

Julia Mahler

# Lived Temporalities



Exploring Duration in Guatemala.  
Empirical and Theoretical Studies

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1 English: ‘Mr.’, used with first name.

2 English: ‘Mrs.’, read [donja].



## PREFACE

### INHABITING THE EVENT

#### I

This book is an attempt at a rethinking of Being and relationality towards the world onto a level that in Western modernity in which I grew up, has been explicitly avoided. I would like to call this level the level of ‘lived time’. I mean by lived time the level of sensuality, of affect as a mode to relate to the world.

I got an initial idea of how one might think about lived time from the work of the philosopher Henri Bergson (1859-1941). Bergson’s work is about duration. For Bergson, duration is a plane of experienced time that got silenced in Western modernity by an excessive focus on measured time. In duration, lived time is plural (lived temporalities). It is a plane of the given where everything exists as temporality, rather than as distinct material entity. My aim was to give an account of lived time as a plane of the socio-cultural and the biological-technological environment in Guatemala. Empirically, I have looked for example at temporalities of sweetcorn, temporalities of water and temporalities of cable TV in Guatemala. Theoretically, I have explored the plurality of temporalities that I encountered as ‘virtual, qualitative multiplicity’. This is a key term in Gilles Deleuze’s reading of the philosophy of duration. Deleuze thereby characterizes the plurality and productivity of the plane of the sensual, which he calls the ‘virtual’. The first chapter of the book will introduce time as virtual, qualitative multiplicity. To describe Guatemalan everyday life as virtual, qualitative multiplicity of lived temporalities was the long-standing project of this work. The encounter between Guatemalan everyday life and Deleuzian philosophy helps to concretise the abstract and strange Deleuzian terminology as well as to open up a perspective on Guatemalan everyday life that can be characterized as follows:

While Bergson locates duration within nature, Deleuze explores the plane of the sensual within capitalism. For Deleuze, capitalism is characterized by immanence – by an actual that has turned virtual. The

fleetingness, intensity and disembeddedness of everyday life in global capitalism leads for him in tendency to a factual and perceptual immanence of the given. Everything seems to be in a permanent state of openness, intensity, chance and change that is more reminiscent to lived time than to measured time. My interest in the various lived temporalities in Guatemala had to do with my experience of these dimensions of global capitalism in London.

Why explore duration in Guatemala? I got fascinated by the amount of lived time in everyday life on earlier visits to that country. In traditional subsistence, on open markets and in overland-buses, it seemed to me that one was better off when orienting oneself by lived time, relating as a sensual surface to the sensual heterogeneity of the given. This is not just in order to appreciate the sensual richness of this down-to-earth way of life, but as a mere strategy of survival, and as a mode of relating to the given that the material environment seems to suggest anyway. The Deleuzian reading of duration worked very well to emphasize during the process of analysis those moments that had fascinated me when taking up the empirical material.

Because the research was set in Guatemala, I naturally ended up with a displacement of the Deleuzian reading of duration. Deleuzian theory is – under different names – in one-way or another not only always concerned with virtual, qualitative multiplicities, but also with the ‘event’. During the process of analysis, I not only explored lived temporalities empirically by way of the virtual, qualitative multiplicity, but I also developed a theory of what I now would call ‘inhabiting the event’. While the multiplicity is a concept that came to account in my work for the socio-cultural and the biological-technological given, the event is a concept that came to account for agency within this given (which, in the book is called ‘becoming-active’). While the Deleuzian event, in my reading, provides the terminology for an agency that affirms the new features of global capitalism, ‘inhabiting the event’ is meant to provide a perspective for an *ethical* agency within global capitalism. An ethical agency, within the inter-relational framework that I will apply in this book, might be characterized as one to which a politically aware self feels ‘yes, this is how I want to do it’.

This latter achievement of the book is an unintended consequence of the original research project. It draws on my making sense first of duration and then of Deleuzian theory against the backdrop of psychoanalysis. This encounter was first implicit, in the choice of the research settings, and then became increasingly explicit, developing from chapter to chapter in the theoretical introductions. I will use the opportunity of this preface to introduce the idea of ‘inhabiting the event’ as what I consider to be a response to the challenges of the contemporary global capitalist given. First, I will define the event and

what I mean by ‘inhabiting the event’ (II). Then, I will explain how ‘inhabiting the event’ responds to global capitalism (III). Thereafter, I will outline how this approach developed throughout the book (IV), and how it contributes to contemporary cultural theory (V). Finally, I will lay out the basis on which I consider it legitimate to study ‘inhabiting the event’ in Guatemala (VI & VII).

## II

What is an event and what do I mean by ‘inhabiting the event’? The event is an explosive moment in the realm of lived time that generates the actualisation of something new. For Deleuze, the event is explicitly pre-individual. Under the name of the ‘Univocity of Being’, he describes in *The Logic of Sense* how virtual *singularities*, rather than actual people, organise themselves in such a way that there emerges a balance of tension between sameness and difference that sets free an unfolding of newness. Deleuze declares these conditions to be an ontological given. As ontological given, the successful build-up of the event is part of Being, and thus rendered out of question.

In this book, by contrast, I assume that it always takes the sensuality of a self to relate to the plane of lived time, and that where an event builds up, this self has passively taken up contact with the sensuality of an other (object or subject) in the world. Thus, the event as an organisation of lived time into a balance of tension between sameness and difference still takes place on the plane of the virtual. But the (self-)organisation of singularities is treated in this book as the mental achievement of a self. The singularities that organise themselves unconsciously in the mind, are in this book specified as the felt sensuality of a self and the felt sensuality of an other. Deleuze rejects any reference to self or other in order to fully concentrate on the level where there are only intensities, rather than actual material entities. He seems to fear that to take account of a self and its other would prevent a focus onto the realm of lived time as a plane of immanence. I will argue, by contrast, that it takes just a shift of emphasis from the event as something in itself within immanence towards the event as something that enables a self to become active within immanence.

The basis for such an argument is a common ground between the Deleuzian event and the concept of triangulation in psychoanalysis that I have encountered during the research for the present book: Drawing on insights from inter-relational psychoanalysis (Jessica Benjamin 1988), I came to understand the balance between sameness and difference on which rests the productivity of the event to be the outcome of a life-long development of human lived time. Then, the balance between sameness and difference is not ontologically given,

but a balance of tension within the human mind that is shaped by affective memories from the entire life, and especially by affective memories from encounters with the first significant others of a human being. In the encounter with the first significant others of a human being, something like a prototype for the event, an architecture for one's affective encounters with the world throughout adult life, develops. In this perspective, the build-up of the balance of tension between sameness and difference is something that is naturally conflictive, because human beings' inter-relational capacities are unevenly developed, and even in the most harmonic relations there happens to be unpredictable things in the course of a life-time that might challenge one's encounters with the world for the rest of one's life.

There is an important difference between the event as ontological given and the event as the outcome of life-long accumulated human inter-relational experiences: In the former approach, the productive and creative encounter of singularities is rendered normal and this norm is all that the picture renders visible. In the latter approach, by contrast, the productivity, creativity and openness of the event, and even the singularity of the encountering agents, is pictured as ideal. Besides this ideal, there is space for all those degrees of human imperfection and vulnerability that might prevent an encounter between self and other to be predominantly characterized by productivity, creativity, openness and singularity. In fact, the focus of psychoanalysis is explicitly directed towards all these less than ideal moments – the imperfections, inhibitions and apparent irrationalities that human beings actually exhibit in their encounters with the world. Thus, I call 'inhabiting the event' the ethical appropriation of the concept of the event as an ideal model for virtual inter-relationality between actual human beings and the world in a way that accounts for human imperfection in living this ideal. I consider this appropriation to be necessary, because I ascribe the event a key role within the exploitative logic of global capitalism.

### III

What does the move from the event towards 'inhabiting the event' have to do with global capitalism? In its passage from modern industrial capitalism to global capitalism, production processes have been simplified, speeded up and multiplied by technological inventions in a way that leading cultural theorists characterize contemporary capitalism no longer mainly by production, as did Marx, but by consumption (see for example Baudrillard 1968, 1970, Lash/Urry 1994). Also, actual distinctions that in modernity divided between a realm that functioned according to the exploitative logic of capitalism and a realm

that was constructed as an outside to capitalism and which functioned as a space for life unfolding in its own right (such as public/private, male/female, work/home, culture/nature) have disintegrated. Therefore we are left with a plane of immanence on which life is just too easily functioning only according to the rules of the ever more aggressive capitalist economy. Through the event, subjects can integrate into their encounter with the world these disintegrating tendencies of global capitalism. While in the literature by and on Deleuze, the event usually expresses characteristics that are compatible with the requirements of global capitalist economy (such as productivity, singularity, flexibility and joy), 'inhabiting the event' adds to these characteristics particularly human requirements, such as care, trust and responsibility in inter-relationality with other human beings. This human dimension is likely to enter into conflict with global capitalism. It is now no longer an outside, but rather a supplement to the logic of global capitalism, as I will elucidate now.

Ultimately, it is narcissism that is at issue. Narcissism is a concept that goes back to the work of Sigmund Freud (1914), on whose classical definition I will rely in the following. Narcissism describes the libidinal organisation of a self that is only preoccupied with itself. Its mind will not include others as others in its view of the world, or not perceive these as equal. Actual others will appear only in their function for the self. Following Freud, there are two main variants (see Wahl 2000): narcissism at the level of the Ego, and narcissism at the level of the Id. In the first case, the Ego consumes the entire libido that the self could otherwise invest in its relations to others in the world. The self thereby keeps itself independent from others. The self perceives satisfaction in representing its own activity, beauty and well-being. This, one could say, is narcissism characteristic of Western modernity: The Enlightenment with its technological, welfare-related and scientific achievements over the course of the past few hundred years has developed such a degree of human knowledge of, and control over life that material reality really seemed to support a representation according to which a certain kind of human being (predominantly male, white, Western, middle-aged etc.) appeared to be independent from others and at the centre of the world.

The entire Deleuzian philosophy is opposed to this kind of Western modern narcissism. Time as virtual, qualitative multiplicity departs from the concerns of the Ego towards the world as it is in itself – a plurality of singular, active, living temporalities. The plane of lived temporalities, however, entails its own danger of narcissism. Here, there is no longer an actual unity, such as the self as represented by the Ego. Together with the rest of actual reality, the subject in global capitalism is, in tendency, turning virtual. The actual part of the self, the Ego, disintegrates and all that is left is unconscious, sensitive



navigation. The self relates to the world by way of attraction, rather than by way of representation. The self encounters the world on the plane of sensuality, the plane of lived time. It perceives what it feels attracted to, and gives resonance to these attracting impulses. This is a dynamic that focuses on the other, rather than on the self. However, it is also narcissism, because the self only gives resonance to what produces attraction for *itself* in the other.

The fifth chapter of this book will introduce the idea that the attracting impulses that initiate an encounter with the other, only reflect the desire of the self. In this kind of narcissism, one could say, relationality is similar to consumption: the self just ‘eats’ the other (bell hooks). The self orientates itself in the joy that it perceives when relating to an other and in the resonance to the perceived impulse that it then perceives in itself. The narcissism of the Id is compatible with the consumption-orientated culture of global capitalism in that informing oneself (about what is available) as well as selling something also function through the positive sensation that a product produces in a potential consumer. However, not only narcissistic, but every encounter between self and other that takes place in lived time starts with a libidinal attachment. The question is what happens next.

My argument in the book will be that the Deleuzian event *remains* on the level of narcissistic consumption, while inter-relationality potentially can proceed to a second stage, namely the holding of the other as other. I will argue that the self can first affirm and then go beyond the consumption-orientated logic of global capitalism. In what I, following inter-relational theory (J. Benjamin 1988), will depict as mature form of inter-relationality, the other to which the self relates is still a living temporality, rather than a material entity. But after and beyond the moment of libidinal attachment, there is the holding of the difference between the living temporality of the self and the living temporality of the other. At stake are now not just resonance (the perception of sameness between self and other), but also the valuation of holding the other as significant for, though different from the self and outside its realm of influence (the perception of difference).

The Deleuzian event entails an acknowledgement of the importance of difference as well. ‘Univocity of Being’ (Deleuze 1969) consists not only in sameness, but also in difference. However, the holding of the co-existing unfolding of two or more different, though related temporalities in Deleuze is presented exclusively as an ontological characteristic of the virtual. Difference does not imply holding a relation with an actual other. The unfolding of sameness and difference in Deleuze takes only the shortest moment possible – the moment that it takes to produce a sensation. The Deleuzian approach affirms the fleetingness and singularity of the global capitalist given by theorising relationality with the world only on the basis of this shortest

possible moment. The Deleuzian event is impersonal. There is no expectation to relate to the other as significant other human being over time. This is why any agency based on the Deleuzian event is prone to be narcissistic – orientated in the well-being of the self, rather than in the quality of the relation with a specific other. To long for a relation with an other as actual other, implies a readiness for long-term commitment – and this is exactly what is absent in the Deleuzian approach, what would go against the grain of global capitalism, and what I have added in this book through inter-relational psychoanalysis. It is the quality of sociality that is at stake in the passage from the event towards ‘inhabiting the event’. This book will offer a perspective for sociality within global capitalism that first affirms, but then goes beyond the Id-based form of narcissism classified above as characteristic of global capitalism. This notion of sociality implies care, responsibility, trust and potentially long-term commitment in the encounter with actual others.

#### IV

How did ‘inhabiting the event’ develop as an issue in this work? The object-relational Freudian psychoanalysis of Melanie Klein (1930) became one of the battlegrounds that Deleuze, together with Felix Guattari, chose for unfolding their argument (see Deleuze/Guattari 1972). Klein, in Deleuze and Guattari’s reading, argues that the little child moves in her development from a pre-mature position where feelings towards her first significant other remain grounded in momentary, fragmented, intensive impressions towards a position where the child’s feelings towards this other integrate into a representation that holds beyond any momentary intensive impression. Both in Kleinian object-relational psychoanalysis and in Deleuze/Guattari, human perception seems to me to start with a sensual impression (a virtual object, or the virtual other), which then extends into a representation of the actual object (the actual other). The virtual other thus is a sensual impression from the surface of the actual other, and one perceives first the former and then the latter. Deleuze and Guattari’s project involved emancipating the virtual from the actual other by cutting the link between the virtual impression and the representation from which this was taken. Kleinian object-relation theory (on which inter-relational psychoanalysis builds)<sup>1</sup>, by contrast, emphasizes that this link exists

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1 Theorists of object relations focus on the self and the objects to which it relates when relating to the world, while theorists of inter-relationality emphasize that the other, when it is a human being, is itself a self, not just an object.

and that it is worth reaching the level of the actual other (the level of representation). For object-relation theory, the perception of the other as whole other is more mature, because it allows for object-constancy, for holding the other over time. According to Deleuze and Guattari, by contrast, the really fascinating things – productivity and creativity – take place in the virtual. They wanted to emancipate the virtual from the actual. For them, virtual relationality was unjustifiably rendered secondary in psychoanalysis, oppressed by the focus on the actual. It is important to keep in mind that Deleuze and Guattari wrote in the spirit of the '68 revolution in France that was directed against an overcome actual, while now, forty years on, global capitalism has produced a socio-cultural given in which there hardly is any actual anymore. Now the emancipation of the virtual from the actual has become a dominant characteristic of capitalism and Deleuze's approach affirms this characteristic. Now the virtual's dangerous side – a narcissism of the Id that prevents inter-relationality proper – becomes apparent. It might now be liberating to remember the potential extension that object-relation theory provides for the Deleuzian approach.

Retrospectively, one can follow through the entire book how my exploration of Deleuze's positive and detailed reading of the virtual entails from the beginning a bias towards inter-relational approaches within psychoanalysis: the first chapter introduces Guatemala as the setting of the empirical research together with Deleuze's reading of Bergson. Why should one study Deleuzian immanence in Guatemala? In this research, it worked as a setting where I could study the temporal conditions of global capitalism (read as Deleuzian immanence with the approach of Scott Lash) with a difference, namely with that extra bit that later, at the moment of analysis of the material, I should find in selected moments of the work of inter-relational psychoanalyst Jessica Benjamin. The second chapter uses Walter Benjamin to read temporalities of traditional subsistence, but what I find thereby could have been found as well with the work of object-relational psychoanalyst Donald W. Winnicott on whom Jessica Benjamin draws for her concept of the social space in-between self and other (see chapter six of this book). This social space entails both the surrender to the continuous relation with the other within the realm of lived time and the recognition of the other as actual other that the processes of traditional subsistence in the second chapter of this book describe. The third chapter reads temporalities at the open market with the theory of territorialisation by Deleuze and Guattari. This goes back mostly to Guattari and, as the sixth chapter reveals, Guattari uses the work of child researcher Daniel Stern to develop his approach. This is the work with which Jessica Benjamin departs from the work of Melanie Klein's student, object-relational theorist Donald W. Winnicott (see J. Benjamin 1988) by arguing that already from birth on, the human being ac-

tively chooses his or her affective environment (the territory through which it will feel held), rather than just being passively dependent on the activity of the sufficiently favourable environment. The fourth chapter employs the theory on aggression by object-relational psychoanalyst Otto Kernberg (1992) to displace the Deleuzian theory of an active death-drive. In retrospect it seems to me that Kernberg's theory worked so well together with Deleuze, because he seems to operate as well with a concept of primary triangulation, reminiscent of the one introduced in the fifth and sixth chapter as corrective to Deleuze's theory of the other in the event through the work of Jessica Benjamin (see Scharff 1999). Thus, the inter-relational approach by Jessica Benjamin that is introduced on its own terms in the last chapter as an extension to the Deleuzian theory of the event, had been implicit in every empirical and theoretical moment throughout the research process.

## V

Is such an alteration of the Deleuzian event relevant? Let us take a look at the works of contemporary Deleuzian cultural theorists. Deleuzians tend to focus on the fascinating productivity, creativity and openness of the virtual. The actual is there, but it seems to me to be perceived as a kind of enemy to the fascinating aspects of the virtual. Its value for making Deleuzian ideals work in the actual that the present book emphasizes, remains so far largely undiscovered. Brian Massumi for example (2002, chapter 1) has become among Deleuzians a major point of reference for theorising affect. This was for a text (and the book that this text introduced) in which he explored affect in reminiscence to the Deleuzian event. Massumi emphasizes the autonomy of affect from the actual in order to highlight its creative dimension. More, he turns to the language of science to elaborate affect as something that takes place explicitly autonomous from the involvement of an actual self or other. Affect, in his reading, encounters the other only on the level of the skin. Thereby, Massumi's notion of affect dismisses the chance to relate to the other in an active, personal way. For Massumi, however, there is affect, and there is emotion. Emotion is personal, but according to Massumi, it is not creative. Consequently, Massumi shows how the actual impacts the event in its manifold social dimensions (ibid, chapter 3), but the social that he comes up with does not entail solidarity. 'Inhabiting the event', by contrast, attempts to show how affect can be creative, productive, open *and* personal. Only if the self relates through the event not only to the virtual, but also to the actual other, I would argue, there is a perspective for sociality that goes beyond the Id-based form of narcissism

that I have depicted above as characteristic of global capitalism – towards solidarity, trust and meaning.

Luciana Parisi (2004) offers an exploration of sexual desire in the age of global, technology-based communication that is reminiscent of Massumi in that it celebrates contemporary technological achievements as liberating the world from the actual. She departs from ‘actual sex’, where the flows of libido are morally chained to the habitual repetition of the ever-same in the conjugal bedroom, dominated by the ultimate objective of discharge. She investigates how contemporary culture functions – by way of the event – through ‘abstract sex’, sensuality freed from the enclosure of the bedroom. Parisi brings to light a rich vocabulary for sensual encounters that take place in the virtual and that will never be extended into actual relations between self and other. However, in the light of contemporary global capitalism where the actual has turned virtual, the singularity and fleetingness that Parisi emphasizes, seems to me to be in danger to confirm the Id-based narcissism of the capitalist given. One might characterize contemporary global capitalist culture by abstract sex: play, joy, fascination – but only as long as there is attraction, only for the moment, and only for fun. Actively striving for a relation with an actual other that is worth holding might now be the dimension of inter-relationality that liberates from current socio-economic tendencies. It could bring in trust, care, generosity, and responsibility – dimensions that are so dear to human existence, but that go against the grain of global capitalism. One might call this ‘love’<sup>2</sup>, as something that is grounded in, but goes beyond ‘sex’. Extending the virtual into the actual thus could open up a passage from abstract sex into abstract love. By extending abstract sex into abstract love, inhabiting the event could mean to turn desire from being a principle of the consumer-orientated culture of global capitalism into a device for meaningful human inter-relationality.

If one translates ‘inhabiting the event’ into abstract love, though, the scope for turning the Deleuzian event around into something else and something better is in danger to be restricted to friends and family. Lived time, by contrast, is about affection by the other. This terminology is more neutral than the desire-based notions of sex and love. As such, it could also work for qualifying relations with work colleagues, neighbours, fellow citizens etc. Lash (2002) argues that industrial capitalism would have been primarily about exploitation (of workers, women and nature) and post-industrial, or global capitalism would be primarily about exclusion that is deeply characteristic of global capitalism. I am strongly convinced, however, that the fleetingness of global capitalist encounters and the Id-based narcissism that is an expression of this brings with it its own peculiar form of affective

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2 Jessica Benjamin called her book ‘The Bonds of Love’.

exploitation. Given that the fleeting material circumstances and the disintegration of pre-given, actual value systems in global capitalism tend to suggest relation only to those impulses perceived in the other that reflect the own self, I fear that global capitalism is prone to a dimension of play in inter-relationality that will pervert the social. Holding relations with actual others and actively contributing to trust, weight and responsibility within them becomes in global capitalism a challenge for the singular human being that goes far beyond relations between partners, friends and family – those relations that are conventionally constructed as grounded in love.

It is interesting to refer at this point to a recent book on ‘nomadic ethics’ by Rosi Braidotti (2006). In her outline of ‘nomadic subjectivity’, it seems to me that she adds some characteristics to what I would see as characteristic of the Deleuzian event in order to transgress the exploitation of global capitalism. Braidotti unfolds the Deleuzian event as ethical concept against the backdrop of the fleetingness and exploitation of global capitalism. My hesitation consists in the following: If it would work to just *want* to relate to the world in a generous, non-profit etc. way, and then this already happens – great! The psychoanalytic assumption of previous experiences entering passively through the unconscious as bio-psychological baggage all present encounters with the world, however, lets one doubt that it is so easy. In this book I understand the event as a fragile balance of tension between sameness and difference that gets built up in every encounter anew, that is always in danger to break down again, and in relation to which every actual human being exhibits a kind of personal signature that has developed throughout their life-time and that impacts how a concrete event will be lived. This book could support Braidotti’s project in that it provides with what I here have called ‘inhabiting the event’ a materialist basis for her ethics. In contrast to Braidotti who considers mutual recognition to be a theme of the past (ibid, p. 158), however, I would not want to give up the expectation to live these values also in relation to significant actual others. I think one is likely to remain on the level of Id-based narcissism, if ethics are lived as a set of values with which a singular self encounters any other whatsoever in the world, rather than as a basis for significant inter-relationality with particular actual others. It might be a valid strategy to survive and even at times to enjoy the fleetingness of global capitalism, but it gives up the expectation to fulfil what inter-relational theory (Benjamin 1988, 2002) argues to be a basic human requirement – significant inter-relationality with significant actual other human beings.

Finally, let us turn to Antonio Negri (2003), who offers also a materialist perspective for the possibility of solidarity in global capitalism. Poverty and love are the material preconditions for the ‘multi-

tude' in which he sees the potential for going beyond the fleetingness of global capitalism. It seems to me, however, that Negri, reminiscent to Braidotti, equates what I have called above 'abstract sex' and 'abstract love'. The Id-based narcissism of the Deleuzian event seems to become in his reading the basis for solidarity between actual human beings with which these can oppose global capitalism from within (Negri: the theology of the common). The openness of the self that emerges once the actual has disintegrated seems to me to be equated with solidarity among actual people. In the present book, one might say, the Guatemalan research setting distinguishes itself from global capitalism also through poverty and love: A basic mode of subsistence forces the people whom I lived with in Guatemala to relate to the world in an open way. There is little departure from the immanence of the given. Substantial parts of the research are set within a family-home where I tried to describe the amount of engaged sociality that had fascinated me so much and that one might call love. My approach is idealistic as well, but maybe Negri's account of poverty and love as ideal material condition that one might or might not find oneself in, could benefit from my attempt to reconstruct the theoretical ideas that expressed themselves in the Guatemalan research setting and that in my reading turned out to be not covered by the Deleuzian approach to the event.

## VI

But does the event exist in Guatemala? With regard to the psychoanalytic concept of the Oedipus-complex with which I compare the Deleuzian event in this book, it has been shown that the concept rests on very culture-specific assumptions about the actual world that would make any straightforward translation to non-European contexts highly problematic (see for example Fanon 1952, Mahler 2000, Said 2003). The division between sameness and differentiation, by contrast, is so basic that it can arguably be observed everywhere. People in Guatemala might not use this model to explain their own temporal development. But it is possible to observe this binary in concrete, empirical inter-relatedness between people and world. For example in chapter four I ask Guatemalan people how they cope with the unreliability of others in relation to agreed times for meeting. Usually, the overall answer is, people just wait. They just accept the other's non-keeping of his or her promise. In the framework of this research, one could say that there is sameness, rather than individual differentiation.

