writings, are the products of bodily performance and are themselves meant to be performative. Artaud's figures, like Bacon's, are *figural* and never *figurative*. They are concerned less with form than with

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[1] Artaud, *50 Drawings*, 4, cf. 8.
[2] Artaud, *50 Drawings*, 4.
[3] Évelyne Grossman, preface to *50 Drawings to Murder Magic*, by Antonin Artaud, ed. Évelyne Grossman, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (London, New York, and Calcutta: Seagull Books, 2008), ix.
[4] Artaud, *50 Drawings*, 16.

the expression of force. The drawings vituperate, as Artaud puts it, against all exigencies of form that seek to impose a structure on bodily forces.

If *The Logic of Sense* was in any way a "structuralist" book, we have seen the transformation in Deleuze's thought by the time we get to the *Francis Bacon* book, where the logic of sensation now replaces that of sense. The encounter with Artaud, as I have tried to demonstrate, was crucial for this transformation. Even in *The Logic of Sense*, Artaud is an uneasy presence, threatening to rend the fragile surface of sense. The collaboration with Guattari was absolutely essential as well for the expansion in the understanding of schizophrenia.

But as I have also tried to demonstrate the encounter with Artaud is only a partial one. It is in many ways, as Morfee said, a "disappointing failed encounter."[1] The first encounter of *The Logic of Sense* failed, as Deleuze himself succumbed to the temptation to pass a clinical judgment on Artaud based on his use of language. Subsequent opportunities for encounter failed because of the strategy of separating the man from the work. The central problem with Deleuze's relation to the man, Artaud, is that he makes of him an example of madness, even if that example is valorized at times. Deleuze will use Artaud's biography to illustrate the struggle against social and political forces of control, but when it comes to his works, the man seems to disappear underneath the critical appropriation of the text. Artaud's body without organs is lifted from his text and put to work in Deleuze's philosophical project. This is hardly surprising given Deleuze's hermeneutical principle of buggery. But Deleuze seems to violate his own stated principle because he also adds, "It was really important for it to be his own child, because

[1] Morfee, *Writing Bodies*, 6n.

the author had to actually say all that I had him saying."[1] I have been suggesting that Artaud, in fact, is saying something different. There is an element of Artaud's unique suffering that is not captured neither in Deleuze's early concept of Sense nor in the later concept of the BwO. Artaud's self-assertion and his *will* get lost in the impersonal plane of Deleuze's philosophy.

Deleuze would no doubt counter my criticisms here by explaining that he was not trying to be a commentator or Artaud scholar, but rather to *do something* with Artaud's texts. My concern here, however, is for the appropriateness of Artaud's texts as tools for Deleuze's project. One can, perhaps, drive a nail with the heel of a shoe, but much better with a hammer. How much violence is done to Artaud and his own project by Deleuze's appropriation? Deleuze and Guattari's reading of the BwO has become so pervasive and dominant that hardly anyone asks anymore whether this is what Artaud himself meant by it. Again, this is not so much a question of establishing authorial intent as it is a question of whether the texts themselves will bear such usage without irremediable damage. It is one thing for Deleuze to create a concept called the BwO, which proves quite successful for his own purposes, but quite another for him to claim that he got this concept from Artaud (in any way other than in name only). Artaud may be a constant dialogue partner for Deleuze, but, as I have also tried to show, Deleuze seems to end up doing most of the talking. Artaud is disappearing beneath the weight of Deleuze's own project.

My own disappointment in the failed full encounter between Deleuze and Artaud lies in the reasons for its failure. In spite of all the seeming valorization of madness and schizophrenia from *Anti-Oedipus* forward, there still seems a reluctance to enter, even imaginatively, into Artaud's singular experience (his pain) and the perspective it affords.

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[1] N, 6.

Madness, which as Foucault suggests is inextricably linked with literature, seems once again pushed to the outside of philosophy.[1] Artaud the man must be held at arms length. "Comment tu peux supporter les schizos?," Deleuze asks.[2] Schizophrenia remains for him just a theoretical category.[3] The problem with this is that an "authentic madman" like Artaud is once again denied his own voice. Deleuze, as I have tried to demonstrate, unwittingly sides with Rivière and Ferdière in trying to force Artaud into their own frameworks (albeit very different ones). Deleuze like Rivière substitutes himself and his own concerns for those of Artaud and begins speaking in Artaud's name. He becomes another *voleur* of Artaud. Artaud ends up not being taken seriously as a thinker in his own right. It is far easier to say of Artaud that "he was mad" than it is to wrestle with his highly unique and often bewildering texts. This approach allows one to pick over the bits one wants and to disregard the rest. But such an approach violates another of Deleuze's own stated principles: "When you admire someone you don't just pick and choose; you may like this or that book better than some other one, but you nevertheless take them as a whole, because you see some element that seems less convincing than others is an absolutely essential step in his exploration, his alchemy, and that he wouldn't have reached the new revelation you find so astonishing if he hadn't followed the path on which you hadn't initially seen the need for this or that detour."[4] What gets lost is a

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[1]Foucault, "Madness, the Absence of Work," 296. I am thinking here of the famous exchanges between Derrida and Foucault over the role of madness in Descartes. See Jacques Derrida, "Cogito and the History of Madness," in *Writing and Difference*, 31-63; and Michel Foucault, "Cogito Incognito: Foucault's 'My Body, This Paper, This Fire,'" trans. Geoff Bennington, in *The Oxford Literary Review*, 4, no. 1 (1979): 9-28. See also Shoshana Felman's discussion of this in *Writing and Madness: (Literature/Philosophy/Psychoanalysis)*, trans. Martha Noel Evans and the author with the assistance of Brian Massumi (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2003), 35-55.

[2] Dosse, *Gilles Deleuze et Félix Guattari*, 19.

[3] "My favorite sentence in Anti-Oedipus," Deleuze claims, "is: 'No we've never seen a schizophrenic." N, 12.

[4] N, 85.

fundamental encounter, a voyage of discovery, with one of the most provocative and original writers of the twentieth century.

Artaud as we have seen was wrestling with one of the most pernicious and intractable of all philosophical problems—the question of self-consciousness. How can one observe oneself without opening up an internal divide between the observer and the observed? Who is this "I" that observes "me"? That he failed to ultimately resolve it means that he is in good company. Artaud opts for the impossible solution: a complete coincidence with the self without any negating distance. The observer and the observed, the container and its contents, become one. His quest, announced from the start, is for an impossible unity both with and without difference between body and mind (or spirit). It is without difference in the sense of having no internal voids or unconscious functions (organs). It is with difference in that Artaud does not want to simply collapse the spirit into the body. The spirit arises from the body and is to be co-extensive with it. It is a paradoxical metaphysics of the flesh. What Artaud ultimately wants is a pure undivided will (a sort of Nietzschean will to power). He wants his force without its being formed by any imposed form (internal or external). Deleuze does, I think, move closer to Artaud with the move from the Logic of Sense to The Logic of Sensation, but even there he prefers Bacon's meat to Artaud's bone.

As Susan Sontag suggests in her preface to Artaud's *Selected Writings*, "Artaud's work becomes usable according to our needs, but the work vanishes behind our use of it. When we tire of using Artaud, we can return to his writings."[1] This study has in part been just such a plea for us to return to Artaud's writings and to allow them once again to speak for themselves.

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[1] SW, lviii.

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