The reasons why something is the way it is, are historically grown. Carrying one's children in a scarf on one's back, treating boys as more valuable than girls, watching on cable TV all day long US-American

activity-orientated forms of life, ...all these particularities of Guatemalan everyday life potentially contribute to the development of an adult's affective architecture in a very culture-specific way. But that such an affective architecture will develop somehow, and that this will consist in some kind of balance of tension between establishing a bond of sameness and a subsequent process of self-differentiation, was incontestable in my encounters with Guatemala. I tried to relate the passive engagement of people with their material environment to the environment in which they live; e.g. waiting for the bus. Thus, reminiscent to psychoanalysis, there is an exploration of material significant others within Guatemalan everyday life and how the encounter with these might shape the development of one's affective architecture as a response to a given affective environment. On the empirical level, the book offers an indulgence in the encounter with material conditions that produce slowness, sensuality and non-linearity. These context conditions then become the basis for exploring, on the theoretical level, the temporalities that it takes for a human self to engage with the world through the event.

## VII

How did 'inhabiting the event' work as methodology? The research project started from sameness. I wanted to find out why there was so much affective resonance with my friends and acquaintances in Guatemala. Every encounter that is grounded in lived time is ideally organised as event. It starts from something that links, on a virtual level, a self and an other. The other, at the point of contact, is a sensitive impulse and the self is a feeling of attraction. Gradually thereafter, actual differences will come in. 'Inhabiting the event' in this way offers a practical perspective for intercultural communication in a globalising world that is characterized by movement and change. Shall I read a book on India before I go out with my Indian flatmate? Shall I avoid communication with someone to whom I feel close, but who happens to be thirty years older than me? Shall I fence off if my landlord introduces a flatmate to our house from a religious sect that in the way I grew up has been presented as dangerous? No, at least ideally, if not always empirically, I try out what is possible, and on the way I will perceive where limits set in. Actual differences exist, such as nationality, age or religion. I can be so much more open in my encounter with these, however, if I allow myself to start with the affective moment that establishes communication and then, gradually, to integrate differences. It is logically consistent development to employ this mode of intercultural communication, so feasible in everyday life practices,



also for academic research in a globalising world. Difference shall not prevent, but enrich communication.

How did I apply this approach concretely? At the moment of writing the empirical texts, I tried to focus explicitly not on a ready-made, ethical or ideal representation of the actual other as other, but on the affirmation of the 'real' plane of lived time in-between me and the other, below the censorship of the Ego that attempts to perceive only what would be acceptable to perceive. The felt dynamic then unfolded into a representation that expressed this 'real' state of affect between me and the other. The subjectivity of the approach is intentional. Affirming the singularity of one's perception is a pre-condition for perception on the plane of the virtual.

The radicalism of this approach comes to a test where it goes against politically correct ways to represent the other. For example, chapter one introduces the reader to Guatemala as a site of lived time through Mayan mythology. The link between present Guatemalan everyday life and Mayan mythology is not only linked to the actual renewed interest in Mayan heritage for a re-valuation of indigenous culture after the civil war that I encountered in Guatemala, but also to my European background from which I was fascinated by indigenous everyday life as other to what I had known so far. Hervik/Kahn (2006) would dismiss this subjective dimension as 'ethnographic surrealism'. In my account, by contrast, this part expresses the 'real' dimension of utopia, the feeling to have found something better than what I had known from Europe that became so central in the process of analysing the material of this research.

The empirical texts might be read best as explorations and illustrations of Deleuzian concepts. For example, in chapter four, I might have been the only person who perceived the mentioned fart as unpleasant. However, I do not claim to give an account of how people in Guatemala perceive farting in the bedroom. In the chapter, the fart is about dynamics in the realm of lived time that are set free by a disguised threat to the Ego. There is also a contemplation of the toilet paper in chapter four that might express so much European-ness that it would possibly sound strange to any Guatemalan, but this part of the chapter does not claim to give an account of the meaning of newspaper as toilet paper in Guatemala for Guatemalans. Rather, this is an empirical exploration of the theoretical idea of envelopment as a dynamic on the plane of lived time.

One major achievement was to discover a way to let theory and empirical material meet on a plane of immanence, within lived time. I followed an intuition that the moments in the Deleuzian texts that attracted me and the moments in Guatemalan everyday life that I had tried to capture by way of my empirical descriptions, went back to the same themes, just expressed by different means – here by empirical

descriptions in Guatemala, there by Continental philosophy. I tried to recall representations of the respective others from the described empirical material, and then awaited whatever attached itself from the theory to these in order to make sense of them. To let the moment of resonance saturate into clear, inner representations of both empirical material and theory was the step beyond Deleuze. This emphasis on doing justice to the other as actual, not just virtual other brought the research towards a proper inter-relational dimension. The attempt to let theory and empirical material encounter each other through my memory on a plane of immanence implied that moments from current context conditions during the process of analysing the material, as well as moments from my own distant past, entered the research. Both of these dimensions became productive parts of the overall research results.

Because I took seriously the challenge of ‘inhabiting the event’ in that I first followed and then analysed my real interest and baggage in lived time in Guatemala, people confronted with the challenge of global capitalism can find in my readings of Guatemalan everyday life perspectives to (re-)learn ways to affirm lived time (as opposed to rationality and structure, see tradition-chapter), ways to build up a feeling of space within the openness of lived time (see market-chapter), ways to cope with the unpleasant, with aggression and frustration in a socially sustainable way (see the chapter on the unpleasant) and ways to relate to the other on the basis of mutual recognition, but grounded in the preconscious realm of the *real* dynamics that there are taking place within affect, rather than only in the realm of consciously acceptable representations (see bus-chapter and final chapter).

## VIII

Let us conclude this preface. Why has Western modernity such a problem with affirming the level of lived time below the actual? Arguably, this is due to a fear of the self losing control, a fear of de-differentiation, a fear of nebulosity. The book will show that on the realm of affect *not* everything is out of control, undifferentiated and diffuse. It is just that the concepts and dimensions used for orientation change. They change from a level of visible entities of humans and objects to a microscopic level of singularities. The Deleuzian and psychoanalytic theory employed in this book spell out this virtual micro-perspective on a theoretical level, and the empirical descriptions show how this theory might play out in actual reality.

The book explores lived temporalities in Guatemala against the backdrop of contemporary global capitalism, understood as a socio-cultural given in which the actual has turned virtual. As soon as one

encounters the other in the realm of lived (virtual) time, rather than in the rationality-based realm of the actual, the biases set in that one carries through life; the affective architecture, the prototype of which developed mostly in the encounter with the first significant other in life (J. Benjamin: 'the bonds of love'). Ideally, there is a balance of tension. But normally, this encounter is more conflictive. Better: this balance is conflictive by nature. This potential for conflict entails the entire range of power, of above below relations. The potential for conflict emerges from the tension between sameness and difference through which the event unfolds. 'Inhabiting the event' means to provide concepts that give one words to articulate the differences between the temporalities of the human in all their imperfection and vulnerability and the event as temporal organisation of the human mind for productive participation in global capitalism. When words are available for the *real* dynamics that take place within the realm of the lived temporalities of the human, below the ideal of the event, the human being can fight for a recognition of these temporal conditions and necessities and thus include them into his or her global capitalist everyday life.

Julia Mahler  
*London, June 2007*

## **ABSTRACT**

This book sets out to explore lived time empirically and theoretically at the example of social formations in Guatemala. Building on Gilles Deleuze's reading of Henri Bergson's concept of 'duration' (Deleuze 1966), 'lived time' is in this book a realm of the given where everything is movement and change and in constant communication with everything else. Through an ethnography of everyday life at home, at markets and in buses, social formations have been explored that are particularly organised by lived time. Bergson (1907) called a singular line of movement within the realm of duration 'élan vital'. Going on from the notion of the élan vital, the book abstracts living within social formations that are organised by lived time to a vitalist mode of living the present. A 'vitalist' mode of living the present is one that orientates itself by the realm of lived temporalities.

The broader aim of this book is to explore vitalism in Guatemala as a perspective for critical and joyful existence within contemporary capitalism (Lash/Urry 1994, Lash 2002). Vitalist forms of life in a periphery of contemporary capitalism have been taken as a wealth of long-standing expertise in living with the decrease of structure and the increase of unpredictability that people in the nodes of contemporary capitalism are currently experiencing. In a Deleuzian perspective (Deleuze 1962, 1966, 1968, 1969, Deleuze/Guattari 1972, 1987), the exploration of lived time is explicitly a non-human adventure in that it focuses on a 'virtual' realm of the given prior to 'actual' human beings. According to Deleuze (1966), the virtual is real, but it is not actual. In sympathy with Deleuze, the exploration of lived time in this book is very much an exploration of a virtual realm of the given that exists prior to the actual. However, this book explores the virtual as a realm for finding one's bearings within the given. On the level of orientation, the human notions of self and other are indispensable. Throughout the book, Deleuze's stance therefore has been understood and eventually expanded from the perspective of an inter-relational approach within psychoanalysis.

*London, January 2006*



## CHAPTER I

### LIVED TEMPORALITIES IN GUATEMALA

This chapter will give an introduction to the approach taken in this book. First, the reader's imagination shall be invited to travel to the location of the research: Guatemala shall be introduced in relation to the theme of this book by way of Ancient Mayan mythology. This is how I first encountered vitalism, before understanding it theoretically through the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze. Second, the theme of the research shall be introduced theoretically. Third, the location of the research shall be introduced as contemporary research-site. Fourth, the methodology will be briefly outlined. Fifth, the chosen approach will be related to existing research.

#### 1.1 LIVED TEMPORALITIES IN THE MAYAN COSMOVISION OF TIME

The Ancient Maya of Central America resided in and around the territory that, since its declaration of sovereignty in 1821, has been called Guatemala. The Mayans were one of the greatest civilizations of the Western hemisphere. During their classical period, between around A.D. 250 and A.D. 900, they built huge temples and pyramids, inscribed stone monuments, made major advances in mathematics and astronomy and developed complex hieroglyphic scripts. The measure of time was at the heart of this impressive development. From the temporal location in which they lived, the Ancient Maya brought the preoccupation with time to an unprecedented level of abstraction. From the temporal location of this book – the beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century London – the Ancient Mayan culture of time measurement, however, provides an example for an immanent existence within lived temporalities. The present account builds on Anthony Aveni's reading of the Mayan practices of time-measurement.<sup>1</sup> Where Aveni points out

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1 Aveni, Anthony 1990: *Empires of Time*, pp. 185-252. I learned about Mayan time-measurement in Guatemala, through various of the weekly conferences at the Spanish schools with which I have been affiliated

the high levels of abstraction in Ancient Mayan time measurement, the following reading will highlight those aspects that express a self-experience of being an immanent part of the lived temporalities of the given.

The entity of 20 days is crucial in Mayan time keeping.<sup>2</sup> The orientation by the entity of 20 days is called the 'body-count'. It is said to be an imitation of the ten fingers and ten toes of a human body.<sup>3</sup> In the concept of the body count, the body is taken to be moved by a plurality of lived temporalities. Imitation is a way to relate to the given by perceiving sensations of lived time and to let oneself be moved by these. Imitation expresses an embodied relation to the given, rather than one on the level of rationality. Mayan time-measurement is based on two calendars. The first was a spiritual calendar called '*tzolkin*', in use from 200 B.C. The *tzolkin* consists of 13 times 20 days. The *tzolkin* expresses an orientation by the lived temporalities of the Gods. Each of the 20 days has the name and the qualities of a God attached to it. The assumption underlying the *tzolkin* is that the character of the respective God impacts the actual day.<sup>4</sup> The second calendar was agrarian, called the '*haab*'.<sup>5</sup> It was added a few hundred years after the *tzolkin*. The *haab* was segmented into 18 times 20 days, plus five days of rest at the end of the year. The *haab* expressed an orientation by the lived temporalities of nature. It measured the circle of the earth around the sun. Together, the two calendars gave every day their temporal order and their meaning. The basis for historical time reckoning among the Ancient Maya was the '*Long Count*'.<sup>6</sup> It developed out of a combination of the *tzolkin* and the *haab*. The *Long Count* also worked in a base-20 logic. It consisted of a hierarchy of lines of numbers. The line at the top had the smallest entity of numbers. It read 18980. The second line, the one below the top line, consisted of the results of each number of the first line multiplied by 20. The third line was called '*katun*'. The special importance of the *katun* for time reckoning by the Ancient Maya will be explained below. The *katun* passed every 20 years. In the *katun*, the numbers of the second line were multiplied by

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over the years. Aveni offers the most detailed description of the themes where, by way of memory and intuition, I drew a link between lived time in Guatemala and lived time in Deleuze. For an alternative account of the astronomical facts that I take from Aveni, see for example E.C. Krupp (1983).

2 See *ibid*, pp. 191-3.

3 See *ibid*, pp. 190 ff.

4 See *ibid*, p. 195.

5 See *ibid*, p. 203.

6 The Long Count goes back to a mythologically-defined origin day of the Mayan people at the 13th of August 3113 B.C. Its circle will be completed for the first time after over 5000 years at the 13th of August in A.D. 2022. See Aveni 1990, p. 211.

18 instead of 20. In the fourth and fifth lines, the base-20 logic returned.

The number 20 imitated various kinds of lived temporalities of Ancient Mayan everyday life. In the calendar of the *tzolkin*, 20 multiplied with 13 to become 260.<sup>7</sup> This imitated the period of human pregnancy, which is on average 266 days from conception to birth. The number 260 also expresses the beginning and end of the rainy season. This is the time of the sun-year during which the main local staple, sweetcorn, grows before it gets harvested. 260 further represents the number of days that it takes to train as a Mayan priest. Finally, Venus appears in 260-day intervals as either the morning or evening star. For the Ancient Maya, Venus was nearly as important as the sun. Because of its close link to the sun, the Ancient Maya saw in Venus a Mayan God that grew out of the ashes of the sun.<sup>8</sup> In all these dimensions the body count indicates that measuring time for the Ancient Maya was grounded in lived time.

The body count also indicates that perceiving lived temporalities was crucial for the Ancient Maya before acting. The importance of being in resonance with a plurality of lived temporalities in Ancient Mayan time keeping came to its artistic height in the '*codices*' and their use.<sup>9</sup> A codex was a book for astronomic consultancy. In it, the knowledge about the temporalities of astronomical bodies such as sun, Moon, Venus or Mars was recorded. Codices were kept when the Mayan culture was at its height of development, from 1000 years before the Spanish conquest in 1523. A codex was written with vegetable juice on precious lime-covered tree bark in the Mayan hieroglyphic language. Only four codices survived the Spanish conquest and colonisation. Catholic priests who came with the Spanish conquistadors in the 16<sup>th</sup> century destroyed most written images because they felt that what was written on them was heretical. The four remaining codices are today kept in Dresden, Madrid, Paris and Mexico City, to remember the great art of time keeping of the Ancient Mayans. The codices were consulted exclusively by Mayan priests.<sup>10</sup> These priests were professional timekeepers. They devoted their life to the art of searching for smallest common denominators of the most far away temporalities of the most important astronomic bodies. An important event such as the beginning of a war or the coronation of a king had to take place at a moment when as many as possible of the important temporalities of the universe would be in favourable alignment. For example, a mural in the Ancient Mayan city of Bonampac,<sup>11</sup> the ruins of

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7 See *ibid*, pp. 197-201.

8 See *ibid*, p. 221.

9 See *ibid*, pp. 220 ff.

10 See *ibid*, p. 220.

11 See *ibid*, pp. 233-4.



which can be seen today close to the northern border of Guatemala in the Yucatán peninsula, displays how the Mayan king of Bonampak and his soldiers launched their spears at the enemy. This took place exactly at the moment when the sun threw its light onto earth, the first morning after the eight-day period when Venus cannot be seen from earth because it is in the sun's shadow. The Mayan king, the mural seems to say, was not fighting alone as Venus was on his side. Therefore, the message of the mural seems to go on, war was pleasure and victory was on the king's side. In this way, establishing resonance with various temporalities of life was believed to improve the destiny of one's actions.

Every time when a *katun* passed, the Ancient Mayans built a 'stela' in important open spaces. A stela is a stone-pillar in which historical events and the temporalities to which they resonated were recorded for the public.<sup>12</sup> The longer the calendars were, the more complex and abstract could be the events that were carved into the stelae, to accompany and enhance the meaning of an emperor or a certain event in an emperor's career. The more diverse and historical temporalities could be set in resonance to the activities of a king, and the more support this king was said to receive from the heavens, the Gods and nature, the more powerful and good he was meant to be. Interestingly in terms of lived time is that the stelae recorded intervals between two events. The interval expressed the way in which the past affected the present in lived time.<sup>13</sup> The bigger the interval between the actual occurrence and the distant temporality set in resonance to it, the deeper the echo of the actual occurrence within the realm of lived time was meant to be. For example, the Ancient Mayan city of Palenque, located in what now is southern Mexico, just north from the Guatemalan territory, reached its peak of influence during the late classical period of the Ancient Maya, from around A.D. 600. This period included the reign of the influential ruler Hanab Pakal. At the *Cross of Palenque*, the death of king Pakal is engraved on the right-hand side. This actual event was given meaning by engraving on the left side of the cross astronomical events that happened at Palenque three and a half million years earlier.<sup>14</sup>

Not only the stelae but the surrounding buildings that the Mayans built and lived in were likely to be an expression of the search for favourable resonance of the actual given to the realm of lived temporalities.<sup>15</sup> Whole cities were constructed on the basis of the knowledge written down in the codices. The most prominent example for the at-

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12 See *ibid*, p. 212.

13 See below the theoretical introduction to chapter 2.

14 See *ibid*, pp. 212-16.

15 See *ibid*, pp. 235-7.

tempt among Ancient Mayan emperors to make architecture a site for the expression of favourable resonances between the actual given and the realm of lived temporalities is Tikal. During the classical period, Tikal was the most important of the Ancient Mayan cities. Begun around 600 B.C, it had a population between 50,000 and 80,000. Its pyramids included the highest known structure built in the Americas before the arrival of Europeans.<sup>16</sup> Its ruins are located in the rainforest in the northern lowlands of Guatemala. Tikal was built around a slightly east of north imagined diagonal that was called the '*magic latitude*'.<sup>17</sup> The imagined diagonal went directly through the ceremonial centre. When the sun was in its zenith, the whole year could be easily divided into important annual events in the sky, such as the summer and winter solstices and the equinoxes, by using this diagonal. Another expression of the attempt to establish through architecture favourable resonances between the actual present and the realm of lived temporalities, is Copán. The ruins of this Ancient Mayan city-state are located just beyond the southern border of Guatemala, in what is now called Honduras. In Copán, Mayan emperors built a window into a temple that gave a view of Venus in the sky always exactly on that night when the rainy season started. A third example of the attempt by the Ancient Maya to establish through architecture favourable resonances between the actual given and the realm of lived temporalities can be found in Palenque. There, the sun strikes the temple under which king Pacal has been buried exactly on that day at the entrance to the tomb when he died many time-circles ago.<sup>18</sup>

After around A.D. 900, the Ancient Mayan civilization suddenly collapsed, for reasons that remain mysterious. Some possible explanations include overpopulation, environmental degradation, drought, or the Maya's long history of warfare.<sup>19</sup> Aveni assumes that when overseas trade became the dominant way of living for the majority of people, the centres of human dwelling moved from the inlands to the coast and therefore the great art of timing of the Ancient Maya eventually lost its meaning. Whatever the reasons, by the eleventh century the Long Count had been dropped and the profession of timekeeping was taught less thoroughly. The frequency and accuracy of building and carving stelae was reduced and they had lost their function.<sup>20</sup>

In conclusion, the fact that time-measurement had become so important for Mayan kings, acknowledges people's dependence on the

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16 See [www.culturefocus.com/guatemala\\_maya.html](http://www.culturefocus.com/guatemala_maya.html) (visited 22 November 2005).

17 See Aveni 1990, p. 238.

18 See *ibid*, pp. 238-42.

19 See [www.culturefocus.com/guatemala\\_maya.html](http://www.culturefocus.com/guatemala_maya.html) (visited 22 November 2005).

20 See Aveni 1990, pp. 247-8.

plurality of temporalities they lived with. The account of lived temporalities through the actions of Ancient Mayan emperors remains indirect in that it is focused on the actual and from this deduces the importance of the realm of lived temporalities. We will now proceed to a direct and theoretical account of 'lived temporalities' through Deleuze's reading of time-philosopher Henri Bergson's concept of duration. In the account of the Ancient Mayan culture of timing that has been given here, the resonance to lived temporalities is a way to enhance the power of an emperor. In contrast to the power-concerns of the Ancient Mayan emperors, for Bergson, resonance to the realm of lived temporalities entails a notion of freedom.

## 1.2 THE CONCEPT OF 'LIVED TIME' IN DELEUZE'S READING OF BERGSON

The philosopher of time Henri Bergson lived and worked in France at the turn to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, at the height of manufacturing capitalism's<sup>21</sup> consummate age of mechanical reproduction and artifice.<sup>22</sup> What I have called 'lived time' in the example of the Ancient Maya, was contained in the philosophy of Bergson as 'duration'. If clock-time, the indispensable disciplinary device of big-scale industrialism is the most abstract notion of time, then duration as lived time is the most immanent notion of time. Bergson directed his work against the one-sided orientation by measured time. The task that he set himself was the re-discovery of lived time. He found concepts and images for lived time as the realm of the invisible and the sensible. He considered this realm to be excluded in the name of objectivity and measurability. While for the Ancient Maya the highest aim was abstraction from lived time through ever more refined searches for common denominators among ever more abstract temporalities, Bergson wanted to rebalance abstraction. While for the Ancient Maya, an orientation by lived temporalities of nature was everyday reality; Bergson considered for his time an orientation by temporalities of nature to such a degree as absent that he devoted his entire work to their exploration. The first paragraph of each of the following five sections in the text will delineate Bergson's position, understood as fascination by an immanent con-

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21 See Lash/Urry 1994: *Economies of Signs and Space*, pp. 2-5. Lash and Urry distinguish between 19<sup>th</sup> century liberal capitalism as the beginning, 20<sup>th</sup> century organised capitalism as the height, and end of 20<sup>th</sup> century disorganised capitalism as that what comes after manufacturing capitalism in their account of contemporary capitalism. See section five (Locating the Research Project within existing Research) below in this chapter.

22 See John Mullarkey 1999: *Bergson and Philosophy*, p. 106.

tact with nature. It will illuminate wherever possible Bergson's position through an example from the Ancient Maya.

Broadly speaking, there have been two ways of interpreting Bergson's philosophy of time.<sup>23</sup> The first emerged within existentialism and phenomenology by such writers as Jean-Paul Sartre, Emmanuel Levinas and Maurice Merleau-Ponty.<sup>24</sup> Duration here referred to the inner time consciousness of a subject. The other interpretation understood duration as an ontological plane of the given. Deleuze's work stands for this second interpretation. Time here is something in itself, explicitly prior to and independent from any involvement of the human. While Bergson's work on duration is the expression of an interest in the temporalities of nature, Deleuze extracts dynamic models that are implicit in Bergson's work and carries these away from the realm of nature to various other phenomena, notably to an understanding of contemporary capitalism.<sup>25</sup> Deleuze's theoretical tool for this is the reading of duration as 'virtual multiplicity'. The following introduction to duration will build on Deleuze's monograph on Bergson. The book is titled itself in the form of a dynamic model. It is called 'Bergsonism'.<sup>26</sup> In this book, Bergson's work on time is read through the model of the 'virtual multiplicity'. The second paragraph of each of the following five sections in the text will introduce the dynamic model that Deleuze extracts from Bergson.

Underlying this entire book is the assumption that the time of duration and the time of the unconscious are compatible. The third paragraph of each of the following five sections in the text will develop this assumption through linking Deleuze's account of Friedrich Nietzsche<sup>27</sup> to his reading of Bergson by way of the dynamic model he extracts from his reading of Bergson. Deleuze's Nietzsche will be unfolded and brought to use particularly in the fourth chapter of this book. In the fifth and sixth chapter of the book, the link between the time of duration and the time of the unconscious will be examined further through bringing together Deleuze's Nietzschean reading of the event and Jessica Benjamin's Winnicottian reading of triangulation. The compatibility of the time of duration and the time of the unconscious is also the basic assumption behind the methodology of this book and this will be developed later in this chapter. It is the basis for the first-person-singular account of the given that the empirical material offers. Despite linking the time of duration and the time of the unconscious, with regard to the two lines of the Bergsonian legacy men-

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23 See Mullarkey, p. 2.

24 Key texts: Sartre 1943: *Being and Nothingness*, Levinas 1948: *Time and the Other*, Merleau-Ponty 1945: *Phenomenology of Perception*.

25 See Deleuze/Guattari 1987: *A Thousand Plateaus*.

26 Deleuze 1966: *Bergsonism*.

27 Deleuze 1962: *Nietzsche and Philosophy*.

tioned above, this book is located on the Deleuzian, and not on the existentialist-phenomenological, side. The central theme in both the empirical and the theoretical texts are the *dynamics* within the given. The book is grounded in the assumption that Deleuze shifts the emphasis from the actual human to pre-actual dynamics within the virtual, but that an actual human self and other always remain the invisible frame of what Deleuze is writing about.<sup>28</sup>

### 1.2.1 Duration: Lived Time as Virtual Multiplicity

“Bergson did not confine himself to opposing a philosophical vision of duration to a scientific conception of space but took the problem into the sphere of the two kinds of multiplicity. He thought that the multiplicity proper to duration had, for its part, a ‘precision’ as great as that of science; moreover, that it should react upon science and open up a path for it that was not necessarily the same as that of Riemann and Einstein. This is why we must attach so much importance to the way in which Bergson, borrowing the notion of multiplicity, gives it renewed range and distribution.”<sup>29</sup>

In *Time and Free Will*<sup>30</sup>, Bergson starts his investigation into time with a study on the subjective experience of intensive states, such as the perception of heat. He understands experience as a composite that can be divided up into two modes, representation and immediate perception. These two modes differ in kind from each other. The immediate perception of intensity takes place prior to abstraction into a representation. Representation provides for Bergson a datum that is ‘space’. Immediate perception, by contrast, provides a datum that is ‘time’. The spatialisation of intensity is for Bergson grounded in utility. The given is perceived in terms of its utility for enabling action. In the perspective that Bergson adopts, however, space has a negative tenor: it captures the ‘free will’ of intensity that exists on the level of time. The three characteristics of time as opposed to space are, in Deleuze’s reading of Bergson, heterogeneity, simplicity, and continuity.<sup>31</sup> For example, a division of a given entity of sweetcorn cobs in a way that it leaves a remainder of 20 might have evoked images for the

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28 See preface.

29 Ibid, p. 40.

30 Bergson 1889.

31 Deleuze 1966, p. 43.

Ancient Maya of various everyday life contexts. Images may have emerged from the body such as ten fingers and ten toes, or images of the beginning of life (the period of human pregnancy), images from food and subsistence (the agrarian productive period), images from religion and spirituality (the period that it takes to become a Mayan priest) and images from mythology (the temporality of the Venus star). Thus, in the realm of lived temporalities, the appearance of 20 sweetcorn cobs might have been heavily loaded up with the experience of the most *heterogeneous* qualities. The dynamic would have been *simple* in that the images that would have attached themselves as various qualities to the number 20 would have been an immediate, bodily response to context-conditions. Finally, the dynamic would have been *continuous*, because images would have come and gone, depending on the changing context conditions. If a pregnant woman would have passed next to the basket with the 20 sweetcorn cobs, a Mayan timekeeper might have evoked a stronger mental link than if two adolescent boys had come along.

Bergson expressed the difference between what time does and what space does through the dynamic model of '*multiplicity*'. The concept of *multiplicity* is derived from mathematics. Bergson borrowed it from the physician and mathematician Riemann. The concept was a major source for Einstein's theory of Relativity.<sup>32</sup> For the course of the present argument, however, the following information shall suffice: Riemann distinguished a 'discrete' and a 'continuous' *multiplicity*. Bergson employed this distinction once, in his first work on time. He thereby translated the Riemannian notions into the terminology of 'qualitative' versus 'quantitative' *multiplicity*. Deleuze reads all of Bergson's work on time in terms of the concept of the *multiplicity*. He contrasts a 'virtual' to an 'actual' *multiplicity*. The notion of the virtual *multiplicity* implies the two former qualifications. The three variants of the concept of the *multiplicity* shall be introduced now.

The distinction between a continuous and a discrete *multiplicity* is modelled on the co-existence of the many. In a continuous *multiplicity*, a given amount of singular entities co-exist in a state of fusion and everything is open for impact by any movement whatsoever. There is constant chance change and constant chance movement. Everything is related to everything else. In a discrete *multiplicity*, by contrast, a

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32 Bergson went into a discussion with Albert Einstein's theory of relativity in his book *Duration and Simultaneity* (1922). For the present argument, however, besides *Time and Free Will*, two other major texts by Bergson, *Matter and Memory* (1896) and *Creative Evolution* (1907) have proved to be particularly helpful. More than *Duration and Simultaneity*, they unfold their argument in terms that allow a link between an immanent existence within nature and a time-based conception of the unconscious.

given amount of singular entities co-exists ordered side by side and every entity is closed on itself. There is a clear distinction between any given singular entity and all the others. Through the terminology of qualitative versus quantitative *multiplicity*, the chance-driven, continuous co-existence of singular entities gets favoured over an ordered, discrete co-existence. If the model of the discrete co-existence of the many gets divided, there is just less of the same. The discrete co-existence of the many is a quantitative *multiplicity*, because when it gets divided, there is merely a difference in degree. If the continuous *multiplicity* differentiates<sup>33</sup> itself, by contrast, everything changes in kind. The continuous model of the co-existence of the many is a qualitative *multiplicity*, because every division produces a qualitative change of the whole. Internal differentiation happens by itself, through an internal impulse. There is a constant production of newness. The comparison of the two *multiplicities* by way of differentiation favours the continuous *multiplicity*. In the name of the production of newness, time gets favoured over space. The translation of the qualitative-quantitative couple into the distinction between a virtual and an actual *multiplicity* finally highlights the coexistence and interdependence of the two modes of differentiation. The actual and the virtual always coexist, but on different planes of the given. Duration is virtual, because 'it is real, but it is not actual'.<sup>34</sup> In the example of the 20 sweetcorn cobs, the virtual would be the immaterial realm of fleeting impressions. Heterogeneity, simplicity and continuity take place in the realm of the virtual. At the same time, but on another level of reality, the sweetcorn cobs remain actual, discrete objects. 20 sweetcorn cobs are on an actual level half of 40 sweetcorn cobs. The actual works in the mode of the quantitative *multiplicity*, where a change of number is just less of the same. The virtual is immaterial, and in that sense 'it is real, but it is not actual'. It emerges in relation to the actual; the actual is the material ground that sets off the virtual. The virtual acts on the actual, the virtual impressions shape the perception of the actual sweetcorn cobs.

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33 In *Bergsonism* (1966, chapter 5), Deleuze uses the term 'differentiation'. In *Difference and Repetition* (1968a, p. 207ff.), by contrast, he distinguishes between differentiation and differentiation. Differentiation refers to an internal, upward movement of production and differentiation refers to a movement that links back an actual entity to the virtual ingredients that went into it. Thus, quantitative differentiation is *not* the same as differentiation in Deleuze 1968a. But differentiation refers in both contexts to an internal, upward movement of creative production and I will use it as such throughout the book in order to achieve integrity. Where both differentiation and differentiation are meant, I will use the common spelling of the term, with 't'.

34 See Deleuze 1966, p. 96.

In Deleuze's Nietzsche, reality consists as well in a virtual multiplicity as opposed to an actual multiplicity. According to Deleuze's Nietzsche, reality exists in forces that are in a state of tension with each other.<sup>35</sup> Reminiscent of Deleuze's Bergson, there is a virtual plane where forces enter into productive relation with each other, and an actual plane where forces do not normally do so. The productive encounter between forces takes place in Deleuze's Nietzsche, as in Deleuze's Bergson, through qualitative differentiation. Qualitative differentiation in Deleuze's Nietzsche does not take place in the realm of time, as in Deleuze's Bergson, but in the realm of unconscious desire. Forces in Deleuze's Nietzsche are either active or reactive. In the name of productivity and creativity, active forces are preferred over reactive forces, with an active force being one which is impelled by an internal 'will to power'.<sup>36</sup> The will to power gives the impulse for the internal, qualitative differentiation of a force. It receives its power and its quality through letting itself be affected by other forces.<sup>37</sup> An active relation among forces takes place prior to consciousness. In the unconscious world of the will to power, both the own will and the will of other forces can unfold themselves when they relate to each other. Thereby, in the will to power, unconscious desire exhibits the central characteristic of lived time as virtual *multiplicity*, namely qualitative differentiation.

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35 See Deleuze 1962: *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 40. My reading of Deleuze's Nietzsche will be unfolded more fully below in chapter 4 of this book.

36 See *ibid*, pp. 40-42, 49-52.

37 See *ibid*, p. 62.



### 1.2.2 The Condition of Duration: Ontology

“We have great difficulty in understanding a survival of the past in itself because we believe that the past is no longer, that it has ceased to be. We have thus confused Being with being-present. Nevertheless, the present *is not*; rather, it is pure becoming, always outside itself. It *is not*, but it acts. Its proper element is not being but the active or the useful. The past, on the other hand, has ceased to act or to be useful. But it has not ceased to be. Useless and inactive, impassive, it IS, in the full sense of the word: It is identical with being itself. It should not be said that it ‘was,’ since it is the in-itself of being, and the form under which being is preserved in itself (in opposition to the present, the form under which being is consummated and places itself outside of itself.)”<sup>38</sup>

In *Matter and Memory*<sup>39</sup>, Bergson broadens his account of duration to a study of the link between the material given and immediate, temporal perception. Temporal perception encounters the given through affect, as opposed to representation. Affect acts through sensation.<sup>40</sup> Affective perception opens up the actual given to an encounter with duration. Duration, in Bergson, is located in the past and the past for Bergson coexists with the present. As such, the present impacts the past and the past impacts the present. The difference between the two modes of time exists in their respective degrees of contraction-relaxation.<sup>41</sup> The present is about action. As such, it is the most contracted degree of the past. The pure past is time in its most passive state, and as such is the most relaxed degree of the present. In the action-orientated present, time passes in relation to goal-orientated action. The past however is passive, it just is. There is no need for it to pass anymore. The past in its most relaxed degree is duration in its pure state. Through memory, the past acts on the present. There are two modes of memory in Bergson, habit-memory and recollection-

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38 See Deleuze 1966, p. 55.

39 Bergson 1896.

40 See *ibid.*, p. 17 ff.

41 Deleuze 1966, chapter 4.

memory.<sup>42</sup> Habit-memory makes use of the past to fulfil a demand of the present. For example if the body perceives a need, if a habit-memory is available, the body will respond to the represented necessity with the automatic release of a set sequence of movements that has proved in the past able to fulfil the present requirement. Habit-memory leaves perception on the level of representation. If, however, there are no habits available to fulfil a perceived demand from the present, recollection-memory sets in. Recollection-memory acts through sensation. A sensation triggers the recollection of certain images from the past. Which images from the past will respond to the present is unpredictable. In recollection-memory, the past appears as virtual *multiplicity*. The more time unfolds in recollection, the more it appears in all its heterogeneity as a continuous flux of images. In recollection-memory, one could say, the present encounters the past as other<sup>43</sup> than itself. It is something that cannot be determined by the self, but only encountered and related to. The cultural techniques of timing of the Ancient Maya provide an example for recollection-memory in that they strove to get to know the multiple temporalities of the given in itself. Then they located their own action in the most favourable way within the given. While Bergson develops his concept of recollection in relation to the time of memory, the Ancient Maya provide an example for recollection in relation to the temporalities of the universe. The two seem to relate to different things. However, for Bergson, memory *is* the time of the universe. It is ontological, not psychological. Psychological time remains for Bergson in the service of the human being.<sup>44</sup> Ontological memory, by contrast, is something much bigger. It is pure memory, or the pure past.<sup>45</sup>

Deleuze is interested in the ontological condition of duration as a dynamic that shapes the experience of the actual present. Deleuze is interested in an actual that has turned virtual. He translates the dynamic model that underlies the idea of the ontological condition of the past into a model of the present as a 'plane of immanence'.<sup>46</sup> On the plane of immanence, everything is movement of images. The entire material world appears in terms of actions and reactions of images. The body of the perceiving human being is an image, too. There is no meaning and there is no closure. The human being on the plane of immanence is on one plane with the material world. The human being on a plane of immanence also moves according to the same mecha-

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42 See Bergson 1896, chapter 2.

43 The relation to the other will be explored more fully below in chapter 5 of this book.

44 See Deleuze 1966, pp. 56, 71-2.

45 See *ibid.*

46 See for example Deleuze 1985: *The Time-Image*, or Deleuze/Guattari 1987: *A Thousand Plateaus*.

nisms ('laws of nature'<sup>47</sup>) as the material world. It reacts to received impulses. The body is the centre of action of the perceived world of images. Affection selects an image from the present and links it with images from the past. If a smaller range of one's present is taken into view, or if the movement of the body slows down, the images of the world affect the felt image of the body more. If a larger range of images is taken into view, or if the movements of the body speed up, impulses are felt less. This scenario of immanence as a present that consists only of free-floating images, comes from Bergson.<sup>48</sup> There, it is called 'pure present'.<sup>49</sup> In Bergson, the pure present exists on a molecular level of biology, prior to human perception. On the level of affective perception that Bergson is interested in, however, the notion of the pure present is a fiction. It serves only as a starting-point for explaining step by step where he really wants to come to – memory. Empirically, on the level of experience, the body encounters the present in Bergson only in terms of images rather than whole objects, when affection and thus the past comes into play. In Deleuze, by contrast, the present as a plane of immanence of free-floating images becomes a model for the socio-cultural actual that has turned virtual.<sup>50</sup> The following section will show that immanence in Bergson goes together with depth, while the immanence of the cultural and the social that Deleuze strives to explore is about ephemerality, fleetingness and flatness.

The dynamic model of the plane of immanence applies to both Deleuze's reading of duration in Bergson and to his reading of the will to power in Nietzsche. The will to power is unconscious desire. The unconscious here, however, is first of all an ontological plane of the given. In Deleuze's Nietzsche, the entire world is a coexistence of inter-relating forces and everything appears in terms of its unfolding lines of unconscious desire. This is an empirical model of the unconscious. Here, the unconscious is not in the service of the human being (as Bergson objected), but a plane of immanence of life on earth itself. In chapter two of Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition*, an unconscious mode to relate to the given is freed from any link to the psychology of a human being. It is read through time, as a passive mode to relate to the given. Three 'passive syntheses of time' get equated with three

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47 See Bergson 1896, p. 20.

48 See *ibid.*, pp. 17-21.

49 See *ibid.*, chapter 1.

50 In Deleuze 1985, examples from Italian post WWII neo-realist cinema are read as examples for a cinematic actual that has turned virtual and in Deleuze and Guattari 1987, the 'rhizome' becomes a concept that helps to highlight the virtual dimensions of everyday culture from chess to politics.

working modes of the unconscious.<sup>51</sup> Unconscious perception in Deleuze's reading is passive perception. As such, the term 'unconscious' is not a mysterious realm of the repressed within the psychology of a self, as in the clinical work of Sigmund Freud<sup>52</sup> who made the exploration of the unconscious popular in the twentieth century. Rather, it is an ontological plane of the given.

### 1.2.3 The Movement within Duration: Life

"In reality, duration divides up and does so constantly: That is why it is a *multiplicity*. But it does not divide up without changing in kind, it changes in kind in the process of dividing up: This is why it is a non-numerical multiplicity, where we can speak of 'indivisibles' at each stage of the division. There is other without there being several; number exists only potentially. In other words, the subjective, or duration, is the *virtual*. To be more precise, it is the virtual insofar as it is actualised, in the course of being actualised, it is inseparable from the movement of its actualisation. For actualisation comes about through differentiation, through divergent lines, and creates so many differences in kind by virtue of its own movement."<sup>53</sup>

In *Creative Evolution*<sup>54</sup>, Bergson broadens his ontology of duration to the maximal possible degree. In this book, Bergson explores duration on the level of the evolution of life itself. Evolution, he argues, is not only differentiation through adaptation to external conditions, but goes back to an internal impetus, the 'élan vital'. The élan vital unites all life on earth and makes evolution a creative, open-ended movement. The ontological condition of time as other than the human being here becomes the ontological condition of life as other than the human being. The account of life that Bergson gives in his attempt to retrieve dimensions of experience that were naturally part of everyday existence in a form of life close to nature, and that Bergson might have perceived as lacking among the commodified, industrialised, urban exis-

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51 See Deleuze 1968a, chapter 2 and the theoretical introductions to chapters 2 and 4 below in this book.

52 See for example Freud 1923b.

53 Deleuze 1966, pp. 42-3.

54 Bergson 1907.

tence that he was writing in, reflects the notion of time expressed in the text on the Ancient Mayans given above. There, life is something bigger than human beings. It is something that human beings can only relate to in the small scope of their perception. Everything has its own *élan vital*, its own drive for life. The various tendencies of life can be perceived and related to. They cannot, however, be controlled. Rational adaptation to the given receives its natural limit through an irrational, inner drive for life.

In Deleuze's extraction of Bergsonian dynamics, the *élan vital* becomes a 'movement of actualisation'.<sup>55</sup> The virtual acts on the actual through actualising itself. The virtual and the actual differ in kind. Their difference expresses the difference between the two multiplicities as introduced above: The virtual is an undivided whole, where everything is in contact with everything else.<sup>56</sup> The actual, by contrast, is divided into a plurality of discrete entities. The movement of actualisation is a movement of internal differentiation. Reminiscent to the model of the qualitative *multiplicity*, the movement of internal differentiation is a positive movement. In duration, there is no negation. Internal differentiation, in contrast to external discrimination, is a movement that proceeds through unfolding its potential out of itself. The movement of actualisation produces something new, because time has to change its mode of existence while actualising itself. '[...] in order to be actualised, the virtual [...] must *create* its own lines of actualisation in positive acts'.<sup>57</sup> In Deleuze's reading of the Bergsonian setting of evolution, the movement of actualisation from the virtual to the actual is a long-term process that goes back to the beginning of life on earth itself. On the actual level of the organism, every living being is closed on itself, reminiscent to the model of the discrete *multiplicity*. At the same time, every living being carries in its own way the virtual whole of duration with it.<sup>58</sup> In every living being, the whole of duration has actualised itself in a particular way and each is just the actual surface of something that in a more holistic view goes much deeper. Through the depth of the movement of actualisation from the virtual to the actual, every living being is united with everything else on earth. In his own work, by contrast, Deleuze works with a notion of actualisation that exists much more in the present. In the *Logic of Sense*<sup>59</sup>, drawing on the work of the Stoics, Chronos and Aion take the place of the actual and the virtual. Chronos is time as actual representation while Aion is time as sensation. The temporality of Aion de-

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55 See Deleuze 1966, chapter 5.

56 See *ibid*, p. 94.

57 See *ibid*, p. 97.

58 See *ibid*, pp. 98-106.

59 See Deleuze 1969: *The Logic of Sense* and introduction to chapter 5 below in this book.

parts from actual representation through virtual sensation. The actual, through acting as sensation, turns virtual, into something within the plane of images. Then there is actualisation from the virtual to the actual. Actualisation produces a kind of second-order version of the actual in the virtual. It is the result of actualisation, however, because it is the result of an organisation of time from something formless into something that has form. Actualisation, in Deleuze's *Logic of Sense*, is a moment rather than a movement. The moment of actualisation of Aion takes no longer than the shortest time possible, the time that it takes to produce an affection. While Bergson uses the image of a cone to explain the process of actualisation,<sup>60</sup> Deleuze in his own work speaks of tacit navigation through momentary surfaces.<sup>61</sup> While Bergson's image of actualisation suggests the non-abbreviated and non-mediated unfolding of processes in their own time, Deleuze's image of actualisation joyfully affirms superficiality.

When the actual has turned virtual and nature is gone for good, the time of an encounter tends to shrink together into instantaneity. The unconscious is at home in instantaneity. The conscious part of the self, the Ego, however, longs for meaning, trust and recognition in the relation with others.<sup>62</sup> In Bergsonian long-term encounters, the desires of the Ego can be integrated. In a Deleuzian actual that has turned virtual, by contrast, the desires of the Ego seem to clash with the instantaneity of the given. The Ego can either defend itself against instantaneity or it can open up towards it. Deleuze's readings of both Bergson and Nietzsche provide a perspective to live the actual in a way, which opens up the Ego to the virtual. The present book will explore this perspective. It will however, along with Jessica Benjamin, go beyond it in arguing that the Ego will only open up towards the virtual if its particular desires can be integrated into the given. When the time of duration becomes compatible with unconscious desire, conscious desire emerges as the opposite of duration.<sup>63</sup>

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60 Deleuze 1966, p. 60.

61 See Deleuze 1969, pp. 4-11.

62 See Jessica Benjamin 1995: *Like Subjects, Love Objects*, chapter 1.

63 This idea will be unfolded below in chapter 6 of this book.

### 1.2.4 Knowledge through Duration: Intuition

“According to Bergson, a composite must always be divided according to its natural articulations, that is, into elements which differ in kind. [...] Bergson is aware that things are mixed together in reality; in fact, experience itself offers us nothing but composites. [...] The obsession with the pure in Bergson goes back to this restoration of differences in kind. Only that which differs in kind can be said to be pure, but only *tendencies* differ in kind.... If the composite represents the fact, it must be divided into tendencies or into pure presences that only exist *in principle (en droit)*. We go beyond experience, toward the conditions of experience [...]. This is the Bergsonian leitmotif: People have seen only differences in degree where there are differences in kind.”<sup>64</sup>

In the course of his account of evolution, Bergson develops a concept of affective perception that he calls intuition.<sup>65</sup> Intuition opens duration up for knowledge. Intuition takes place halfway between human intellect and animal instinct. The intellect gets corrected in its utilitarian orientation towards the external world by considering the lived time of the other in itself, as other. If representation leads to a utilitarian orientation towards the world, intuition is about encountering the other in all its complexity, in its own temporality.<sup>66</sup> Only in such an interest-free encounter with the other, a movement of actualisation can unfold itself. The ability to encounter the other in itself in Bergson is a matter of ‘sympathetic communication’.<sup>67</sup> If the intellect’s usual relation to the world is one of representation through rational perception, intuition is a way to use the intellect for intensive perception. Intensive perception perceives the tendencies of life in themselves. The material given is just an effect of these. Bergson’s famous example is that one can perceive the duration of a lump of sugar in itself by throwing it into water. After doing this, one has to ‘wait until the sugar dissolves’.<sup>68</sup> Waiting means not just physically remaining close to the sugar, but remaining internally attentive to what happens with the

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64 Deleuze 1966, pp. 22-3.

65 See Bergson 1907, pp. 165-85.

66 *Ibid.*, p. 177.

67 *Ibid.*, pp. 154-65, especially pp. 155 & 161.

68 Deleuze 1966, p. 32.

sugar in the glass of water. The impatience that one will perceive while waiting reveals something about the duration of the piece of sugar. It is the sugar's specific temporality unfolding over time. If one remains just physically but not internally present to the sugar, nothing will happen. One will not get access to the other's duration. The co-existence will remain on a level of quantitative multiplicity. No matter how much time goes by, the self and the sugar will remain nothing more than distinct entities.

Deleuze, in his extraction of dynamic models from Bergson, emphasizes that intuition is a precise method of philosophy, not just a vague feeling of sympathy.<sup>69</sup> He ascribes intuition three rules. The first is to 'apply the test of true and false to problems themselves'.<sup>70</sup> In the domain of the intellect, the level of actual representation, everything appears in terms of differences in degree. Differences in degree are relations of more or less. Perceptions on the level of differences in degree lead to 'false problems'. On the virtual plane of lived temporalities, by contrast, there are only 'differences in kind'. Everything appears in terms of a plurality of life-tendencies that display their own internal differences in positive and natural movements. Perception on the level of differences in kind enables one to see what is really going on. The second rule of intuition therefore states: 'struggle against illusion, rediscover the true differences in kind or articulations of the real.'<sup>71</sup> When Deleuze concludes, in the third rule of intuition, that one should 'state problems and solve them in terms of time rather than in terms of space',<sup>72</sup> this means, I think, that intuition is a method to use the intellect against its own tendency to orientate itself by differences in degree. The intellect *can* open up to experience. Experience is a composite of various differences in kind (one could say, of various lived temporalities). The turn from orientating oneself by differences in degree towards doing so by differences in kind is a turn beyond experience. The encounter with the given in the realm of 'lived time' makes one perceive the lived temporalities that condition the given experience that one had.

The dynamic model that really seems to underlie Deleuze's three-rule definition of intuition, is the method introduced in Deleuze's 'Nietzsche'.<sup>73</sup> 'Transmutation', as the Nietzschean method is called, refers also to a shift from rational perception to intensive perception. Just that in Deleuze's Nietzsche, what is at stake is unconscious desire, rather than the time of duration. In the instantaneous environments that Deleuze is interested in, transmutation allows the self to re-

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69 Ibid, p. 13.

70 Ibid, p. 15.

71 Ibid, p. 21.

72 Ibid, p. 31.

73 See Deleuze 1962, pp. 171– 94.



late on the level of unconscious desire to the given even in the short time of an affection in a way that an active movement of differentiation emerges. However, perceiving the other in the short time that it takes to let oneself be affected by what attracts one, amounts to relating to the other in terms of the own desire. This is the utilitarianism that Bergson was able to circumvent through choosing his examples for intuition from long-term encounters with the temporalities of nature.<sup>74</sup>

### 1.2.5 Living Life Impelled by Duration: Vitalism

“(Freedom is) to detonate an explosive, to use it for more and more powerful movements.”<sup>75</sup>

“Duration, Life, is in principle memory, in principle consciousness, in principle freedom.

‘In principle’ means virtually. The whole question is knowing under what conditions duration becomes in fact consciousness of self, how life actually accedes to a memory and freedom of fact.”<sup>76</sup>

There is a notion of freedom implied in the notion of duration, linked to the creative power of life. In action, the power of life usually remains silent. However, ‘if man accedes to the open creative totality it is therefore by acting and by creating rather than by contemplating’<sup>77</sup>. Vitalism as it shall be addressed in this book, is a model of agency. It is about acting on the basis of intuition. It is about acting in response to the dynamic of lived temporalities within the given. In Bergson’s work, duration appears as an opposition between passive and active. The creative power of life unfolds, where time can open up passively in all its dimensions. Agency seems to amount to a passive acceptance of the naturally given. Action shall be impelled by life in all its dimensions. The example of the Ancient Mayans given above, however, shows that even passively paying attention to the temporalities of the other as other than oneself does not necessarily mean the absence of utilitarian orientation. Up until the 1950s, scholars commonly believed that the Ancient Mayans must have been peaceful, scholarly people as they devoted so much of their time to understanding the temporalities of the given in themselves. Since then, by contrast, it is generally ac-

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74 This argument will be unfolded below in chapters 5 & 6.

75 Quoted in Deleuze 1966, p. 107.

76 Quoted *ibid.*, p. 106.

77 *Ibid.*, p. 111.

cepted that there have been constant wars among the Mayan people.<sup>78</sup> As pointed out above, knowledge about the temporalities of the given was a means to enhance power, both through modelling one's destiny and through representing oneself in a favourable light to one's people. In Bergson, therefore, the notion of freedom implied in the notion of duration is not a description of the given, but an ethics of vitalism in that it goes beyond the given. It is both a perspective for a creative encounter with the world *and* a way out of a utilitarian encounter with the other.

Deleuze's entire work is vitalist in the sense that it opens up the realm of the virtual, in which everything exists in a plurality of life forces. The ethical dimension that Deleuze takes up from Bergson is the perspective for a creative encounter with the world. The dualism that his more Nietzschean vitalism is concerned with, however, is not passive-active, but reactive-active. Initially, the two pairs of concepts express something similar: reactive action is action that is cut off from the virtual realm of lived temporalities. The power of life remains silent. Active action, by contrast, is action that is impelled by life. In the context of the dynamic that will be introduced more fully in chapter four below as the Nietzschean doctrine of the eternal return, however, active action requires something more than a passive affirmation of the given. After affirming the dynamic of life within the given, in the doctrine of the eternal return the will of the self passively selects from this given that what shall go beyond the present moment into an open future. The present moment, the doctrine says, shall affirm the own will for life to such a degree that it would be desirable that the present moment would return eternally. The creative movement of differentiation emerges in-between the own will for life and that what pleases oneself within the given. Vitalism in the eternal return aims at the unfolding of life in a movement of internal differentiation. It does explicitly not aim at an encounter with the other as other. The representation of the other as other seems to prevent the creative unfolding of life.

The work of inter-relational psychoanalyst Jessica Benjamin shows a way for how representation can make out of the creative movement of life an encounter with the other as actual human being. The key concept for doing so is representation as a mental capacity of the active self. Representation allows one to hold the other as other and thereby to build-up a virtual space in-between the self and the other in which one can encounter the other in creative movements of internal differentiation of the kind, Deleuze had found in Nietzsche. With the extension of Deleuzian vitalism through the work of Jessica Benjamin, it is possible to address pre-conditions that the active self

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78 Aveni 1990, p. 190.

requires in order to give itself into the virtual, and to take the effect of one's action on actual others into account. In Bergsonian vitalism, the creative unfolding of duration went together with an encounter of the other as other, because he explicitly chose his examples in a way that one physically stayed with the other throughout the time that it took for a process of internal differentiation to unfold. Deleuze's account of the contemporary as an actual that has turned virtual, by contrast, suggests that it is likely that one does not encounter the other as other. The radicalism in Deleuze consists in that he explicitly gives up the desire to do so. In Jessica Benjamin, finally, the encounter with the other as other is a desire that is specific to the human being. If the self affirms the desire for an encounter with the other as other as an explicit part of its will for life, this will can displace the fleetingness and instantaneity of the given.<sup>79</sup>

In this section of the text, it has been shown that the time of duration in Bergson refers to temporalities within nature that the human is part of and can relate to, and that Deleuze extracts dynamic models from Bergson and carries them away from the temporalities of nature into temporalities of a scenario in which the actual has turned virtual. In doing so, it has been shown how lived time and the unconscious become compatible. As such, the notion of lived temporalities, taken as an open and creative mode of co-existence of the multiple, concerns both a mode of the given and a mode to live within the given. Now, it will be explained why, how and where this research took place in Guatemala.

### 1.3 THE LOCATION OF THE RESEARCH: GUATEMALA

I first encountered the term vitalism through the Cosmovision of the Ancient Mayas in its meaning to *contemporary* Mayan descendants. It has been indicated above that the Ancient Maya, during the so-called classical period of their development, built one of the greatest civilizations of the Western hemisphere. When European colonisers reached the Americas in the sixteenth century, they destroyed indigenous cultures like that of the Maya. While today the great days of the Maya civilization are gone, the Maya are not a vanished people, with more than half of the Guatemalan population being of indigenous origin.<sup>80</sup> Many still adhere to ancient customs despite the repressive regimes imposed on them in the centuries since the Spanish conquest. In 1996, peace treaties formally ended a civil war that had bedevilled the country for 36 years. During this war, entire indigenous communities,

79 This argument will be unfolded below in chapters 5 & 6 of this book.

80 See Barbara Honner 1994.

many forming the poorest part of the population, have been murdered by the military because they were suspected of being in contact with the *guerrilla*<sup>81</sup> that operated within the country. The erasure of indigenous communities was called ‘politics of the burnt earth’ and was meant to destroy communist and government-opposed thinking from the ground up. The civil war had resulted in 100,000 politically motivated murders, 40,000 missing people, 200,000 refugees and one million people displaced within the own country. Since my first visit to Guatemala in 1995, I got to know vitalism as part of a re-valuation of indigenous culture. This was a result of the lifting of repression in the final years of the war. During the latter half of the nineties, among the people I lived with, *vitalismo* had become an alternative to Catholicism and Evangelism. It was an attitude towards life that orientated itself by a belief that on a deeper level, everything relates to everything else, derived from the Mayan Cosmovision. It was through encounters with Guatemalan culture in everyday life that I decided to describe and understand how people live time.

The present research is based on eight months of fieldwork (June 2002 – February 2003). The field was selected from the life-world of a friend, whom I shall refer to as Manuel Gómez-Quichtán<sup>82</sup>. We lived together with his parents, whom I shall refer to as *Don* Arsenio and *Doña* Toria. We also stayed with his grandmother and his brother, *Doña* Maria and Oswaldo. The closest relatives to the family were the family of Manuel’s cousin, Carmencita<sup>83</sup>. Carmencita and her husband Mario lived about fifteen minutes foot-walk away from where we lived, together with their four children, Carmencita’s mother *Doña* Olga, and her grandfather *Don* Meme. *Doña* Olga is the sister of *Don* Arsenio. All of these people identified themselves – to varying extents – as indigenous, as Catholic, and as poor. *Don* Arsenio was a tailor. He had gone to school for six years. He worked from home for people who knew him. *Doña* Toria and her mother also worked in the so-called informal sector. They, however, had never learned a profession. *Doña* Toria had gone to school for three years while *Doña* Maria had received no formal education. The two women were working for a relative who set up a business by exporting colourful wooden cases filled with dolls dressed in local indigenous garments to Europe. The dolls are called ‘sorrow dolls’, because supposedly one can put them

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81 Armed forces, mostly from the common people, fighting in underground techniques against the professional army from the government.

82 The first part of the surname is Spanish, the second part is Mayan. In everyday life, just the first part is used.

83 The official name is Carmen. The ending ‘-ita’ or ‘-ito’ is a very common way in Guatemala to express affection for someone or something. In the family where I lived, everyone addressed Carmen only with ‘Carmencita’.

under one's cushion when going to bed in the evening and when one wakes up in the morning, all sorrows have disappeared. Besides, the two women painted eggshells and filled these with confetti for carnival-time in February.<sup>84</sup> Mostly, *Doña* Toria and *Doña* Maria did the housework. Oswaldo had stopped school a year before finishing secondary school. He did learn the tailor profession from his father and continued to assist him. Manuel had received a university degree in psychology. He earned his living in a school, which he and two friends owned. The school offered foreigners (mainly backpackers) the opportunity to learn Spanish as a second language. The school started as a non-governmental organisation (NGO) in the final years of the civil war. One idea behind the project was to teach foreigners those aspects of local culture that the government repressed in its official versions. The profit was meant to support indigenous community projects in the countryside. By the time of the fieldwork the school was broader in what it was teaching. *Doña* Olga was selling traditional local food and drinks made from sweetcorn on the open market. Carmencita, her daughter, had worked for many years in a local supermarket, until a kidney-illness two years ago prevented her from continuing. Her husband Mario was employed by a radio station as a moderator. At the time of the fieldwork, Manuel was 34 years old; his brother Oswaldo was 29. Their parents *Doña* Toria and *Don* Arsenio were 61 and 64. Their grandmother, *Doña* Maria was 85 years old. Carmencita and Mario were around 40. *Doña* Olga was 63 years old. At the time of the fieldwork, I had known all these people for eight years.

The main site of the research was Quetzaltenango<sup>85</sup>, the main town in the Guatemalan southern highlands. It was the second largest city in the country, after the capital, although it retained a small-town-character. The city was situated 2,300 metres above sea level. The area was very hilly and the houses had only one floor due to the danger of earthquakes. The size of the city resulted mainly from the spread of urbanised areas connected to it and the population was at the time of the fieldwork around half a million people. Locally, the name of the town was abbreviated from its indigenous name 'Xelajú' as 'Xela'.

Most of all, I explored lived temporalities through sharing time at home with the people introduced above. My understanding of time that thereby emerged was then amplified through conversations and encounters with people and circumstances other than those I lived with. I conducted ten half-structured interviews with teachers in the Spanish school where Manuel was working, as well as with the per-

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84 See photo 6 in appendix.

85 See map in appendix.

sonnel of a rural NGO that had been working over the past with this school.<sup>86</sup> Through this NGO, I also took part in various one to seven-day visits to indigenous communities in the countryside. At the same time I followed the local news and went to presentations by local organisations at the Spanish school where these related to the theme of the research. Among the culture of the politically left, young student circles that dominated my encounters at the Spanish school and the NGO, vitalism as a re-evaluation of Ancient Mayan customs and beliefs was something like a political stance and a communal spirit. Among the culture of the indigenous older generation of Manuel's parents and grandparents, vitalism was an attitude towards life that was close to everyday lived experience, although ideologically these people were much more indebted to Catholicism. The visits to indigenous villages in the countryside highlighted those aspects in the daily life at home that resembled Bergsonian long-term processes of nature. At the same time, I kept diaries on everyday life at open markets in and around Xela and on everyday journeys in second-class buses up and down the country.<sup>87</sup> These sites brought lived time more into view in terms of Deleuzian immanence and instantaneity.

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86 See questionnaire in appendix. The questions noted down there were meant to give the conversations a comparable direction. The conversations generated by the questionnaire took on average one hour. Its questions brought my explorations of duration after the first three months of fieldwork on the point in order to substantiate the acquired insights through comparable information from sources other than the place where I lived.

87 A substantial part of the material in the bus-chapter is from a research diary kept by Nikola Schmitt according to my instruction. Nikola was a student whom I had met in the Spanish school. I had planned to use solicited research diaries kept by others as a way to triangulate perspectives on buses in Guatemala. On research diaries kept by others as methodological tool for triangulation see Robert Burgess (1984). My instruction consisted in the request to describe bus journeys in terms of movements. I was interested in movements of objects, subjects and intensities. (Movements of the bus, of passengers, of the driver, of the assistant, of animals, of luggage, of money, of smell, of sound, of other tacit impressions, such as wind breezes). On movements of objects and subjects as theoretical approach see Lash/Urry (1994) in section five below in this chapter.

#### 1.4 METHODOLOGY: STUDYING ATMOSPHERES OF DURATION AND THEIR PRODUCTION

The methodology used in this book is derived from Deleuze and Guattari's outline of schizoanalysis.<sup>88</sup> Schizoanalysis is intuition translated into the instantaneous. While intuition is grounded in the time of duration, schizoanalysis is grounded in unconscious desire. Again, the time of duration and the time of the unconscious become compatible. Schizoanalysis allows the study of duration both among the long-term temporalities of nature and among the instantaneity and fleetingness of an actual that has turned virtual. In this book, schizoanalysis has been employed to study atmospheres and their production. The abstract concept of duration was translated into the empirical as atmosphere. The guiding question for empirically exploring lived time, understood as duration, was how a particular atmosphere gets produced by a given material environment. The definition of 'atmosphere' in this book is compatible with Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the 'social field' that schizoanalysis sets out to explore. As in Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche mentioned above, schizoanalysis builds on the unconscious as a plane of the given. In the context of their outline of schizoanalysis, Deleuze and Guattari speak of the 'social unconscious'<sup>89</sup>. The social unconscious consists of flows of desire that link selected parts of a given material environment on the level of time with a perceiving self. By the same token, this book understands 'atmosphere' as relating to the plane of virtual time. An atmosphere builds up within the realm of affect, not within the realm of representation. Schizoanalysis wants to stay with the unconscious on the level of time (desire), below the level of space (representation). Here, the radicalism of Deleuzian vitalism in rejecting the logic of the actual expresses itself once more. On the level of time, Deleuze and Guattari argue, desire can be studied on the level of its production. On the level of space, by contrast, desire only ever shows itself in representations of lacking. Schizoanalysis, in the reading of Deleuze and Guattari, has nothing to do with schizophrenia as a mental state. Rather, the methodology strives to study time in its raw state, before it gets coerced into representations.

'We believe in desire as in the irrational of every form of rationality, and not because it is a lack, a thirst or an aspiration, but because it is the production of desire: desire that produces – real-desire, or the real in itself. Finally, we do not at all think that the revolutionary is schizophrenic or vice versa. On the contrary, we have consistently dis-

88 See Deleuze/Guattari 1972: *Anti-Oedipus*, pp. 273-83.

89 See *ibid.*, pp. 283-96.

tinguished the schizophrenic as an entity from schizophrenia as a process; [...] The schizophrenic process [...] is revolutionary, [...].'<sup>90</sup>

In agreement with Deleuze and Guattari, the study of atmospheres in this book consists of three subsequent steps: first, an atmosphere is affirmed as relevant for the research and second, the atmosphere gets mapped. It is linked back to material conditions in a given present environment that took part in its production. Third, the theoretical interest of the researcher, which by definition is implicit in the mapped atmosphere, gets actualised in reading the material. The reading of the atmosphere thereby becomes explicitly a partial and subjective account of the given. The reading brings to light something that established communication between the researching self and the researched other. That what comes to light, however, is taken as expression of the social, rather than as manifestation of a self.

#### **1.4.1 Affirming an Atmosphere: The Molar and the Molecular**

A social field, according to Deleuze and Guattari, consists of two levels, one of which is 'molar', while the other is 'molecular'.<sup>91</sup> The two terms are compatible with the Deleuzian distinction between an actual realm of the given where everything appears as representation and a virtual realm of the given where everything is lived time. On the molar level, the social field appears in terms of representations of whole others. An actual object appears in front of the eye of the researcher. On the molar level, the many co-exist in the form of a discrete multiplicity. The given appears in terms of discrete objects and movements. On the molecular level, by contrast, the social field appears prior to its formation into representations. On the molecular level, the given appears in terms of duration: everything is diffuse movement and affect. The many co-exist in the form of a continuous multiplicity. Everything is related to everything else. The first step of studying a social field, according to Deleuze and Guattari, consists of the destruction of the habit, to perceive desire only on the molar level of representation.<sup>92</sup> Desire, Deleuze and Guattari argue, is something much more general than love or sexual desire for an actual other person. Rather, on the molecular level, there is only desire. Every perceived impression goes back, on the molecular level, to flows of desire and every impression is the effect of the de-centralised, plural, heterogeneous and ephemeral work of unconscious flows of desire.

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90 *Ibid.*, pp. 379-80.

91 *Ibid.*, pp. 280, 283-96.

92 See *ibid.*, pp. 322-39.



"[...] every fantasy is a group fantasy and in this sense a position of reality. But the two kinds of investments are radically different, according as the one bears upon the molar structures that subordinate the molecules, and the other on the contrary bears upon the molecular multiplicities that subordinate the structured crowd phenomena."<sup>93</sup>

The aim of the first step in schizoanalysis, one could say, is to affirm a given impression on the level of duration. In Deleuze and Guattari, it is a *methodological technique* of perception to move away from the molar realm of representation into the molecular realm of duration. Through shifting the focus from the molar to the molecular, a notion of atmosphere as something that can be named, located and studied emerges. The present research, however, is concerned with atmospheres that *empirically* express duration. Atmospheres have been studied in social spaces in which duration – time prior to its abstraction and coercion into discrete representations – has been the dominant impression, independent of any methodological background. But how did the definition of an atmosphere of duration take place concretely? The empirical exploration of duration has brought to light four distinct themes. These have been brought into four empirical chapters. First, in a chapter on the traditional home, I located an atmosphere of duration in the impression that time literally seemed to stand still, passively, in all its weight from past, present and future. Second, in a chapter on the open market, I located an atmosphere of duration in the impression that everything seemed to act on one at the same time and on the same level. Third, in a chapter on unpleasure; I located an atmosphere of duration in the impression that in the traditional home, the unpleasant coexisted on one plane with the pleasant within everyday life. Fourth, in a chapter on second-class buses, I located an atmosphere of duration in an impression of density and unpredictability reminiscent of the open market.

### 1.4.2 Mapping an Atmosphere: The Partial Objects

In Deleuze and Guattari, the social field consists of unconsciously contracted impulses from a given present environment. Deleuze and Guattari call these impulses after Melanie Klein, an English object-relation theorist, 'partial objects'.<sup>94</sup> Melanie Klein speaks of part objects as affective impulses into which the child-self at a certain, immature state of its development, reduces its perception of the whole (m)other.<sup>95</sup> In the partial object, the other is perceived as a reflection

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93 See *ibid*, p. 280.

94 See *ibid*, pp. 42-50, 324.

95 See Melanie Klein 1930: *Contributions to Psychoanalysis*, pp. 242-3.

of one's affection for the other. The good other is completely split off from the bad other. In Klein, at some stage, the immature perception of the other in terms of part objects will integrate into a holistic perception. Then, the attracting affection towards the other and the rejecting feelings towards the other can be integrated. In Klein therefore, the holistic perception of the other is more mature than the perception of the other in terms of part objects.

In Deleuze and Guattari, in contrast to Klein, partial objects are something in themselves.<sup>96</sup> They do not refer to the whole body of the material object they are part of. Rather, for Deleuze and Guattari, partial objects refer to the social field which unconsciously spreads-up in-between various contracted partial objects. By this way, any given perceived atmosphere could be brought back to a variety of unconsciously contracted partial objects. If the partial objects that have gone into an atmosphere can be located, the production of an atmosphere can be reconstructed retrospectively. Partial objects are located within the realm of lived time; however, these are drawn from whole objects within a given material environment. When a partial object gets contracted<sup>97</sup> by the unconscious into a perceived atmosphere, the material object from which it is drawn becomes part of the social unconscious. An atmosphere is therefore something material, but not a material object. Rather, it spreads-up between material objects. It is a momentary formation of impulses that are transmitting flows of desire. The flows of desire bind the impulses and, by extension, the material objects from which the impulses have been drawn. The perceiving self is part of the atmosphere and is on the same level as the contracted impulses. The atmosphere is always changing, due to the ephemeral nature of the unconscious contraction of partial objects. The contraction produces a momentary impression that relates to a given social and natural environment. The second step of schizoanalysis is therefore to map the flows of desire (Deleuze and Guattari: the 'nonhuman sexes') that span a social field between a self and a variety of contracted partial objects. This takes place, again, below the level of representation, within the realm of lived time. In this sense, mapping an atmosphere is not about interpretation, but about the functional mechanics of finding out what has flown where.

"The first positive task consists of discovering in a subject the nature, the formation, or the functioning of *his* desiring-machines, independently of any interpretations. What are your desiring-machines, what do you put into these machines, what is the output, how does it work, what are your non-

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96 See *ibid*, p. 324.

97 Deleuze's term for unconscious selection. See Deleuze 1968, chapter 2.

human sexes? The schizoanalyst is a mechanic, and schizoanalysis is solely functional.<sup>98</sup>

How did the mapping of atmospheres actually take place? I tried to retrospectively (the same evening or the next day) locate a given atmosphere of duration within the material environment in which it had emerged. The point was not to describe a material environment in its entirety, but to pick up those aspects of this environment that for me were most obvious when I tried to recall it in relation to the atmosphere I wanted to reconstruct. I tried to localise one affective point that came to mind when I recalled the material environment in which the impression of duration emerged. I tried to describe, in as much detail as possible, what this had to do with duration. Then I tried to explain the entire situation in terms of this one impression. Everything that contributed to unfolding the impression of duration in the given situation was included. At times the social field that thereby emerged consisted of an object in a given situation, while at times it consisted of the various sequences of a process over time. In this way, there emerged verbal pictures of the molecular unconscious. First, in the chapter on the home, the impression that time seemed to stand still, passively, in all its weight could be linked back to the material conditions set by a traditional mode of subsistence. For example, the temporalities of the open fire make cooking and heating water long-term processes. Second, in the chapter on the market-place, the impression that everything seemed to act on one at the same time and on the same level could be linked back to the way the market-place organises itself. For example, a bag is made by folding a sheet of old newspaper to hold some garlic. Preachers call out messages about God next to displays of women's underwear and oranges,<sup>99</sup> while ownerless dogs and drunken men are seen nearby. Third, in the chapter on the unpleasant, the impression that the unpleasant coexisted on one plane with the pleasant in everyday life, could be linked back, for example, to the open *patio* that impels people to live in close contact with the weather, no matter what the conditions. Fourth, in the chapter on second-class buses, the impression of density and unpredictability could be linked back to the heterogeneity and unpredictability of flows of objects and sensations, such as money, luggage, people, animals, smells, sights and sounds.

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98 Ibid, p. 322.

99 See photo 10 in appendix.

### 1.4.3 Analysing an Atmosphere: The Machine

The partial objects form a social field in their links with each other and with the perceiving self according to an organising principle. In Deleuze and Guattari, this organising principle is called a ‘machine’.<sup>100</sup> Empirically, the machine is an affective moment that repeats itself in all the unconsciously contracted images. The most diverse material objects from the environment get connected through this one moment. Theoretically, the notion of the ‘machine’ indicates that the social field exists only as long as the machine is working. A machine, in the reading of Deleuze and Guattari, is a unit of production of a number of flows that works according to the inter-communication of its parts. If there is no flow between the partial objects anymore, the machine disappears.<sup>101</sup> It is also important, however, that the machine is something *between* the material given and the unconsciously perceiving self. To map the partial objects within the material given thus actualises only half of the social unconscious. Every single one of the contracted partial objects will also express in some way the interest of the contemplating self. If this point can be located, it can then be supported with respective theoretical concepts and thus made stronger as a theoretical reading of the given empirical material. The point is to make use of the subjectivity of perception in a way that supports the research. Deleuze and Guattari suggest locating the class interest of the contemplating self, as they want to link back the subjective investment of the researcher to his socio-economic location. This would be one way to read the social field as social in relation to both the present given and the unconscious investment of the researcher. It would also be one way to express that the social field is something *in-between*, not a whole or objective picture of something in itself.

“Now we can present the second thesis of schizoanalysis: within the social investments we will distinguish the unconscious libidinal investments of group or desire, and the preconscious investment of class or interest.”<sup>102</sup>

In translation, I found in the mappings of atmospheres a theoretical position that through expressing my interest in both theoretical texts I had read and empirical situations that interested me, could serve as a point of departure for linking the empirical material with theoretical abstractions. I was interested in vitalism and I was interested in the social field as a space for action impelled by life. How do people within the social fields that I had characterized by duration affirm

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100 See *ibid.*, pp. 283-91, especially pp. 283-4.

101 See *ibid.*, p. 283.

102 See *ibid.*, pp. 343-4.

lived time? First, in the chapter on the traditional home, people seem to passively repeat the slowness, openness and intensity of the material conditions they live in through the way they interact with their work, with the Saints and with each other. Second, in the chapter on the open market, people seem to cope with immanence through territorialisation by resonance. One immerses oneself into the given and then, on the level of lived time, passively picks up what attracts one, thereby flexibly building up territories out of whatever is available. Third, in the chapter on the unpleasant, people seem to encounter the immanence of the pleasant and the unpleasant through the affirmation of the own will for life. The unpleasant does not get repressed, but affirmed. The own will for life, however, also gets affirmed. In the end, the affirmation of the own will for life makes one relate to the given selectively in a way that affirms life in general. Fourth, in the chapter on second-class buses, density and unpredictability can be affirmed, if one orientates oneself by an ideal surface-feeling of inner balance as the effect of the encounter between oneself and whatever upcoming circumstances that occur within the given. Orientation seems to take place not by any particular other, but by this feeling of inner balance in relation to any possible other.

John Marks' characterisation of Deleuzian vitalism<sup>103</sup> as containing the three imperatives of 'no rationality', 'no negativity' and 'no interiority' (complemented by my own contribution of 'no subjectivity'), brought my encounter with Deleuze in relation to time throughout the analysis of the material nicely to the point. The different imperatives therefore have each been linked retrospectively to one of the empirical chapters, in order to characterize what I had explored as 'Deleuzian vitalism'. Deleuzian vitalism, however, as has been said above, is explicitly pre-human. Using the work of Jessica Benjamin, as the final chapter will show, it was possible to extend Deleuzian vitalism in an abstraction from the research results in a way that it became compatible with inter-relationality in-between actual people.

## 1.5 LOCATING THE RESEARCH PROJECT WITHIN EXISTING RESEARCH

The two years of analysis of the empirical material took place in London at the Centre for Cultural Studies at Goldsmiths' College, and not at the field-site in Guatemala. The current academic orientation at the Centre allowed me to analyse the empirical material in a way that answered the contemporary challenge of adjusting modes of perceiving

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103 See John Marks 1998: *Gilles Deleuze. Vitalism an Multiplicity*, pp. 31 & 51.

and acting to conditions of global capitalism. At the Centre, through the work of its current director Scott Lash, global capitalism is affirmed in its own right, rather than, as is often done, approached in negative terms as the disappearance of something that was there before.<sup>104</sup> The basis for Lash's affirmative approach to the new given is a Deleuzian notion of immanence. The work of Lash allowed establishing a link between the postmodern immanence of global capitalism and a premodern immanence that I had found by way of Bergson's concept of duration in modern indigenous Guatemalan everyday life.

In a recent reading of global capitalism and its cultural effects, Lash defines the new given as 'Information Age'. The immanence of the Information Age is reminiscent of the immanence of Deleuze's Nietzschean reading of Bergson in that in the Information Age, in comparison to what was there before, the actual turns virtual. Movement and sensation become a general condition of existence. 'The primary qualities of information are flow, disembeddedness, spatial compression, temporal compression, real-time relations. It is not exclusively, but mainly, in this sense that we live in an Information Age.'<sup>105</sup> The characteristic temporality of the Information Age is instantaneity.<sup>106</sup> Similar to Deleuze's Nietzschean reading of Bergson, the work of Lash suggests that an immanent orientation provides a perspective for affirming the instantaneity of the new given.<sup>107</sup> Lash and Urry's *Economies of Signs and Space* (1994) can be read as a predecessor to this approach of the Information Age. The book provides a systematic framework for reading the new given in terms of immanence. It reads global capitalism in terms of an immanence of mobile objects and reflexive subjects. It distinguishes a contemporary immanence of mobile objects and subjects that are circulating through affection- and consumption-dominated global capitalism from an earlier structuring of objects and subjects by an abstraction- and manufacturing-dominated nation-based capitalism. The human being, Lash and Urry argue, is capable of affirming the new given on the level of the body through 'aesthetic reflexivity'.<sup>108</sup> Aesthetic reflexivity is a vitalist orientation within the new given in that it works by unconscious affection.

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104 See below in this part of the chapter the discussion of the work of David Harvey (1989), Ulrich Beck (1992) and Anthony Giddens (1990, 1991).

105 Lash 2002, *Critique of Information*, p. 2.

106 Lash uses with Paul Virilio the term 'speed' (2002, pp. 137-8). The term 'instantaneity' is compatible with speed. In Lash/Urry (1994, pp. 241-51), instantaneity has been developed as the characteristic temporality of what then later got termed 'Information Age'.

107 Lash (2002) in passim, esp. chapters 1, 6, 12.

108 See Lash/Urry 1994, pp. 54 ff.

In the work of Lash and Urry, the premodern refers to a life in an immanent relation with the pace of nature and the modern refers to an abstraction from the immanence of nature through the setting of structures. Modern structures abstract from the insecurities, unpredictabilities and incommensurabilities implied in a life in immanent relation with nature. The postmodern meanwhile refers to a shrinking down of these structures through developments in the realms of economics and technology. The postmodern starts where technology and economy make it possible to transgress the boundedness of modern structure towards a globalisation of flows of objects and subjects. In the postmodern, insecurities, unpredictabilities and incommensurabilities implied by an immanent relation with the given are there again, but now the grounding in nature is gone. Urry<sup>109</sup> limits the modern experience of structure and control to an experience of 'North Atlantic rim cultures'<sup>110</sup>. Only in these cultures, Urry holds, there have been 200 years or so of experience that nurtured the expectation to be able to control unpredictable, open-ended movement as dominant experience of the given through setting structures. For most of the world's population, by contrast, the experience of unpredictable, open-ended movement has always been dominant. In this reading, unpredictable, open-ended movement is linked to an immanent existence within nature. An existence in immanence with nature brings with it the kinds of incommensurability and unpredictability that the project of modernity within 'North Atlantic rim cultures' set out to relieve. In this reading, people in Guatemala have much expertise in living with immanence because for them, there never was a phase that was dominated by the modern experience to be able to control the given through setting structures. At the same time, Lash<sup>111</sup> holds that while in modern manufacturing capitalism the less technologised and less capitalised peripheries were likely to be exploited, in the new consumption-based Information Age capitalism, these peripheries are likely to be cut off from the distribution of flows altogether. Exclusion and inclusion from and into the flows of the Information Age creates 'wild zones' and 'tame zones'.<sup>112</sup> According to this reading, there would be much immanence in Guatemala, because traditional forms of everyday life are likely to become a 'wild zone' of global capitalism. People within traditional forms of life would be much more acutely faced with the necessity to come through on their own terms, cut-off or left aside from any structural support by social, cultural and economic institutions of a nation-state

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109 See John Urry 2000: *Sociology beyond Societies*, pp. 5-12.

110 One attempt to come away from the ever too exclusive, clear-cut and general term 'the West' – but of course still exclusive, clear-cut and general.

111 See Lash 2002, chapter 3.

112 See *ibid*, pp. VII-VIII.

that has to keep up with globalisation on a world scale from a weak position. In this reading, immanence in Guatemala is a postmodern phenomenon. It is an effect of the globalisation of flows of objects and subjects.

The effect of studying immanence with Deleuze in Guatemala is firstly to explore temporalities of humans, before bringing these together with the fleetingness of global capitalism. In an environment where temporalities of nature unfold themselves non-abbreviated and non-mediated, the temporalities of the human, as part of these, do so as well. There is time for slowness, there is time for the unpleasant, and there is time for holding. Secondly, the chapters on markets and buses bring the temporalities of the human together with an actual that has turned virtual. Here, one effect of studying immanence with Deleuze in Guatemala is to show that people at the margins struggle with similar themes as people in the nodes of global capitalism. Thirdly, the detour over Guatemala in learning how to live the temporalities of global capitalism explores everyday life at a low level of built-up structural comfort and security, while highlighting the possibility of life unfolding itself in these conditions. In order to live one's own temporalities in their positive difference from the temporalities of global capitalism, one needs the readiness to subsist on a low living standard, either temporarily or on a more long-term basis if required. Fourthly, a further effect of studying immanence with Deleuze in Guatemala is an affirmation of the desire for lived inter-relationality with other people. In an active 'Yes' to the space in-between actual human beings, empirically the traditional home and theoretically the extension of Deleuzian vitalism through the work of Jessica Benjamin opens up a perspective for sociality in a world dominated by the logic of the free market. Overall, the detour over Guatemala in learning how to live the temporalities of global capitalism provided the tools for a vitalist ethics. Because of its link between the time of duration and the time of the unconscious, the present book derived its ethics of vitalism from Deleuze's readings of Bergson, Freud and Nietzsche, and read then, by extension, Jessica Benjamin in relation to this. Capitalism is inhuman. If the human affirms the temporalities of global capitalism, but also its own temporalities as different from these, then the tension between the temporalities of global capitalism and the temporalities of the human can express themselves through what gets produced in the space in-between. The limits in adapting to global capitalism can then become productive.



## EXPOSÉE

In what follows now, the four empirical chapters that throughout this chapter have been introduced from various angles will be presented. Each chapter will start with a theoretical introduction that develops one major aspect related to lived temporalities (in a broad sense that includes unconscious desire) through a reading of Deleuze, and of Deleuze and Guattari. Then, the empirical material will be presented. I have used the present tense in order to make the account as direct as possible. Each chapter will end not only with a conclusion, but also with a 'line of flight'<sup>113</sup>. The concept of the line of flight by Deleuze and Guattari expresses that as soon as something gets demarcated as form, there is already a movement toward somewhere else. Form is ever only provisional and momentary. In the context of this book, the line of flight-section will suggest how local connotations of the empirical material might depart from my readings of the respective topics. The chapters appear in the order of tradition, market, unpleasant and buses. A final, sixth chapter will summarise the findings of the book in relation to time as virtual multiplicity. It will abstract from these findings through extending the virtual multiplicity by way of the work of Jessica Benjamin into the actual.

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113 See Deleuze/Guattari 1987: pp. 508-10 and in *passim*.

## CHAPTER 2

### 'POCO A POCO'<sup>1</sup>: PASSIVE TIME AND THE TRADITIONAL HOME

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION: PASSIVE TIME AND THE LIVING PRESENT

The material circumstances of traditional subsistence in the present chapter produce an atmosphere that I have called 'passive time'. The notion of passive time builds on the reading of the passive synthesis of time that Deleuze unfolds in *Difference and Repetition*. Building importantly on Bergson's theory of memory, in *Difference and Repetition*<sup>2</sup>, Deleuze introduces time on the three levels of past, present and future through each level's respective synthesis of the other two modes of time. (He asks: 'how does the past synthesise present and future? How does the present synthesise past and future? How does the future synthesise past and present?') For every level, Deleuze distinguishes between an active synthesis and a passive synthesis. The active synthesis works through representation. The passive synthesis works through affection. Deleuze is interested explicitly in the three *passive* syntheses of time. The passive syntheses take place within the realm of lived time. Read with Deleuze's theory of the three passive syntheses of time, passive time allows the present to be lived as a 'living present'<sup>3</sup>. Bringing then in Walter Benjamin, tradition is so much saturated with passive time, because of natural conditions that suggest living the present in the mode of a living present.

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1 English: 'Bit by bit'. *Doña Toria* and *Doña Maria* used this expression constantly. It transmits what this chapter is meant to unfold. It means something like 'come down. Do it slowly. One step after the other.' It is about linear movements, about relaxed movements, and about adjusting one's movements to the temporalities of the given.

2 See Deleuze 1968a, chapter 2.

3 See *ibid.*, p. 70.

### 2.1.1 Passive Time

Bergson's theory of memory describes time in a fascinatingly simple, yet highly consequential formula: time is a continuum from 'time that is' to 'time that passes'.<sup>4</sup> The present is the time that passes, because the present is about action. The past is the time that is, because in past time, there is no need anymore for action. The time that is coexists with the time that passes in varying degrees of contraction and relaxation. As well, in Deleuze's theory of the passive syntheses of time, the past is not something past, but a passive mode of the present. As such, the past coexists with the present. It is the passive ground of the present.<sup>5</sup> The more the emphasis is on passing, the more tense, ephemeral and thin time is. The more the emphasis is on passivity, the more time is, in all its weight. In passive time, all time is one. Passive time is absolutely relaxed. It is 'full time'. Passive time passively synthesises the full weight of present, past and future.

"[...] the past, far from being a dimension of time, is the synthesis of all time of which the present and the future are only dimensions. We cannot say that it was. It no longer exists, it does not exist, but it insists, it consists, it is. It insists with the former present, it consists with the new or present present. It is the in-itself of time as the final ground of the passage of time. In this sense it forms a pure, general, a priori element of all time."<sup>6</sup>

The more passive time is, the more it opens up and thereby unfolds a particular dynamic: in passive time, everything follows a logic of attraction. 'It is always Eros, [...], who allows us to penetrate this pure past in itself, [...]'<sup>7</sup> There is only movement and affect. Every movement is a response to a received intensity, signalled by a sign.<sup>8</sup> In Bergson's terminology, every action is a reaction.<sup>9</sup> When the present is lived in a way that every action is a reaction to signs<sup>10</sup>, passive time unfolds its particular dynamic in the present. When signs signal intensities, they envelop other signs.<sup>11</sup> Envelopment characterizes the passive synthesis of time particular to the past. The more passive time is,

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4 See *ibid.*, pp. 80-83 and chapter 1 of this book.

5 See *ibid.*, p. 80.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 82.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 85.

8 See *ibid.*, p. 222.

9 See chapter 1 of this book.

10 See *ibid.*, p. 73.

11 See *ibid.*, p. 73. Deleuze distinguishes between natural and artificial signs. Natural signs refer 'to the present in which they signify.' Artificial signs, by contrast, refer to past and future 'as distinct dimensions of the present, dimensions on which the present might in turn depend.' (See *ibid.*, p. 77).

the more signs envelop themselves into the present. Envelopment is a passive dynamic. Different intensities attach themselves to a given intensity, rather than being actively chosen to do so.<sup>12</sup> As well, envelopment is a non-directed dynamic: Intensities can be equally enveloped from all of the past, from all of the present and from all of the future. The dynamic of envelopment is unpredictable. It can only be reconstructed afterwards. Finally, envelopment is a plural and heterogeneous dynamic: there are always various intensities that get enveloped by a given intensity.

A belief in destiny expresses the presence of passive time in the present. It expresses a belief in chance connections of envelopment. In destiny, the present is seen as the chance outcome of something much more profound than the given. The present is seen as the effect of dynamics of repercussion and attraction within the passive ground of time. All of the past is organised on planes of varying degrees of contraction-relaxation. The more passive time is, the more the present will be experienced as the open-ended and chance dynamic of envelopment. Destiny...

"[...] implies between successive presents non-localisable connections, actions at a distance, systems of replay, resonance and echoes, objective chances, signs, signals and roles which transcend spatial locations and temporal successions. [...] The succession of present presents is only the manifestation of something more profound – namely, the manner in which each continues the whole life, but at different levels or degree to the preceding, since all levels and degrees coexist and present themselves for our choice on the basis of a past which was never present."<sup>13</sup>

### 2.1.2 The Living Present

The living present is the passive synthesis of time characteristic of the present. Deleuze characterizes the present as a succession of instants motivated by need.<sup>14</sup> The living present consists in the repetition of these instants in a passive mode of time. In passive time, every present instant produces an echo in past and future of an  $n^{\text{th}}$  dimension. The strength of this echo depends on the duration allowed for the contraction of past time into the present. The repetition of a present moment within passive time makes out of a given present a living present. The longer the interval is in-between two instants in which the echo of these instants unfolds, the more the given present can become, through the communication of signs in passive time, a living present.

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12 See *ibid*, p. 237.

13 *Ibid*, p. 83.

14 See *ibid*, p. 77.

"The present extends between two eruptions of need, and coincides with the duration of a contemplation."<sup>15</sup>

"It is not that the present is a dimension of time: the present alone exists. Rather, synthesis constitutes time as a 'living present', and the past and the future as dimensions of this present. This synthesis is none the less intra-temporal, which means that this present passes."<sup>16</sup>

Habit, with Deleuze, is grounded in the living present. On the actual level, habit is the repetition of the ever-same sequence of actions in the present. Through the echo in passive time, habit becomes an expression of a living present. As expression of a living present, the repetition of the ever-same sequence of actions in the actual present structures time far beyond the actual present. The memory of the repetition of an ever-same present movement in the past produces an anticipation of the return of the repetition of this ever-same movement in the future. The anticipation attaches itself as expectancy to the present movement.

"Passive synthesis [...] constitutes our habit of living, our expectation that 'it' will continue, that one of the elements will appear after the other, thereby assuring the perpetuation of our case. When we say that habit is a contraction we are speaking not of an instantaneous action which combines with another to form an element of repetition, but rather of the fusion of that repetition in the contemplating mind. A soul must be attributed to the heart, to the muscles, nerves and cells, but a contemplative soul whose entire function is to contract a habit."<sup>17</sup>

"In every way, material or bare repetition, so-called repetition of the same, is like a skin which unravels, the external husk of a kernel of difference and more complicated internal repetitions."<sup>18</sup>

Expectancy forms a 'living rule' for the future.<sup>19</sup> If there is expectancy, the time of the future is structured. This is not a static grid, but a living structure. The living structuring of the future through expectancy is grounded in passive time. Deleuze, in the end, strives with everything he says towards the over-turning of any kind of structuring of time in the living of the present. Deleuze is interested most of all in what comes after the passive synthesis of the past and the passive syn-

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15 Ibid.

16 *ibid.*, p. 76.

17 *ibid.*, p. 74.

18 *ibid.*, p. 76.

19 See *ibid.*, p. 71.

thesis of the present. The passive synthesis of the future starts off with an explosive moment that sets free an open-ended movement in which time goes completely out of joint.<sup>20</sup> Passive time (the passive synthesis of the past) and the repetition of the present through passive time as a living present (the passive synthesis of the present) are pre-conditions for time to go out of joint (the passive synthesis of the future). Chapter four of this book will deal especially with the passive synthesis of the future. This chapter, however, will focus on the passive structuring of time by expectancy. It will do so through the work of Walter Benjamin. In Walter Benjamin's work on tradition, there is an emphasis on expectancy as the precondition for passive communication (communication within passive time) to emerge.

### 2.1.3 Tradition

Through the concept of experience, Walter Benjamin's work is compatible with Deleuze's notion of the 'living present'. Walter Benjamin distinguishes between the experience (*Erfahrung*) and the event (*Erlebnis*) of the given.<sup>21</sup> An experience emerges where a moment has been lived as a living present. In the event, by contrast, the actual present remains simple, as it is given. Experience unfolds within passive time. Experience takes place where things stay. The individual past is deeply interwoven with the collective past. The event, by contrast, lasts for hardly more than an hour.

Traditional subsistence is the realm where experience is at home. Experience takes place below the level of consciousness.<sup>22</sup> Walter Benjamin distinguishes, as does Deleuze in his reading of Bergson, between consciousness as the realm of action and the unconscious as the realm of the passive unfolding of the dynamic among signs that signal intensities. Passive time as the realm of signs that signal and envelop intensities, in Walter Benjamin is brought back to the actual conditions among which people subsist. In traditional subsistence, as Walter Benjamin reads it, time unfolds non-mediated and non-abbreviated in all its weight. Through the figure of the storyteller, Walter Benjamin gives a nuanced account of the production of passive time in tradition. In Walter Benjamin, the story comes to stand for many things: it is a mode of communication, a mode of living, and a mode of work characteristic for the premodern time of tradition. Expectancy, the figure of the storyteller read through Walter Benjamin reveals, in times of traditional subsistence goes back to an eternal interwoven-ness of the local people with the local natural and cultural en-

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20 See *ibid.*, pp. 88-9.

21 See Walter Benjamin 1968: *Illuminations*, p. 159.

22 See *ibid.*

vironment. However, expectancy in the figure of the storyteller read through Walter Benjamin also has concretely to do with the way people relate to their work in traditional subsistence. Work is grounded in passive time. To extract the concept of the living present from the way people in traditional subsistence relate to their work, allows the emancipation of a concept of expectancy from the natural time-space of traditional subsistence.

The story, according to Walter Benjamin, always contains, overtly or covertly, something useful. 'The usefulness may, in one case, consist in a moral; in another, in some practical advice; in a third, in a proverb or maxim. In every case, the storyteller is a man who has counsel for his readers.'<sup>23</sup> In traditional subsistence, one can infer from this, there is no time reserved for life, such as weekends, leisure, hobbies or holidays. Time is completely structured by the instants of need that fulfil the tasks of subsistence. Nevertheless, there is much life in traditional subsistence. The repetitive nature of the actual instants of need that fulfil the task of subsistence, suggests a move away from active time into passive time. 'The more self-forgetful the listener is, the more deeply is what he listens to impressed upon his memory. When the rhythm of work has seized him, he listens to the tales in such a way that the gift of retelling them comes to him all by itself.'<sup>24</sup> Slowness, sturdiness and quietness are actual conditions under which passive repetition can unfold best. When the actual present proceeds slowly, one step after the other, in-between the instants of need that fulfil the task of subsistence, there can unfold a passive echo of the present. Not acting as quickly as possible, not doing various things at the same time, not always watching out for intellectual conversation, just letting time pass-by, passively, in all its weight.

Then, Walter Benjamin goes on, there emerges '[...] that slow piling one on top of the other of thin, transparent layers which constitutes the most appropriate picture of the way in which the perfect narrative is revealed through the layers of a variety of retellings.'<sup>25</sup> Passive time, one can infer from this, has so much presence in traditional subsistence, because the structuring of the present is in the end second to the living of the present. Traditional subsistence works with nature in a very raw and unmediated state. Nature sets an example for an orientation by passive time in the living of the present. Naturally, procedures take all the time they need to unfold their perfection. There are hardly any means for abbreviation. The way people do their work and interact with each other in W. Benjamin's reading of tradition, reflect this passive structuring of time. Things are ready when they are ready.

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23 See *ibid*, p. 86.

24 See *ibid*, p. 91.

25 See *ibid*, p. 92.

Further, in a passive structuring of work, the actual distinctions between object and subject fade away. ‘Traces of the storyteller cling to the story the way the handprints of the potter cling to the clay vessel.’<sup>26</sup> The time of the worker and the time of the work project, one can infer from this, are inseparably interwoven. The worker gives himself to the work task and in response, the finished work project expresses the time of the worker. It is about devotion – giving one’s time into an encounter, rather than getting something out of it. The degree of absolute devotion in traditional work refers also to the body of the worker: The work expresses the soul of the worker, and it is done with full bodily involvement. ‘After all, storytelling, in its sensory aspect, is by no means a job for the voice alone. Rather, in genuine storytelling the hand plays a part which supports what is expressed in a hundred ways with its gestures trained by work.’<sup>27</sup>

The storyteller, Walter Benjamin concludes, has an ‘incomparable aura’.<sup>28</sup> ‘Aura’ is Walter Benjamin’s term for a mode of passive communication that emphasizes expectancy. It is an effect of the unbroken interwoven-ness between a material body’s past and the past of the wider collective in which it exists. First, aura is about looking at things in a passive way. Passive here means involuntary: everything that happens is a reaction to a received impulse. Aura starts in the object one looks at.<sup>29</sup> The inanimate object seems to look back,<sup>30</sup> because through signs, it sets free impulses that signal intensities. Second, aura refers to the object that is looked at. The object communicates correspondences with a local, ‘prehistoric’ past.<sup>31</sup> Thus, aura communicates sturdiness: the eternal, continuous web between the given object and the local environment. Aura unfolds in the experience of things that stay. In aura, however, the living structure of expectancy is just the pre-condition for passive communication to unfold in an open and unpredictable way. The expectancy of the ever-same provides a temporal frame in which, on the level of signs, the ever-new of living communication can take place. In aura, Walter Benjamin seems to suggest, the other looks back from a distance, as other.<sup>32</sup>

“What is aura, actually? A strange weave of space and time: the unique appearance or semblance of distance, no matter how close the object may be. While resting on a summer’s noon, to trace a range of mountains on the horizon, or a branch that throws its shadow on the observer, until the mo-

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26 See *ibid*, p. 91.

27 See *ibid*, p. 107.

28 See *ibid*.

29 See *ibid*, p. 182.

30 See *ibid*, p. 184.

31 See *ibid*, pp. 177-8.

32 See *ibid*, p. 184.



ment or the hour become part of their appearance – that is what it means to breathe the aura of those mountains, that branch.”<sup>33</sup>

While in the daily tasks of traditional subsistence, the passive communication of aura gets produced naturally as a kind of by-product, in the religious ritual, the production of aura is the whole reason for an action to take place. First, the religious ritual is about an actual repetition of the ever-same sequence of movements in a way traditional subsistence provided naturally, so that on the plane of passive time, time gets perceived as structured through expectancy. Second, the original place of art was in ritual, where it was meant to express authenticity. Authenticity as well produces expectancy, the passive perception of an unbroken web of space and time that traditional subsistence naturally provided by itself. Expectancy in the religious ritual is produced as a condition for passive communication between the Bible and the believers to emerge.

“Originally the contextual integration of art in tradition found its expression in the cult. We know that the earliest art works originated in the service of a ritual – first the magical, then the religious kind. It is significant that the existence of the work of art with reference to its aura is never entirely separated from its ritual function. In other words, the unique value of the ‘authentic’ work of art has its basis in ritual, the location of its original use value.”<sup>34</sup>

## 2.2 EMPIRICAL EXPLORATIONS

The empirical explorations of this chapter set out to show how much passive time there is in traditional forms of life. There is a tacit general impression of time standing still, unfolding in all its intensive weight and impact. This atmosphere of passive time will be first traced back to material conditions through the example of the preparation and maintenance of wood-fire. The second section will be on the temporalities of water. It explicitly focuses on slowness as a condition for a passive structuring of time. The third section will be on the temporalities of sweetcorn. It is about a form of structuring time that is grounded in an awareness of what there is, empirically. The fourth section will address the temporalities of Saints. Here, passive communication is found in the sensitive reception of Catholic rituals. While in everyday life in Guatemala, passivity is usually perceived in terms of a lack of action and a lack of comfort, Catholic rituals seem to fulfil their function only if through them a leap into passive time is induced.

33 Walter Benjamin 1979: *One-Way Street*, p. 250.

34 W. Benjamin 1968, p. 217.

Is the reading of passive time in tradition through Walter Benjamin ‘realistic’? It does not express the primary concerns of the people I lived with in Guatemala, as the last section of the chapter under the title ‘line of flight’ will show. According to my perception, in the traditional home there was so much passive time that local people did not particularly appreciate the fascinating sides of it. Walter Benjamin’s reading expresses the gaze of someone who looks at traditional subsistence from afar. Walter Benjamin, from his background of experience in a society where the material conditions that led to a natural production of passive time were gone for good, could wonder about things that for those who live passive time in abundance on an everyday basis, leave little to wonder about. In this, Walter Benjamin’s reading of tradition corresponds with Bergson’s reading of duration. In their concern with living the present impelled by life, both Walter Benjamin and Bergson help to extract from traditional subsistence those conditions that make passive time unfold. Vitalism will be explored in this chapter as a form of life that makes out of the present a living present. The living present is grounded in sensation. Sensation unfolds through passivity. With Walter Benjamin and Bergson, sensation goes beyond rationality.

## 2.2.1 Temporalities of Fire

*In passive time, all time is one. There are only impulses and intensive movements. The present is grounded in passive time the more its actions are reactions to received impulses. In subsistence, temporalities of nature produce an atmosphere of passive time. There is no abbreviation and no mediation in the name of action. Processes take all the time necessary to achieve their perfection. With bare eyes, often no transformation at all is perceptible. Time seems to stand still. The more relaxed time is, the more signs can unfold passively their intensive communication. Passive time is time in its full intensive weight. People seem to endure the temporalities of nature passively. Their actions seem to be reactions to received intensive impulses.*

### 2.2.1.1 Chopping Firewood

*Firewood produces an atmosphere of time passively unfolding in all its weight, full time. This atmosphere gets produced through signs that signal the co-existence of the non-abbreviated and non-mediated temporalities of nature and the non-abbreviated and non-mediated temporalities of people*

Firewood comes twice a week in bundles from the coast<sup>35</sup>. It is piled up along the wall in the *patio*<sup>36</sup>. Its warm colour, its resinous smell and its solid texture, act as signs that produce an atmosphere of full time. Everything has inscribed in itself a natural temporality that consists in all the time necessary to accomplish its perfection. In nature, there is no abbreviation and no mediation in the name of action. Before using it, the wood has to be chopped into smaller bits. In front of the piled up *leña*<sup>37</sup> (firewood), there is a trunk and an axe for chopping the wood. One slice of wood is placed on the tree trunk, half on it and half in the air beyond. The axe is taken in both hands. In a movement that involves the whole upper part of the body, it is thrown onto the wood. Two or three of such movements are necessary to chop the wood into small enough bits. The chopping of the wood also produces an atmosphere of passive time. It is a movement that requires full physical and spiritual engagement of a chopper. It is a heavy movement that requires considerable force. The movement involves risk, potentially the risk of life: an unskilled positioning of the wood might produce a kind of leverage. It might make the throwing down of the axe throw up the wood and injure the head of the person who meant to chop the wood.

There is both mediation and abbreviation: *Doña Maria* does not go, as people do in villages in the countryside, herself into the forest to fetch the wood. The wood is even brought from the coastal area, rather than from the humid forests around Xela, because this wood is drier and thus starts to burn quicker. Finally, there are the axe and the trunk for chopping. However, the wood's temporality is still passive enough to determine a considerable part of *Doña Maria* and *Don Arsenio*'s daily activities. It contributes to the full time presence of these people at home. It contributes to the feeling of these people just being there in the home whenever one might look for them, full time. The movement of chopping wood contributes to the feeling of home and these people just belonging unquestioned together. It binds the two to the home: one of the two is doing this job every morning, and sometimes during the day as well. *Doña Maria*'s creased hands seem to give testimony of her wood chopping activities day in day out throughout her long life. The powerful, concrete, concentrated, but

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35 Quetzaltenango, 2300 metres above sea level, is located within the cold climate zone. 'Coast' is everything that belongs to the hot climate zone, from about 1500 metres height downwards. The border between the cold climate zone and the hot climate zone is reached by car from Xela in about one hour. To reach the water front, takes from there about two hours more.

36 English: An open-air, inner court yard. Traditionally, houses in Guatemala are built around such a court yard. It is the open-air centre of the house. Modern houses, by contrast, are constructed as a closed entity.

37 Read: [lenjʌ]

warm and natural sound of the axe when it comes down into the wood acts as a passive sound. It expresses the described assemblage of full times involved in chopping firewood. It is vibrating through the whole living space every morning and afternoon.

### 2.2.1.2 Tending the Fire

*Tending the fire is a passive movement. It is based in the passive endurance of what there is. On an actual level, nothing is going on. Within passive time, by contrast, there are movements of intensification that at some stage actualise themselves. Movements within passive time are open-ended. Every movement is set free by an impulse that triggers unpredictable effects within an unpredictable time-span.*

In the kitchen, there is a stone-built, knee-high enhancement that takes up about three-quarter of one side of the room. It is used for work, for storage and for cooking. On one side of it, in the corner of the room, an iron grating is positioned on the enhancement. The grating allows for the pots of water to be heated. The roof above the grating is slightly open, in order for the smoke to leave. This is the fireplace. About four pieces of *leña* are positioned under the grating. The wood is set on fire. The wood is just there. The centre of concentration for the subsequent time is whether and how the wood will accept the fire. This is a passive movement, based in endurance of what there is. It takes so much time for the wood to react to the fire that it is hardly possible to make out any movement at all with bare eyes. On a visible level of the linear time of action, nothing is going on. Time seems to stand still. On an invisible level of full time, heat intensifies. At some point the *leña* accepts the fire and burns by itself.

When a wood has burned down or is fallen into ashes, the whole wooden arrangement changes its position. Therefore, keeping the fire going requires relating to the temporalities of the fire over time. One looks into the fireplace, into the dancing of the flames or the smouldering of the embers. Sometimes, the wood has to be repositioned so that there remains enough air and space for the fire to be fed, and enough fresh wood for the fire to ‘eat’. *Doña* Toria and *Doña* Maria spend their day nearly full time in the kitchen. This is mostly due to the fire. I thought for a long time when I came into the kitchen that the two were just sitting there. I thought they were letting time pass by. They do not talk much. Usually, the ‘*Estereo Cien*’<sup>38</sup>-radio program is running with low sound in the background. The two are looking into

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38 A local radio station. ‘*Cien*’ means 100, the position on the tuning scale.

the embers. But I was wrong. They are tending the fire. They passively endure the temporality of the fire.

Every movement in this activity is open-ended. Every movement is an impulse that triggers unpredictable effects after an unpredictable time-span. Impulses are reactions to received impulses. What kind of impulses will combine to trigger the next action or which direction a reaction to an impulse will take, is unpredictable. One gives an impulse through re-arranging the wood or through blowing wind through a fan into the fire, and then one has to wait to see how the fire will respond. Was it a repressing impulse, or was it a pushing, awakening impulse? The result is only too temporary, falling into ashes in the next moment or so already. Tending the fire is a passive movement. It is based in enduring and taking up what there is. Everything that happens is related to something else that has happened before. Everything is communication. Everything is emergence of something new. In passive time, every action is reaction to a received movement.

The required amount of big-sized cans and pots, filled with water from the *pila*<sup>39</sup>, stays on the grating over the fire. The water passively endures the heat produced by the fire. Nothing visible seems to happen until after maybe an hour, it starts bubbling. This long time-span, however, is the condition not only for the movement of intensification of heat that terminates in the visible effect of bubbling. It also acts as a condition for a movement of intensification of excitement that ends in a visible movement of lifting the lid of the pot and the exclamation ‘¡*Qué alegre!*’ (How joyful!) in reaction to the sight of the bubbling water. More than once when I am sitting in the kitchen with *Doña* Maria and *Doña* Toria, *Doña* Toria lifts the lid of the metal milk jug that is used in the afternoons for heating water. She calls me to come closer to watch the bubbles from the almost boiling water. The bubbling of the water and the steam that is evaporating from the jug when the boiling water is refilled into another pot are moments of joy. The passively endured time acts on the present in manifold, invisible ways.

The passive endurance of the temporalities of the wood is related to money. Some kind of kindling has to bridge the time between setting fire to the wood and the big chunk of wood burning by itself. Old newspaper or plastic trash is used for this, anything. For three *Quetzales*, a small bundle of *ocote* can be bought on the open market. *Ocote* is a local red wood. It is sold as pieces of kindling. It catches fire particularly easily and it burns for a particularly long time. If available, two *ocote* are lit and placed in-between the *leña*. *Ocote* shortens the interval between setting fire on the *leña* and the big chunk of wood burning out of itself. If money for *ocote* is available, the time of the

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39 The *pila* is a particular type of stone washbasin that people in Guatemala have in their *patio*. See below, section on ‘temporalities of water’.

*leña* to accept the fire can be actively abbreviated. Then, the dynamic is impelled by a movement that does not come from the wood, but from somewhere else. An interest in accomplishing the activity as soon as possible, emerging as a temporality of the guarding person, can develop the power to impact the time of the wood. Money can mediate the dynamic produced by guarding the fire in a way that increases the activity of the temporality of the guarding person in relation to the temporality of the fire. The less money there is, the more the full time of the heating-up of the wood gets endured passively. The more passivity there is in relation to the fire, the more impact the temporality of the fire has full time on the dynamic in the home.

The passive endurance of the temporalities of the wood is also related to tradition, to repeating things the way they have always been done. The assemblage of wood and fire produces smoke. Smoke develops its own temporality as well. The temporality of smoke contributes to the atmosphere of full time. There is no mediation: the smoke vapours into the kitchen and enters into assemblage with eyes, noses, skins and walls. The walls of the kitchen are black from the smoke. There is no abbreviation: *Doña* María always complains about her hurting eyes. Her eyes give testimony to a life-long endurance of smoke produced by wood-fire. Probably, on a level not yet sensible, her entire body has endured serious damage from interacting with the smoke of the fire throughout her long life. However, the damage by the smoke has been endured passively. There had been impulses to react, to dis-empower the smoke's impact on the dynamic in the kitchen: often nowadays, people in Guatemala do not have the fire on top of a stone enhancement, but in a stone depression. The depression is covered with an iron tile and thereby forms a fire-hole. This is the local successor of the way, *Doña* Toria and *Doña* Maria cook. The smoke then is led out through a pipe that leads from the back of the fire-hole along the wall directly out of the roof. *Don* Arsenio had offered to build such a chimney. However, in the end this has never happened. *Doña* Toria rejected the offer. The cooking of *nixtamal*<sup>40</sup> and the cooking of *patches*<sup>41</sup> requires more heat than a fire that is mediated

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40 Read: [ni:ʃtʌmʌl]. *Nixtamal* is the soaked, swollen sweetcorn that is brought to a local mill for grinding the dough from which *tortilla* (sweetcorn dough cakes, read: [torti:jʌ]) and *tamales* (sweetcorn dumplings) are made. See below in this chapter the section 'temporalities of sweetcorn'.

41 See photo 1 in appendix. Read: [pʌʃes]. *Patches* structure special events in indigenous Guatemala. They are eaten at special family reunions such as birthdays or marriages, at religious activities such as novenas (nine days of mourning when someone has died, see below in this chapter section 'temporalities of Saints'), or even in the interval at public concerts. *Patches* have their peak-time between Christmas and

through an iron tile would have been able to produce. There would have been possibilities to circumvent this problem. *Nixtamal* and *patches* could have been cooked on a *temascal*, an iron three-leg that elevates the pot high enough from the ground to build-up a wood fire below it. This is the predecessor of the way, *Doña Toria* and *Doña Maria* cook. Only, with a *temascal* the open fire is on the earthen ground in the patio, not on an enhancement in the kitchen. Somehow this possibility had never achieved decisive impact on the dynamic around the smoke in the kitchen. The power of doing things the way one is used to doing them seems to have been stronger.

### 2.2.2 Temporalities of Water

*In the traditional home, water acts as a sign of passive time. It stays. It takes its time in all relaxation. Passive temporalities of nature make people who build their subsistence on them, move a lot. The movements, however, repeat the passive velocity of the water – they are slow. Slowness is passive in that it is a relaxed form of movement. A slow passing of the present opens up the present towards a wide response from passive time.*

#### 2.2.2.1 The Pila

*Passive time acts through intensities. Through slowness, intensities passively unfold their power within the actual present.*

The *pila* consists of three parts. In the middle there is an open water depot and to the left and right of this there are wide, riffled washbasins. A tap leads into the water-depot. It is the main water connection in the house. When the water base is filled, maybe 20 litres are contained there. The water stays in the open water depot. In the water depot there are small-size plastic pots. With them, water gets poured in manifold, repetitive movements over the singular cloth or dish that is to be washed. The sound of water when it is falling out of the little plastic pots expresses relaxation. From being temporarily contracted,

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New Year. During this period, people eat them up to three times a day. There is a custom to cook patches not only for oneself, but also as presents for friends, neighbours, acquaintances and relatives. *Patches* consist of either a rice-dough or a potato-dough. The dough is formed into square and flat packets. In the middle is a piece of meat, a piece of vegetable and a spicy sauce. The packet is wrapped in big, green leaves from a plant that is called machate. The leaves are meant to give additional flavour. Besides, wrapped in the leaves, the packets really look like gift items. (On gift-giving see below in this chapter the section on water-gifts.) The wrapped packets are cooked in water over the open fire. See photo in appendix. *Patches* are eaten with white bread.

the water falls back into a mode of full time. The interval from this sound to the sound of splashing water that emerges when the little plastic pot is scooping new water out of the reservoir of standing water, seems to correspond to the velocity of falling water. The passivity of the water seems to impulse the slow velocity of washing. Several times during the day, the reservoir of standing water in the *pila* has to be filled again. In an encounter with *Doña Toria* and *Doña Maria*, the *pila* would rather be characterized through this sound of water rushing out of the tap. They would take this sound as an expression of comfort, of mobilising the natural passivity of water. I had once taken a photo that showed washing soaking in the patio. The colourful plastic water buckets for me expressed passivity. Water was standing around in its natural state of full time. The two women, by contrast, said they saw only the tap above the buckets when they were looking at the photo. They said they thought that I had taken a photo of the tap above the buckets. They started to tell me about the decrease of passivity that the tap had brought to their life. Their narration expressed the far bigger impact of the temporalities of water on the slowness of the passing of people's present in the past.

Nowadays, the *pila* is in the patio. People have to walk about ten metres every time that there is a need for water in the kitchen. Before the *pila* came to the house, about thirty years ago, however, *Doña Toria* and *Doña Maria* had to go to public taps for every bit of water. One was behind the '*Mercado de las Flores*'<sup>42</sup> about 150 meters away. Another one was at the park '*El Calvario*'<sup>43</sup>, about 800 meters away. Sometimes there was no water at one tap, so one had to go to the next one. There was a *tanque*, a public place for washing clothes, about 700 meters away. But people were occupying free washbasins for friends or acquaintances, so there was a good chance that one had to walk all the way to a river outside the town. Later the *tanque* was privatised and one had to pay 40 *Quetzales*<sup>44</sup> per month to get access to the washbasins. Going the long way to the river then became a matter of saving money. After washing, one had to carry the troughs with the wet washing or the pots filled with water, home on the head. The water pots were made from clay. Nowadays they are plastic. Sometimes one had brought successfully a full clay water pot home, took it down from one's head and then, through putting it too hard on the floor, the

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42 See below expos  e to chapter 3 for further introduction.

43 A green space in-between streets in front of the cemetery. There are trees, some benches, a basketball field, some plants and a paved path.

44 1 *Quetzal* are 100 *Centavos* in Guatemala; 8 *Quetzales* are 1 Euro; 12 *Quetzales* are 1 Pound Sterling. '*Quetzal*' is the name of a bird with very colourful plumage that used to be at home in the Guatemalan forests and that Guatemalan authorities declared to be one of their national symbols.



clay smashed into bits and the water spread all over the floor. With the *pila*, every movement of scooping is impelled by the weight of the water. However, before the *pila* came to the house, this intensity had much more impact on the movements of people around the subsistence on water. There were more movements, but they were kept slow. The weight of the water imposed slowness onto them. Nowadays nearly everyone has a *pila* and water connection at home. People made an effort to get it.

### 2.2.2.2 Cleaning Clothes

*Traditional subsistence produces an atmosphere of passive time, because it is grounded in the slow and intense temporalities of nature.*

The heaps of clothes get separated by colour. Everything is distributed into several of *Doña Toria's* colourful plastic-buckets. Some washing powder is spilled onto the washing. Then the clothes get covered with water until it is approximately a hand-width above the clothes. Some drops of chlorine are poured into the white cloth buckets to dissolve the stains from the clothes. Thereafter, from time to time, the washing gets stirred with a wooden stick. The human has to wait for the soapy water slowly soaking the dirty clothes, lightening the grip of the assemblage of dirt and cloth. This takes from an hour up to one night or even longer, depending on the degree of dirt in the clothes. During this interval of soaking, not just loads of water, but also the used clothes enter full time into the human present through standing around in the corner of the *patio* in large numbers of colourful plastic buckets. The bright colours of the plastic neutralise in part the impression of darkness produced by the used clothes. The buckets signal relaxation.

One piece of cloth is taken out of the water and into the right washbasin of the *pila*. After fishing with one hand for one of the small plastic pots that are around, either in the water basin or at one of the side-areas, clear and cold water gets scooped out of the water depot and poured onto the outstretched cloth. The movement of scooping lets one feel concretely how much water is needed for washing clothes. The act of scooping also transmits the weight of the water in the pot, the coolness while dropping into the water basin to get new water into the pot, and the movement of pouring when the water is dropped down onto the cloth. Meanwhile the one hand is scooping, the other hand kneads the wet cloth to get the soap out. Then new washing powder gets spread onto the piece of cloth. A bit of fresh water gets sprinkled over the cloth. Then the hands rub the cloth with the support of the full weight of the upper part of the body in repetitive back and forth movements over the riffled stone to erase stains and bad smell. Again, the duration of the lightening of the stains in the

cloth determines the duration of the rubbing. If the objective is just fresh smell, about eight rubbing back and forth movements will do. Then about four loads of fresh water come down with the plastic pot out of the *pila*. They rush over the now stretched out cloth to get the soap out. The coming down of the water in many repetitive movements produces the powerful, heavy, refreshing sound of falling water. Usually then the cloth will smell fresh and the stains have at least lightened up. If not, the soaping-rubbing-rinsing-sequence can be repeated once more. Rinsing implies a lot of movement. However, the movement is relaxed. It receives impulses not only from the full time of water, but also from the silence and the continuity of the warmth and brightness of the sunlight in the *patio*.

Now the water gets wrought with both hands and all physical strength available out of the cloth. The cloth is hung onto the clothes-line. There are six clothes-lines in the *patio*. The entire *patio* is lined. Because the *patio* is the centre of the house and the doors are usually open, the washing on the line can be seen from all the rooms. For example a white blanket reflects the sun and transmits a sensation of brightness and transparency. It also transmits the wind breezes, producing an atmosphere of slowness and calmness through the encounter of people's temporalities with the often slower temporalities of nature. The blanket goes into assemblage with the fig tree in the *patio*, whose leaves are also moved slowly by occasional breezes. Their green shines brilliantly when touched by rays of sun. As well the temporalities of the pets, the two dogs, the cat, the duck and the squirrel, contribute to the atmosphere of full time through their respective forms of hanging around in the *patio*, letting time pass by. If the act of washing has taken place at about nine o'clock in the morning, and the sun shines as it usually does, until about three o'clock in the rainy season or five o'clock in the dry season, the clothes will be dry in a day or two.

*Doña Toria* washes something nearly every morning. The extensive impact of the temporalities of water on her time make her try to avoid the accumulation of washing. This is the main reason why she does not want to go out for work. While the description given here emphasises the relation of slowness to passive time, in the considerations of the people involved in subsistence the relation of slowness to active time, to the amount of time spent or saved, has more priority.

### 2.2.2.3 Washing the Body

*The passivity of water makes people who use the water, move a lot. The movements of the people are slow, repeating the passivity of the water.*

Washing the body is an activity that happens for most people only once a week because it is so time demanding. First, for taking a shower the water is heated up before use. This takes about an hour.<sup>45</sup> Xela is situated that high in the mountains that the temperatures demand this in order to avoid a cold. Second, for *Doña Toria* and *Doña Maria* who both do not cut their hair, there is another hour or so after the actual washing that is part of the process of taking a shower: when the hair dries, it is wrapped in huge towels. This ties the two women to a chair. During both times, the passing of the womens' present is impelled by the full time of water. The fear that they might catch a cold and the joy of the washed body extend themselves into the temporal dynamic within the kitchen. One condition for this is that on an actual level, there is not much going on in these times, just time passing by.

As well during the washing itself, the water takes its time. People improvise with plastic pots and all kind of other jugs and jars available to solve the problem of carrying the large amounts of water that are needed for the process of washing. This solution leaves the weight and the volume of the large amount of the water used for washing in its full time and it makes people carry and walk a lot. The velocity of the movements is kept low through the weight and volume of the water. For bathing, the metal milk jug, a water jug and a large cooking pot are used. Apart from this, there is a big and sturdy stone jug. The jug is always positioned right next to the fire, so that it is heating up water without taking away space on the grating. The small pots are brought to the *pila* and filled with fresh water. Then they are tapped with a lid and put onto the open fireplace. The big stone jug is filled with water from a plastic bucket. When the water has heated up considerably, an extra big plastic trough is brought in from the *patio*. It is positioned next to the fireside on the floor and filled in the same repetitive pouring-movements as produced from the plastic pots at the *pila*, with the hot and steamy water. The filled trough is rolled to the toilet hut in the *patio*. The bucket with the used toilet paper is taken out into the *patio*. The toilet hut now becomes the shower place. A towel, soap and one of the small plastic pots are positioned on the lid of the toilet. Clothes are taken off and hung over the toilet hut door. Then the same process begins as with washing clothes or washing dishes. The little plastic pot pours water from the water basin over one's body (soaking). Then

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45 See above section on 'temporalities of fire'.

body and hair are soaped. In many water pouring movements the soap gets cleared off with the little plastic bucket (rinsing). After drying oneself with the towel and getting dressed, the water trough is rolled out into the *patio*. A brush clears off the soapy water from the paved floor, the bucket with the used toilet paper is brought back to its former location and the shower place transforms again into a toilet.

The amount of time that it takes to pour the water over the body is for all those in the house who wash themselves once a week about three times as long as for me and for Manuel who take a shower every morning. If there is more time left in-between the pouring movements, the need-aspect of washing seems to be relatively lower. Intensities that are passively contracted from the water then receive more time for extension. The feeling of freshness of the water on the body can be enjoyed more fully.

#### 2.2.2.4 The Water-Gifts

*Slowness sets free a passive response to the actual given. This effect finds its repetition in a local value in Guatemalan culture: 'con cariño'<sup>46</sup>. In giving one's time passively, giving water can become a way of giving one's time.<sup>47</sup> In the water-gifts that I receive from Doña Toria, the passive temporality of water acts as a sign that transmit the offer of and the desire for mutual whole-hearted engagement.*

To make water from the *pila* drinkable is a process of considerable slowness and considerable duration. The water has to be heated up and then it has to be boiled for about ten minutes in order to kill all the bacteria inside. Otherwise one might catch serious illnesses, because the pipes through which the water runs before it comes out of the tap are fully left over to their natural processes of rusting and dirtying. The way people try to reduce the quantity of time necessary for this is by keeping a number of thermos in the kitchen. People heat water

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46 English: 'With heartfelt engagement'.

47 This reading is inspired by Marcel Mauss' (1950) reading of the gift. For Mauss, one can argue in accordance with Mary Douglas in her preface to the English edition of the text (1990), gift-giving is not about utilitarianism. It is not about need or the calculation of what one might get back, but about value. The gift-giver gives something of oneself to the other. This is for Mauss an expression of embeddedness within the natural and social environment that for him was characteristic of archaic societies as opposed to modern industrial societies (see also Durkheim/Mauss 1903). The idea in my example of the water gifts was that the more time the production of the gift entails, the more the giver grounds herself into the gift and the more she gives of herself. Giving oneself, however, produces debt – the necessity to receive and to return the gift.

once and then guard it in a thermos flask, so that there is hot water throughout the day. *Doña* Toria and *Doña* Maria have constantly two in use, one thermos for hot water and another plastic jar for boiled water that is cooled down again, so that it is cold, but can be drunk. However, the process of storing portable water by way of thermos involves its own dimensions of slowness.

In the afternoon, when lunch is through, *Doña* Toria and *Doña* Maria heat up the water for the water bottles. A while after I came to join the house, they have given me as well one of the big thermos that they have in their storage room. The storage room is crammed full of plastic pots in all possible sizes and forms. A while later, *Doña* Toria gave me a pink plastic can which she had bought new. This can was for boiled water that had cooled down. Giving it to me seemed to be impelled by the observation that I like to drink pure cold water. The two women cannot understand this habit. They live in such a close contact with the full time of water in its pure state that drinking it becomes joyful only through putting large amounts of sugar or artificial flavour into it. However, *Doña* Toria relates herself to my desire for portable water in a way that seems to envelop her own desire to be on good terms with me, and the ways she knows to express this. She starts to fill my two jars every day. She comes to my door in the afternoon and asks for '*el termo y el patchon*'. Then, later, when it is dark already, she comes again and I hear her voice from outside: '*Julia, su termo*'.<sup>48</sup>

At stake seems to be much more than the functional provision with portable water. I feel confronted with a basic value of Guatemalan culture: '*Con cariño*'. This expression means that someone gives one's time without limits in what one does. No mediation and no abbreviation, all intensity and all extensity of one's time are given. Giving one's time seems to become a way to signal an interest in friendship, in including me in *Doña* Toria's present and in becoming herself part of my present. The way this happens is so much about full time. It is so much more about the never-ending repetition of receiving and giving intensity than about words. It takes the two women an hour or longer at the wooden fire to boil this water while for me on the gas-stove in our room it would take maybe ten minutes. Though I feel so much good intention from her, and though I feel so much intensity for this woman myself, I do not really feel comfortable with receiving these constant gifts. I like to be independent in everyday activities from Manuel's parents. I do not want to feel pressured to give this much intensity constantly back. However, though we have found compromises in many other respects, this is not something that can be

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48 English: 'Julia, your thermos flask.'

changed. When I try to put an end to it, the gifts come with more pervasiveness, producing a bit of a tension.

### 2.2.3 Temporalities of Sweetcorn<sup>49</sup>

*Sweetcorn is the main staple in Guatemala. It is consumed in all possible forms. First of all, it is baked into tortilla (sweetcorn dough cakes) and tamales (sweetcorn dumplings) which make every meal go further. If there are tortilla, people need much less vegetables or meat or whatever else is available in order to keep going for a day. Tortilla fill the stomach for a long time. The most basic staple in Guatemala is tortilla with some salt. Apart from this, sweetcorn is consumed as drinks, as food on special occasions, as cakes and as vegetable. Doña Toria once commented: 'We never get tired of sweetcorn. Although we eat so much of it, that would never happen.' In one of the interviews with local teachers at the Spanish school, Vivian said something similar when she told me something obvious in Guatemala: 'A meal without tortilla would not be a proper meal.'*

*The seemingly eternal and unbroken web of time between people and sweetcorn makes time appear to stand still with regard to the past. Traditional subsistence consists in habit as the repetition of ever-same movements day in day out. Deleuze is interested in habit in terms of expectancy<sup>50</sup>. Expectancy is a passive structuring of time. The actual repetition of the ever-same contraction sets free a sensual and psychological contraction that structures time passively.<sup>51</sup> Expectancy makes one passively repeat the ever-same movement from the present through an echo in the past into an indefinite future. Things are done the way they have always been done and the way they will always be done.*

*In the following examples from traditional subsistence, work is structured by expectancy. There is always something to do. Time is structured. It has a direction. However, this structure is a living structure, not an imposed grid. It is grounded in the expectancy of what one will do next, and then, and then, and then. Structure goes together with a living present. This is an actual present to which life passively responds.*

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49 See photos 2-4 in appendix.

50 See above, pp. 58-61.

51 See Deleuze 1968a, p. 74.

### 2.2.3.1 Peeling Corn

*When work is structured by expectancy, there is one clearly circumscribed movement after the other, until the project has achieved completion. The actual time of work is open. The structuring of time is orientated by the passive engagement with the given*

Every second afternoon, a *nixtamal* has to be prepared. *Nixtamal* is the local name for cooked, swollen sweetcorn. It is brought for grinding to a mill and then processed into *tamales* or *tortilla*. If one cultivates one's own sweetcorn, the corn is stored on the dried cob. Before preparing the *nixtamal*, about one and a half hours are spent peeling the dry corn from the cob. *Doña* Maria does this job every second morning. The movements of her fingers are slow. This seems not only conditioned by the 85 years of age of her body, but also by the hardness of the corn. The fingers have to dig somewhere into the dense rows of the slippery, stone-hard grain. They have to find a starting-point for breaking off a grain from the cob. At the beginning this hurts a lot at the finger tips. Once the corn is off at one point, the rest follows more easily and therefore the process becomes quicker. Empirical reality imposes hesitation upon movement, grounding it in full time. Its tempo is determined by the physical contact with a particular materiality.

The range of what gets contracted to impel the passive structuring of time is open-ended. The stool on which *Doña* Maria sits while she is peeling corn is small. The level of distanciation from the earthen ground is low. The stool's height makes it appear more like one for children. The temporality implied by the stool offers a solution to the problem of sitting that gives relatively little regard to the temporalities of the joints of an elderly lady. The joints endure the sitting in a hardly mediated intensity. An old transistor radio is running at a low level in the background. The radio transmits everything that 'Estereo Cien' has on offer, the whole day through. No matter what the radio brings, it seems to be endured passively. Some of the news or advertisements get commented on, some of the information on burials or weddings is remembered. The radio is covered with a woven cloth. It stands below a plastic case. Both are means of dissociating the fragile temporalities of the radio from the temporalities of the dust that lies down everywhere. The continuous, never-ending fall of dust is hardly visible in its slowness. Yet, it is powerful in its effects. It causes *Doña* Maria to make many movements to reach the buttons of the radio, to switch it on or off or change the volume. Besides, the sound that the radio transmits into the room is reduced by the cloth and the plastic case. The open door lets into the otherwise dark room sparks of sun, warm breezes and the echoes from occasional steps in the *patio*. All changes

of light or air in the room come from the *patio*. The contrast between the obscurity and coldness within the room and the light and warmth of the *patio* act as one more sign of a passive structuring of time in the kitchen while *Doña* Maria is peeling corn.

*Doña* Maria's manual movements are repetitious. The passive repetition of the actual movements sets free expectancy. Not only do the hands repeat the same movements over and over again, but *Doña* Maria has been repeating the process of disgraining every second morning as long as I have known her. The thick horny skin on her fingers even seems to signal that she has been repeating these ever-same movements throughout her long life. Whenever the arm reaches into the raffia basket, I expect a corn cob to be taken out, followed by an approximately five minutes of disgraining. Then I expect the arm to go back into the raffia basket to take out another corn cob. This will be followed again by the fingers finding their way slowly under the cob, then the arm going back into the basket etc. The time to come, the future, seems structured. This structure emerges through reflection from the past. A particular past is reflected into a general future.<sup>52</sup> The weight of the future is conditioned by the weight of particular movements in the past. If the repetition of manual movements makes me contract the last three times that I have sat in the kitchen while *Doña* Maria was peeling corn, the contribution of the manual movements to my subjective perception of the temporal atmosphere in the room as passive will be relatively smaller than if I contract the past eight months or, with regard to *Doña* Maria's horn-skinned fingers, the entire life of this sturdy woman repeating these ever-same movements throughout that time. The perceived certainty that the sequence of slow, ever-same movements will go on and on and on, also makes the future appear full time, allowing time simply being there in itself. Relaxed it acts in all its weight onto the present, like the past.

*Doña* Maria starts after breakfast at about nine o'clock. She tries to finish by about half past eleven, when she and her daughter will start preparing lunch. If she does not manage to finish by midday, she will finish off in the afternoon, before starting the fire for cooking the corn. It does not really matter whether she finishes by midday or not. It seems to be more a question of experience from the past that she *can* finish by midday, if nothing unforeseen happens, and that then the afternoon will be calmer. Her movements are one by one – concentrated, continuous, relaxed. Her activity seems to be structured by passive time. Time takes its time. Movements take as long as they take. Time is structured by what there is, by the living present, rather than by what there should be, which could be called an ideal present. If there were pressure to fulfil the plan to finish the peeling by midday as

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52 See Deleuze 1968a, p. 71.



an actual deadline, from a certain point on the passive structuring of the future that is grounded in the lived temporalities of the given, would disappear into a structuring of the present based in ideals. No longer a particular past, but a particular future would structure the present. The empirical present would become general. Mechanism would take over. Time would lift out onto the level of need-fulfilment. The lived repetition of movements would become routine repetition. Open-endedness, a relaxed attitude towards set ideals of efficiency, are a condition for a passive structuring of time.

### 2.2.3.2 Cooking *Nixtamal*

*The passive structuring of time is heterogeneous. There is space for other expectancies than the one related to the actual work project to enter the structuring of the time of work.*

Every other afternoon, a *nixtamal* is cooked. The process involves about two hours of waiting. In this time, the two women are working on something else. Their work seems to repeat the passive structuring of time by the cooking of the *nixtamal*. It is ready when it is ready. For cooking the *nixtamal*, things are done the way they have always been done. It is a sequence of concrete, clearly circumscribed work tasks. These are carried out one after the other. Whenever movement A appears, one expects the appearance of movement B, C and D.<sup>53</sup> A big fire gets started. An iron ten-litre-bucket gets half-filled with water. It is placed on the open fireplace in the kitchen. About three handfuls of lime are added to the water. The lime is for conserving the sweetcorn. Then one has to wait for the corn to cook. All the time, the fire is kept in sight. The cooking of the corn is a process so slow that progress is hardly perceivable with bare eyes. After roughly two hours, the bucket is full to the brim from the swollen corn. At this point, the *nixtamal* is ready. The bucket gets taken off the fire and cools down over night. The next morning it is brought to one of the nearby sweetcorn-mills for grinding. From the dough coming out of that, *tamales* and *tortilla* can be made.

While waiting for the *nixtamal* to be cooked, sorrow-dolls<sup>54</sup> get packed. The colourful dolls and the colourful cases come ready-made in huge packages that pile up in the family bedroom. The women have to fill the cases with the dolls. The way the two women carry out their task is as a seemingly never-ending repetition of concrete, clearly circumscribed movements, one by one. One yellow case is taken out of a plastic bucket and opened. Then three little 'girls' (dolls with skirts)

53 See Deleuze 1968, p. 72.

54 See above chapter 1, section on 'location of the research'.

and three little ‘boys’ (dolls with trousers) are taken out of another plastic bucket and put into the yellow case. Then the case is closed and left in a third plastic bucket. Then another yellow case is taken out, opened, filled with three ‘boys’ and three ‘girls’, closed etc. The amount of cases and dolls seems endless. *Doña* Maria and *Doña* Toria get paid by a sack of filled cases. The progress of filling a sack is so slow that it is hardly possible to see any difference after a day of work. One could build up 20 open cases on the table, take a handful of ‘girls’, spread three into every case in one single movement, then do the same with the ‘boys’ and then close all 20 cases in one go. That would be much more efficient. The time of work would be relatively more structured by the output of filled cases. Manuel told me that this was the way he was working when helping the two women from time to time. He wanted them to earn more money. However, his interference was only temporary. He got bored very quickly. The two women, by contrast, achieved in their way of working a constancy of doing the job for years and years, day in, day out. They seemed to have managed to maintain their life quality not through money, but through slowness. They say that they are satisfied with the conditions of life available to them. Whenever one enters, the generally calm and communicative atmosphere in the kitchen seems to support this statement.

Although there is a rough idea about how many sorrow-doll packages one can fill in a day, this seems to be in no way a strict plan. There is always something to do. But when someone knocks at the door and there is one of the many unforeseen visits, there seems to be always the time to have a break. One offers the person a drink and something small to eat and sits down for a small conversation. There seems to be no concept such as ‘I don’t have time’. This would be an expression of a structuring of time orientated towards the actual outcome. It would be very impolite. Rather, work proceeds step by step, movement by movement, ‘*poco a poco*’. Time is structured by expectancy and this is an open form of structuring. Heterogeneous expectancies can resonate with each other. The expectancy of how to treat an unexpected visitor can be integrated into the expectancy of work.

### 2.2.3.3 Baking *Tortilla*<sup>55</sup>

*A passive structuring of work is grounded in a heterogeneous engagement with the given. When there is fresh sweetcorn dough, tortilla get prepared for breakfast. Baking tortilla depends on the passive structuring of one's time by various temporalities other than the intention of the acting self.*

First, a blank gets formed. A half ball of a thumb-size portion of dough is flattened by pressing it in-between the balls of the thumb. Then it is rounded by rotating it in one hand while softly pressing an even edge with the fingers of the other hand. The success of forming a *tortilla* blank depends on the temporalities of the hands. Firstly, if they are not clean and of a moderate temperature, the dough will stick to the hands and tear apart; secondly, the size of the *tortilla* is determined by the size of the hands. The dough blank starts being smacked from one ball of thumb into the other in quick and short movements. By this method, the intention to get the dough cake as thin and large as possible can circumvent to a certain degree the limitation imposed by the size of the forming hands. However, by being smacked, the middle of the dough cake tends to become thinner while the edge remains the same. From a certain size on, the edge's weight will tear the dough cake apart from the middle.

The dough cake is baked on a *komal*<sup>56</sup> over the open wood-fire. Again, the concrete movements that take place are impelled by a plurality of temporalities other than the intention of the acting self. The *komal* gets treated with a hand-brush and sprinkled with lime. It is heated up on a wood-fire. These movements are impelled by an expectancy of the reaction between *komal* and dough. If the *komal* is not clean and hot enough at the moment when the dough cake gets placed on it, the dough will stick to the iron after the process of baking. The hand places the dough cake on the *komal* by first establishing one point of contact only and subsequently unrolling the rest of the dough. This movement is impelled by an expectancy of the reaction between air and dough. Air will extend and produce bubbles in the dough from below when heated up. When one side of the *tortilla* is done, it gets tossed. When tossing a *tortilla*, the acting self contracts the heat of the baking dough unmediated. A bare finger touches the hot dough cake to perceive whether one side is done. If the dough sticks just minimally to the skin, the *tortilla* can be tossed. With bare thumb and forefinger the hot dough cake gets taken up from the hot *komal* and turned around. There is a good chance of burning one's finger by doing this.

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55 See photo 3 in appendix.

56 A round baking tray.

The baking of one side of a *tortilla* takes about five minutes. A *komal* takes four *tortilla* at a time. For a meal of six people, at least thirty *tortilla* will be prepared. There is a constant repetition of forming a *tortilla*, putting it on the *komal*, turning it around, taking it off the *komal* and storing it in a basket under a woven cloth. The movement is relaxed. Its tempo is determined by the slow transformation of the dough by the heat. The meal starts when half of the *tortilla* are ready baked. Eating likewise proceeds slowly and in relaxed fashion. Before starting to eat, one after the other, every person at the table addresses explicitly every other person at the table by his or her name and wishes him or her to enjoy one's meal. ('*Buen provecho Arsenio, buen provecho mama, buen provecho Julia, ...*') Time seems to unfold passively in all its heterogeneity.

### 2.2.3.4 Unwrapping *Tamales*

*The dumplings are wrapped in the leaves that cover the cob when growing in the field. These corn husks are called 'doblador'. They communicate sweetcorn's deep and far-reaching inter-woven-ness with local time and space. Time gets passively structured by the impression of a seemingly eternal and unbroken web of time between people and sweetcorn.*

Every second day after breakfast, *Doña Maria* prepares '*tamalitos*'<sup>57</sup>. Elongated dumplings are formed that have the size of about two centimetres in width and five centimetres in length. They are stapled in a big pot which is covered with water at the bottom. They cook in about two hours in the steam from the boiling water. For the next two days or so the pot is in the corner of the kitchen and the *tamales* used for each meal are taken out from there. During mealtimes, the gesture of unwrapping the *doblador* produces an atmosphere of gift reception. Arms reach slowly over the table about three or four times per person per meal. Within a woven cloth in a small raffia basket the hand searches for a warm *tamal*. The *doblador* is unwrapped from the *tamal*. The texture of the *doblador* feels and looks like wrapping paper. The dis-used *doblador* piles up on and around the table.<sup>58</sup> The *tamal* is eaten up. The passive repetition of the actual movements produces an impression of people receiving sweetcorn as a gift from nature. The impression contracts a wealth of signs from the local past that support the impression of an eternal and unbroken web between the temporalities of people and the temporalities of sweetcorn.

57 In the family where I lived, people often used the ending '-ito', expressing affection, when referring to this daily food item.

58 See photo 4 in appendix.

For example, the annual cycle of cultivation of sweetcorn is used as a means for measuring the time during the year. The year is structured naturally, through its pervasive presence in people's everyday life, by the different phases in the cultivation of sweetcorn. The sweetcorn year culminates in the harvest in November. After harvest in November, most roofs of the houses in the countryside shine yellow from the corn cobs placed on them for drying in the sun of the dry season climate. In rural areas, villages often consist of dispersed huts in-midst of extensive corn-fields. At a village near Lake Atitlán<sup>59</sup> where I spent a day in November, shortly before harvest time, the roofs of the huts were hardly visible from the street. Houses were always located one family's cornfield apart from each other. The only connection between them were narrow paths along the edges of the cornfields. At the house where I live, the *doblador* is part of the present of the people throughout the year. It gets stored in big nets in the *patio* along the wall, similar to the corn cobs. The impact of sweetcorn on Guatemalan people's life used to be so pervasive that among the Quiché-Maya, the indigenous community around Quetzaltenango, the famous creation myth even states that human beings were created out of sweetcorn.<sup>60</sup> Their creators failed in two attempts when they tried to make bones out of clay and wood. The third time they made bones from sweetcorn and it worked. Human beings considered themselves to *be* sweetcorn because they *ate* so much sweetcorn. To be the other here seems both a way to acknowledge one's total dependence on the other, and to acknowledge the great presence of the other in one's everyday life.

The weight of particular past instances on the present does not get doubled into an expectancy towards the future. Partly due to technological innovations, the signs that the future will be different are too obvious.

#### 2.2.4 Temporalities of Saints

*Catholic rituals seem to be an artificial way to passively structure time by expectancy. The anticipation of the repetition of the ever-same sequence of movements gives the interaction between people and Saints a dimension of security that allows them to leap into the realm of passive time. Catholic rituals seem to be designed to act not through rationality, on the realm of active time, but through passive communication. A passive mode of communication is based in sensitive perception and sensitive reaction towards the perceived. In pas-*

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59 See map in appendix.

60 <http://www.sacred-texts.com/nam/maya/pvgn/index.html> (visited 20 November 2005).

*sive communication, everything is intensity, signalled out by signs. When perceived as intensive signs, words act on the same level as smells, sounds and images. The present acts on the same plane as all of the past and all of the future. Every sign envelops a variety of other signs. Through the examples of names, death and Christmas, the following descriptions will show how passive communication determines the interactions between people and Saints.*

#### 2.2.4.1 Names

*Passive communication is integrated with a belief in destiny. With Deleuze, destiny is when there seems to be a relation between two or more instances in the actual, either within one life or in-between different lives, that cannot be explained only by the actual. For the one who believes in destiny, the distinct instances 'play out in the same thing, in the same story, but at different levels: here more or less relaxed, there more or less contracted.'<sup>61</sup> Destiny is the belief that the actual is expression of a variety of lived temporalities that I am not aware of, but that act on my action. Catholic faith is the belief that a life dedicated to God secures a good destiny. God is a principle that ensures that only the favourable energies are able to impact on life. Giving one's time to God seems to secure a good destiny.*

One day after my birthday *abuelita*<sup>62</sup> says to me: '*ya se fue su Santo*' (your Saint has already gone). I am surprised by this formulation. I do not understand what it means. In Catholic Guatemala, traditionally one is named after the Saint to whom the day is dedicated on which one is born. This Saint is said to be one's guardian spirit. The day of birth of *Don Arsenio* is the day of the holy Arsenio. The birthday of *Doña Victoria* is the name day of Victoria, the birthday of Manuel's grandmother Maria Bernadette is the day of San Bernarda. Manuel's grandmother and her two sisters all received as first Christian name a link to the earthly mother of Jesus Christ, to Maria. Apparently, it did not matter to the parents of Manuel's grandmother that all of their three daughters had to live in the same family with the same name. The name was not so much about individuality than about establishing a spiritual link to the guardian energy of the most important of all women in Catholic religion, to the mother of Jesus Christ, who in Catholicism is seen as a Saint. Traditionally, one does not celebrate the person that was born on a birthday. Rather, the person who has birth-

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61 Deleuze 1968a, p. 83.

62 English: '*Abuela*' means 'grandmother'. In the family where I lived, everyone addressed *Doña Maria* only with '*abuelita*'. On the ending '-ita' see chapter 1 above, section on 'location of the research'.

day shows gratitude for the guardian Saint. Traditionally, therefore, one goes to church on one's birthday.

A similar belief in the passive structuring of one's time by destiny expresses itself in the conviction that everything that happens in life does so because God wants this to happen. Such an idea seems to come through in the full admiration expressed by *Doña Toria's* comment while exploring her newly bought alarm clock: '*qué chulo que hizo Dios*' (how beautiful is it what God made). Or when *Doña Maria* on entering the *patio* in the morning, starts a new day with the words '*a ver que hizo Dios*' (let's see what God made). When the two women talk like this, the lived experience of passive time within the dependence on the variety of temporalities of nature and the Catholic faith with its belief in something bigger than oneself, seem to resonate with each other.

## 2.2.4.2 Death

### 2.2.4.2.1 Novena

*When a Catholic person in Guatemala has died, a novena<sup>63</sup> is held. The activity makes the community accompany those to whom the passed away person was nearest during life-time. The expression of compassion takes place through passive communication. In various ways, the ritual of the novena seems to provide a structuring of time that supports the emergence of passive communication. Structure supports a sliding from a logic of need into a logic of sensual contraction. The relaxation necessary for the leap into passive communication seems to go together with a subordination to God as principle of identity and order.<sup>64</sup>*

There is a *novena* for someone in the neighbourhood who has died a year ago. I go with *Don Arsenio*, who is invited to lead the preaching. We are led into a specially prepared, small, green-coloured room without windows. There are about 15 plastic chairs lined up in a row around the walls. In one corner, in sharp contrast to this, an altar is built up. On a table there are three candles and four big vases with real flowers. On the ground there are two more big vases with real flowers as well. Over the table, white linen is arranged. The linen heightens the arrangement to the ceiling of the room. On the altar, on top of the linen, the Image of the Virgin Mary is represented by a large oil painting in a gold-coloured frame. In contrast to this, the image of the man

63 English: '*Nueve*' means 'nine'. The term '*novena*' refers to a sequence of nine days of morning after the death of someone.

64 See Deleuze 1968a, pp. 86-7.

who has died is represented only through a small, black and white passport-size photo that is left somewhere in-between the vases on the table. The photo is hardly visible in the midst of the flower vases even when one is standing right in front of the altar. It is not visible at all when one is sitting on one of the chairs. The activity is based on a pre-structured prayer known in Catholic tradition as the ‘rosary’. Set phrases are spoken by a preacher and answered by the community. The prayer expresses gratitude and obedience to the Virgin Mary. The passed away person and his family do hardly appear. Only at one point, wishes for them are expressed. God is something bigger than the human being.

When the activity starts, all chairs are occupied. The chairs are left and people kneel on the naked floor. *Don Arsenio* holds a necklace with wooden pearls (the rosary) in his hands. Using both hands, for each phrase spoken, a pearl is counted off on the necklace from one end of pearls to the other. With every repetition of this movement, his voice is repeating the same verse. The other voices are answering his prayer with another verse, also always repeating the same words within one section of pearls. Then there is his voice with another phrase. The phrase is again repeated for as long as it takes to count another section of pearls off on the necklace. The necklace helps the preacher not to lose himself in-between repetitions that have already happened and repetitions that are still to come. The community does *not* have a necklace. Their sliding into passive orientation by intensive impulses seems to be desired. All voices merge into a kind of one-dimensional trance-talk – hammering, quick and rhythmic, lasting about 45 minutes. A rattling vocal forest. The collective agitation constantly increases. It reaches its peak when at one point the rigid segmentation between front-speaking and answering disappears. All voices kick over into singular rhythms. It seems like chaos – pure intensity. But then the antiphonal structure comes back. Everyone knew exactly what to do.

*Novenas* are held in Guatemala for nine days in a row when a person has died, from the third day after the death onwards. After the nine days there is a mass, a church service. Then again one year after, to remember the day of the death, there are nine days in a row of praying the rosary followed by a mass. The duration of the nine days of prayer together with the daily repetition of the ever-same movements produce a similar kick-off into passive orientation by intensity as the praying described above. After some days one tends to forget whether one evening of praying has passed and eight are still to come, or whether three have gone by and six are still to come, or whether seven have passed and two are still to come. It seems that every evening there is a *novena*. The orientation by days slides into a general feeling of being in the midst of mourning. A general feeling of compassion



passively structures one's time, rather than the two hours every evening that one goes to the ever-same house to pray with the ever-same people the ever-same words for the ever-same person. The concrete movements induce the memory of the passed-away person and of those who were close to him.

Last but not least, the structures provided by a *novena* give a time-space for passive communication among people from the community. Socialising also seems to take place mainly through passive time. Flows of words seem to be indicators of the state of relaxation within the energetic field within a room. For example, during the *novena* mentioned above, I arrive with *Don Arsenio* at about 7:30 p.m. when the event is meant to start. At that time, only three of the fifteen chairs provided are occupied. There are three middle-aged women. *Don Arsenio* introduces me to them. Then there is silence. About 20 minutes after the arranged starting time, still no one else has arrived. One and then all three of the women start to ask me questions. Their words seem to emerge as an effect of the relaxation of boredom. After the prayer, something similar happens. *Patches* and something to drink are served. One can choose between Coke with rum and coffee with sugar. People wait in silence to receiving food and drink, then they start eating in silence. Slowly, seemingly in accordance with the relaxation of the warm meal and the assurance that everything is as it always is, there emerge spare flows of words here and there. In the end, there is chatting. Verbal communication seems to come after passive communication, as an effect of it. There seems to be little need for verbal action. Words seem to be not an expression of a pressure to say something, but an expression of passive time.

#### 2.2.4.2.2 The 'Day of the Saints' and the 'Day of the Dead'

*The first and the second of November in Catholic Guatemala are celebrated as the 'Day of the Saints' (1 of November) and the 'Day of the Dead' (2 of November). No one around could give me a convincing explanation concerning the difference between the two days. The event that is performed on both days is the passive communication with those who have passed away. The passive communication with the Saints seems to act as a frame for the communication with the dead, much as in the novena. Framed by the communication with Saints, the death of a close loved one might prevent impulses of rage or hate towards the Saints from being actualised. The event expresses itself in form of a party. A party is chosen to stage the communication with the dead. On the first and the second of November, passive communication with the dead receives a formal frame.*

*The passive communication with the dead works through the intensity through which the dead are still present for those living. This*

*intensity depends on the closeness with those who have now passed away during one's lifetime and on the time that has passed since the other has passed away. On the plane of passive time, to feel intensity for someone alive or for someone dead is a difference of degree, not of kind.<sup>65</sup> The atmosphere of the party therefore is explicitly joyful, although serious. Communication adapts to circumstances. Kites (barilletes<sup>66</sup>) become a means for communication between those who are still on earth and those who might be in heaven. In front of the cemetery, kites are sold. People fly kites in-between and on top of the graves at the cemetery. Sometimes, food and drink are shared next to the grave, to overcome the actual separation imposed by death. Especially during these two days, ghost stories and jokes that involve ghosts are told to offer accounts of the encounter between the living and the non-living.*

### **Fr, 01.11.**

Today is the Day of the Saints here in Guatemala. Tomorrow is the Day of the Dead. Yesterday, I had already noticed that in front of the cemetery it looked more like the preparation of a funfair before a public party than like the preparation of a day of mourning. There are merry-go-rounds, places for table-football, lots of places to buy sweets, drinks and all kinds of nuts, hot-dogs, pizzas and flowers. More than anything else what struck me were all the flowers! There are asters, dahlias, gladioli, '*flor de muerte*'<sup>67</sup> and all the various shapes of '*coronas*', of wreaths with green plants and flowers around.

Yesterday, I went to the house of Carmencita to prepare the '*fiambre*'. This is a cold food, a kind of salad with every kind of ingredient one can possibly imagine of here in Guatemala. It entails everything that the local markets and the supermarkets have on offer. Vegetables, meats, cheeses and fish – some say that up to 80 different ingredients go into this meal. *Fiambre* is the traditional meal for the first and second of November here. It costs more than many families are able to pay for a meal, about 200 *Quetzales* for us six here in the house. But everyone asks everyone else if one is going to have a *fiambre*. It seems to be an indicator for social status, whether the answer is positive or negative. We spent all day long, from eight o'clock in the morning to seven o'clock in the evening, cutting the various vegetables, cooking them and preparing the *salsa*. The day before, *Doña Toria* already went to the market at 'La Terminal' to get the ingredients, together with *Don Arsenio* and *Oswaldo*. They told me that everything was much more expensive than normal, instead of 3 *Quetzales*

65 See above, p. 38.

66 Read: [bʌri:jetes].

67 English: 'Flower of Death'. A yellow species of flower.

they paid 4.50 and so on. Peas cost 20 *Quetzales* instead of 10! The sellers cheated with the measures more than on other days.

Today then, at eight o'clock in the morning *Don Arsenio*, *Oswaldo* and I are going to the cemetery (planned for seven o'clock). (The family of *Carmencita* even planned to go at six o'clock, in order to be there before the masses of people would arrive. However, they arrive when we are about to leave.) *Manuel* told me in the morning that this would be a day of party, the day of colours, for flowers are around everywhere. He told me that this day really is a day of joy, rather than a day of mourning and melancholy. He is right: at the cemetery they are selling kites to use on the cemetery, or on one larger grave children are even playing football. Graves in Guatemala are not made from earth, but from stone, often painted in bright colours. At the two Days of the Dead they are decorated over and over with flowers. People are selling ice cream, chewing gum and nuts. The weather is great, lots of sunshine. A *marachi* band<sup>68</sup> offers, for some money, to play melodies in front of the graves. The combo consists of a *marimba*, a *shirimía* and a *túm*<sup>69</sup>. The cemetery is huge and very nicely positioned in front of the volcano *Santa Maria*. So many people are there. They come with their families and with all the flowers; some are with food. There is a bright and cheerful atmosphere.

### Sat, 02.11.

Today at breakfast, *Don Arsenio* is telling me ghost stories. These are always present here in *Xela*, but especially during the Days of the Dead. I am told about 'La Llorona'<sup>70</sup>. This is a female ghost, stalking in her white robe at night through the streets of *Xela*. *Don Arsenio* keeps saying that he met her once as an adolescent, when he had to go out late at night to buy medicine for his sister. She crossed his way and he felt electrified. He says that he could not move until she had passed by. *Don Arsenio* tells me as well a joke about death as a person, consisting of a skeleton, walking through the village, knocking at doors to inform the inhabitants that the next dying person would be from their family. The young man living there got scared and thought, 'what on earth can I do to escape death?' Then he had an idea. He shaved his head completely. He thought, if there were no longer hair on it, death would not recognise him. Death came at the promised day and went into the saloon of the village. All the inhabitants of the vil-

68 Read: [mari:atʃi:]. Traditional Mexican music combo.

69 Traditional Guatemalan instruments, said to be of Indian origin. A *marimba* is a xylophone that Guatemalan officials declared to be the Guatemalan national instrument. A *shirimía* is a wooden flute, a *túm* is a drum.

70 Read: [jəʊrəʊnɔ]. English: Llorar means weeping.

lage were present. He looked around and looked around – and could not find the one he was looking for. So finally death said, ‘well, then I take this shaved guy here’, and took accidentally the poor man he was originally looking for!

### 2.2.4.3 Christmas

*Events in the Catholic year in Guatemala are anticipated by passive communication. Images<sup>71</sup> of Catholic Saints are carried by a procession through the town. Processions are very popular in the street-life of Xela. By way of the Images, they perform some event from the Bible. The Biblical content to which the respective festivity relates, gets translated from the level of ancient, abstract words onto a level of concrete intensities that act on the present. The procession seems to suggest that people connect to Catholicism on a plane of passive time through making experiences with it. Passive communication makes one connect to the Images in a way that these become signs that are speaking to the people through transmitting intensities. Passive communication works through the reception of sensation and the passive repetition of these. With Walter Benjamin one could say: an inanimate object is invested with the power to look back at one in the way a human being would look back when feeling that he or she were addressed directly by a gaze.<sup>72</sup>*

*Passive communication allows signs from Biblical scenes to open up to signs from contemporary contexts. On the plane of passive time, the ancient contents merge with present preoccupations and context-conditions. The Images transmit an air of distance despite all their concrete materiality. Adopting a W. Benjaminian perspective, one could say: the Image communicates ‘correspondences’ with the Divine.<sup>73</sup> The correspondences express depth – an eternal, unquestioned web between the human and the Divine. Again, from a W. Benjaminian perspective we might say that passive communication requires a passive way of looking at things. The following material will show how slowness and actual repetition seem to suggest a leap from the actual into passive time. However, an abundance of actual repetition seems to prevent a seizing away into passive time.*

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71 Human-size wooden painted figures.

72 See introduction to this chapter.

73 See W. Benjamin 1968, p. 178.

### 2.2.4.3.1 *Las Posadas*

*The nine evenings before 24 December there are posadas in Guatemala. Posadas are one kind of Catholic procession. Posadas enact the search by Joseph and Mary for a shelter during their first night in Bethlehem. Every one of the nine evenings, various religious groups organise these collective marches through the different parts of the town. Everyone has a focada, a self-made red lantern with a candle inside, and a picos, a whistle. The Image, Joseph leading Mary on a donkey, is carried on a tray. It is illuminated by an electric bulb connected to a generator that is carried by two men or driven alongside the pedestrians on the back of an accompanying pick-up. With Don Arsenio, I join one of the posadas.*

An atmosphere of slowness, endlessness, surrealness and intensity seems to invite a leap into passive time: the long rows of red lanterns move themselves slowly through the narrow, hilly streets and alleys of the town. Due to curves, the end of a row of people is never in sight. The illuminated Image is far bigger than any human being. Its gaze is directed towards heaven. The Image is floating over the heads of the people. It is elevated by many helping hands, carried through the darkness of the night, through the coldness of the night air in the mountains. Incense is spilled out. It makes the shapes of objects and subjects merge into one another in front of one's eyes. Its smell carries one away from everyday action. There is a loudspeaker and three people with guitars. Their preaching invites a connection with the most general questions of life. The movement of the procession is very slow. It stops when the musicians of the band in front play a tune. It stops when boys fire off jumping jacks in front of the band. It stops when the lines of people who are walking along in pairs of two get so much out of shape that someone comes to re-organise them. The movement is slow anyway, just on account of the weight of the Image and for the vast number of walking people. The repetition of the procession over nine evenings produces once more the impression that this is going on forever and that it has never been different, reminiscent of the temporality of the *novena*<sup>74</sup>.

The atmosphere receives further passive weight in that it seems to express the eternity of the time of God. The atmosphere expresses distance from everyday life. The procession passes zone two of the town, which consists of houses where people live. Where the procession comes near, people step out of their houses, interrupting for a while whatever they have been doing. They watch the red lanterns passing

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74 See above.

by in darkness. Then the movement reaches the ‘Parque Central’<sup>75</sup>. Other, similar rows of red lanterns and floating, illuminated Images turn out from all directions of the darkness through several of the streets that terminate in the plaza. The whole town seems to be transformed for some evenings through similar flickering – slow, serious messages that something is different from the normal. Then we go up along the shop windows of fourteenth Avenida towards zone 3 to the market at ‘La Democracia’<sup>76</sup>. The time of the *posada* contrasts remarkably with the profit-orientated temporalities of business. At the time we are passing by, the shops are closed and the metal security grilles impose a temporary barrier on capitalism. To give one’s time to God seems to be a valid break from the constant gnawing preoccupation with economic survival. At ‘La Democracia’, the *posada* ends in front of a church.

We find ourselves in front of a closed door. An antiphonal song called ‘Las Posadas’ is started. Singing invites passive communication. It requires particular bodily engagement. The song is very long. It has 13 verses. It is very repetitive. The repetitive melody receives a further repetitiveness through ending on a freely prolonged swerve on a one-tone step. The song repeats the scene represented by the Images that we have been carrying through the streets. It is about the rejection of Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem when they look for a shelter to spend the night. The pilgrims outside the door start a verse, then from inside comes an answer in the form of the second verse and so on. The position of those inside and outside in relation to the closed door seems to repeat once more the dynamic of rejection transmitted by the song and the Images. Many of those outside probably do really feel cold, hungry, tired and a bit impatient after a two-hour walk, like me. Through repetition of the dynamic of rejection on the level of actual movements, the feeling of rejection seems to emerge in the atmosphere in front of the church door.

In the last verse of the song, the dynamic receives a sudden turn. In correspondence, when those inside the closed door in the song have understood that the one who seeks hostage is the mother of the coming Jesus Child, doors are opened. Rejection turns into joy and a warm welcome-party. *Patches* and something to drink are served. There is a *piñata*<sup>77</sup> and music. This turning appears, when perceived passively,

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75 The pedestrian centre of zone one in Quetzaltenango.

76 See below *exposée* at the end of the introduction to the chapter on the market for introduction.

77 A paper image of a comic figure or something else that attracts children, often child-height, is filled with sweets inside. The figure gets bound on a string in the air on children head height. One child gets blindfolded. He other children stay around and cheer. With a stick the

like a utopia of migration. While standing among all these Guatemalan people in front of this closed door, asking to be let in, I cannot help thinking of all those of whom I know here that they have been for a while to the US, would like to go, or have someone close to them being over there or planning to go soon. It seems as if through passive communication, everyone could open up the ancient story from the Bible to personal circumstances. When I rehearsed the song for the *posada* during the past weeks after breakfast with *Don Arsenio* in the kitchen, he sang the voice of those inside the door and I sang the voice of those outside the door. Then, the signs that got contracted from the story that the lyrics tell, referred to my own being a guest for such a long time in this house already. Then, the signs that emerged by bringing the Bible-story through passive communication into contact with present circumstances referred to Guatemalan hospitality. The local absence of the phrase 'I don't have time' became once more apparent. The phrase stands in stark contrast to the experience of living with Manuel's family who are always ready to share with me the little they have.

#### 2.2.4.3.2 *Nacimiento*<sup>78</sup>

*A 'nacimiento' is a scene built around the Image of the Jesus-Child in the shed where He was born. Here in Guatemala, the build-up of the scene around this Image expresses so much passive communication. People say the nacimiento expresses 'cariño'<sup>79</sup>. The actual seems to lose ground in favour of passive time. The logic of need seems to be left behind in favour of a logic of intensities. People's own needs seem to be forgotten in favour of the self-forgetful reception of Jesus when He is born on earth.*

On the plane of passive time, objects and subjects merge with each other. The *nacimiento* seems to merge with the people's realm of life. Often *nacimientos* occupy up to half a room of space and all the space from top to bottom of a room. Often there are sky-or cave-backgrounds made from painted blankets. There seems to be an excess of intensity that receives its impulses not only from the Bible-story, but also from the normal experience of lack in everyday life. People manage to afford things for the *nacimiento* that those whom I know here do not consider to be able to afford simply for themselves. Often there are frames around the *nacimiento*-scene decorated over and over

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blindfolded child will try to hit the figure in a way that the paper destroys and the sweets spread over the floor for all children to grab for.

78 English: 'Nacer' means to be born.

79 Heartfelt engagement. See above the section on water-gifts.

with Christmas-flowers (plastic or real) or fruit-strings of *manzanilla*<sup>80</sup> (orange-like, but smaller than mandarin), lemons or red apples. Christmas light strings are never missing. In everyday life, *Doña Toria* and *Doña Maria* would rather sit in darkness than use the electric bulb in the kitchen in order to save energy costs. In the *nacimiento*, by contrast, various Christmas light strings are often installed side by side.

On the plane of passive time, signs envelop other signs.<sup>81</sup> The light-chains seem to be an expression of various impulses. A love for the technological envelops a love for the artificial: often, a light-chain is still packed in its plastic wrap, just connected to a plug, when illuminating the *nacimiento*. A love for action and intensity envelops a fascination with the far away: the light-strings come in all colours imaginable, with blink-functions and ever-repeating melodies. Such melodies become expressions of movement, either as experience or as desire. Most often, there is the US-song 'We wish you a Merry Christmas'; frequently there is the Spanish song '*Feliz Navidad*'<sup>82</sup> and also the European song 'Holy Night, Silent Night'. Only sometimes I hear the local song '*Las Posadas*'<sup>83</sup>. All of them are bleeping along in never-ending repetition in mobile phone ring-tone quality.

On the plane of passive time, past, present and future act on the same level. Ancient Bible-stories open up to the experiences, interests, preoccupations and desires of contemporary people. Figures of the Christmas story from the Bible are often included in miniature down to the most incredible level of detail. There are Mary and Joseph, sheep and the ox and the donkey close by the crib, maybe a cat and some chickens as well. The shepherds are coming from the one side and the three Magi are coming from the other side. The angel Gabriel and the morning star are hanging over the shed. There are balls of glass or some cheaper brilliant and colourful material. Moss, foil and painted wood shaving in various colours indicate fields, small streams, paths, sand and grass. Specific Christmas adornment tends to mix with the local everyday. Sometimes there is sweetcorn in the four colours yellow, white, red and black. In one house I see indigenous figures in traditional Indian clothes among the shepherds. In another *nacimiento* there is a small doll in form of a blonde lady with sunglasses and bikini. In yet another there is a plastic robot and a broken small can. The animals that appear in the Bible-story, such as ox and donkey, get supplemented through the imaginative power of passive perception by all kinds of miniature animals, from elephants to pigs.

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80 Read: [mɔnzɔni:jɔ].

81 See above, p. 51.

82 English: 'Happy Christmas'.

83 The song accompanies the interaction described above. See section on '*Las Posadas*'.



Actual repetition increases passive communication: the Image of the Jesus-Child is at the centre of every *nacimiento*. It is doll-size, far bigger than anything else in the scene. Often there are two Jesus-Child-Images side by side. In one house there are even six of them. They intensify each other. At the same time, they drag the *nacimiento* towards passive communication. The scene is an expression of a passive repetition of how things are received that are told in the Bible, rather than an actual repetition of how things might have been in fact. In another house, about eight calendars from present and past years adorn the wall around the *nacimiento*. The effect is similar to the one achieved by the six Jesus-Child-Images. The actual repetition of the calendar on the wall drags the calendars towards passive communication. Having eight calendars on the wall from present and past years is not functional. They do not seem to be meant anymore to orientate people within measured time. Rather, they act as intensities. The outlines of temporal standardization together with the accompanying pictures act as adornment – a sign of modernity. At a family meal at the house of Carmencita at the 26<sup>th</sup> of December, the traditional *marimba* music played from cassette and the screechy noise from the light strings from the *nacimiento* continued together for the whole afternoon. The sound clash and the constant repetition made me so nervous. When I asked Jenny, the seven-year-old daughter of Carmencita, how she felt about this meshing, she did not even understand what I was talking about. Of course she loved it – a polyphony of intensities. As with the improvised diversity of objects built into the crib-scene, it did not matter that the different intensities clashed with each other on an actual level. The important thing was the *cariño*, the heartfelt engagement, that spoke through the constant actual repetition from the virtual.

### 2.2.4.3.3 'The Visit of the Child'

*On 25 December there takes place another visit of an Image. The event is the visit of the Child of God, 'la visita del niño Dios'. The Jesus-Child, according to the Bible, has been born the night before. It is now carried into the different houses, to the different families to let everyone know that Jesus has been born on earth. I join the hermandad<sup>84</sup> that Don Arsenio is a member of. The hermandad has to visit eighty families in this one day. In order to do so, they have split themselves into two groups of about 15 people each. So we have to visit 40*

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84 English: 'Hermano' means 'brother', 'hermana' means 'sister.' An *hermandad* is a community of active Catholic believers. In Quetzaltenango, the practicing of the Catholic religion takes place in that people organise themselves in one of these communities.

*families in that one day. The event starts at about eight o' clock in the morning. It finishes at around half past ten in the evening.*

*The Images and all the kinds of formal devices that are described in the following, could have induced a spark of spirituality through people's passive communication with them. However, this intensity could only have been produced in passive time. The abundance of actual repetition prevents passive repetition to emerge. Things remain things. They do not turn into signs.*

Two of the younger people are carrying trays covered with woven cloths on which the Image of the Jesus-Child is placed. The Image appears human and non-human at once. It looks like a big baby-doll with brown hair. Apart from some white linen underwear, it is naked. Its legs and arms are thrashing about in the air. Make-up has been used to give the eyes the expressiveness of an adult woman. They are looking towards the skies, beyond the human. The Image has been baptised by the church. When we come to a house, we make noise with whistles. Two of the children are carrying turtle-shells on a strip around their neck. One of the shells is painted gold. On the back of these they are drumming with sticks in a given rhythm. The two people who are carrying the Child are in front. Someone opens the door and lets us in. The more visits are already behind us, the more readily the functionality of the doorbell is preferred to announcing our visit by the festive sound produced by turtle shells and whistles. The latter creates distance from the everyday. The bell produces quicker responses. Increasingly the functional substitutes for the spiritual.

We are lead to an altar, where a *nacimiento* is built up. *Don Arsenio* in front and the others behind kneel down in front of the *nacimiento*, say the rosary and sing to God. Repetitive, monotonous, hammering – everyone knows exactly what to do. However, on this occasion, all this takes place 40 times in one day! After the first few visits, it tends to become a speedy reeling off. Not the whole rosary, but only one section of pearls is prayed. Nor do we sing the whole of a song, only one verse. After a while, *Don Arsenio's* voice becomes so hoarse that he is hardly able to speak anymore. There emerges something like an insecurity every time he starts to pray or to sing. Will his voice support him? Movements tend to become routines. They remain on the level of the actual.

Then there comes the greeting. We stand up and form a line at one side of the room. The host and his family do the same on the opposite side. One representative of the *hermandad* starts the greeting. Then the vice-president of the *hermandad* speaks. Thereafter the male house-owner and head of family speaks, and finally one of the two from the *hermandad* who spoke in the beginning makes a reply. The greeting seems to be meant to express monumentality. The words and

sentence structures are more formal and festive than those used in everyday life. They express how nice it is to have been considered by the *hermandad* to be visited, that Jesus Christ has been born and that we are wishing each other a nice Christmas and a happy New Year. It is emphasized what a great pleasure it is to be invited. However, after the first ten times the words are increasingly sped up and reeled off. After the first 20 visits or so it is not only the children who seem to be on the lookout when they enter a room for a place where they will find support, a wall or some kind of furniture. Besides, Christmas celebrations traditionally have started the midnight before, meaning that people are already short of sleep. As an effect of all this, movements remain actual.

Then the host or his wife invites us to sit down and rest for a while. We are offered food and drink. We get biscuits, red custard-like dessert, peaches from a tin, half an apple or sweets.<sup>85</sup> We also receive something to drink – we receive alcohol, soft drinks, tea, coffee or orange juice. With forty visits this is a lot! People from our group carry plastic bags under their jackets. In these, the food that they do not manage to finish, disappears during an unobserved moment. It is not appropriate to say ‘No thanks, I don’t want any. I am not thirsty.’ That would be an offence. Increasingly, however, women ask the host as soon as food and drink are served if they may use his toilet. This makes equally clear that there have been already 20 refreshments or so before the present one, and that the gesture of drinking another one does not correspond to bodily need, but to good manners. (Men go outside in the fields to urinate.) The atmosphere increasingly transgresses from passivity into an active search for strategies as to how to evade the abundance of formal interaction. Clock-time acts as an additional pressure, for it really would not be appropriate to do the Visit of the Child at any time other than on Christmas Day. Again, movements remain actual.

At the beginning of the visit, when we enter the room, the Images are placed in front of the *nacimiento*. Towards the end of the visit, the family members kiss the Images and put some money (between ten and 100 *Quetzales*) underneath their back onto both trays. Then the rest of our *hermandad*-group lines up behind the Image-carriers and shakes hands or embraces the family members. Everyone again wishes them happy Christmas and a good New Year and off we go, to the next house – by foot or, if the way is longer, luckily by pick-up. In the early afternoon, after maybe the 15<sup>th</sup> visit, the second president of the *hermandad* reflects on the large amount of money that one host has

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85 Traditionally, people are served at the Visit of the Child sweet-corn-foed, such as ‘patches’, ‘chuchitos’ (dumplings with meat filling) or ‘cambraiis’ (dumplings with sweet filling).

given. He jokes that next year, they will come only to this house to do the Visit of the Child. He suggests that this would be an easier way to make money. Spiritually, the money that the hosts put under the Image's back before leaving a house is meant as a material expression of opening one's heart and house to God. In fact, however, it will be used to fill a hole in the financial household of the *hermandad*. The link between organising a Visit of the Child and financial necessity is real. However, it is not appropriate to mention it. When this aspect is actualised, spirituality disappears. The activity gets once more lifted out from passive time.

## 2.3 CONCLUSION AND LINE OF FLIGHT

*In Deleuze, as this chapter has shown, passive time is a value: it allows the present to be lived as a living present. Orientation within passive time entails the power to open up the actual given towards the realm of life. In passive time, the given is allowed to unfold itself on its own terms in all its sensational richness. The voice of the given in passive time is more heterogeneous than one can possibly be aware of at any moment. Passive time opens up a communication with the actual given that is deeper and more multi-dimensional than words can express. People in Guatemala, however, tend to live among so much passive time, but not to appreciate it particularly. With Deleuze, one can characterize the Guatemalan notion of passivity as active.<sup>86</sup> An active notion of passivity perceives in-activity only in negative terms, as a lack of activity. In an active notion of passivity, action is the background against which passivity gets perceived and evaluated. Action, rather than communication and sensation, is the all-encompassing point of reference.*

*For example, in one of the interviews with the staff at the indigenous NGO I was working with, Luisa made particularly explicit how living within time that seems to passively stay in all its weight is for her something negative. Her entire life seems to be moved by the desire for distance from the full unfolding of temporalities of nature in everyday subsistence. Her means of achieving such distance has been education. She had to fight for education. By all means available, Luisa fought against the passive endurance of that formally for her, the realm of education was very much closed. Education meant for her the possibility of action. She wanted actively to do something that would mediate and abbreviate the impact of the full unfolding of the temporalities of nature in daily subsistence. The following text is an extract from the interview.*

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86 See Deleuze 1968a, p. 87.

'I am from a community near Totonicapán<sup>87</sup> that is called Puschnakuk. I was born in 1963, so I am already very old. I come from a very numerous family. My father didn't have a stable income. We were nine brothers and sisters. Together with my parents and my grandmother we were 12 people. At the age of five or six I came to school. I have been five years at school. There was discrimination for being indigenous and for being woman. Women were meant to be for the house and for marriage, not for school. I had to earn myself the money for exercise books and pencils. A pencil was very valuable and it had to hold for a long time, so we had to take good care of it. With 11 years, I lived at the house of a cousin of my father because of the poverty. I took care of his children. By this, I earned my food, because that was what it was all about. Later, at the age of 13, there was a family who wanted to adopt me as their child. First my parents agreed, but then they changed the arrangement to 'renting' me away, for the funny price of one *Quetzal* per year. My parents decided and I was fine with that. I thought I would live better there than at home. I stayed there for three years, until the age of 16.' [...]

I always went on studying by any means available, although I didn't have the chance to go to school for very long. I learned typing, I did a first aid course and exam, and I got seminars on health training and on family planning. I always went on educating myself. I discovered that social work was my area, other areas not. When they told me in the NGO that I would now stay in the office and be responsible for the condition of handicrafts, (a program which later became the women's program), it first made me anxious. I always attempted, independently of my parents, to achieve something that would make life a bit easier, that would allow us to live a bit better. For example, I wanted us to be able to sleep in a bed and then I wanted us to cook on an elevated place, not on the ground. Television is a necessity for me. We have had a telly for three years by now. In the last years, when I was studying for my secondary school degree, there was no time to watch television because I had to study during the evenings.<sup>88</sup> [...]

There was a very difficult time in my life, but then I educated myself and now I am very happy, although I always have headaches. If I were married and had children, I would not be here in the office to do the work I am doing. I have always understood the NGO as a child that you have to care for so that it can grow. It is a gift from God. We don't have Internet here in the office. But there is a place in Xela where we can use Internet for free. I have my own Internet address.

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87 See map in appendix.

88 After finishing secondary school, Luisa started to study for a '*bachillerato*', a bachelor's degree, which in Guatemala is the entry requirement for university. But she could not finish due to constant headache.

People give me a call, they write to me by email. Although I don't know them, I see them as friends. As well with the conferences that I give and with the Spanish that I learned in primary school, there have been huge changes for me. (I ask: 'Do you live quicker now than you did in earlier times?') I live slower now. Because the telephone is here in the office and I don't have to go anymore to Salcajá or Xela to use a phone.<sup>89</sup> As well, I can take a taxi or a car to come here. [...]

My brothers went to the United States, some seven or eight years ago. The younger one went for four years, the other one stayed for three years over there. One of them managed to get a visa. Now he is travelling often. From my community, many have gone, as well women. But there is not much change through this in the community, because there was always the idea that there is no income to be made within the community. In earlier times, people went to the *finca*<sup>90</sup>; now they go to the United States. Over there, people want to earn the money to build a house here, for example. The difference between thinking of leaving for the *finca* and thinking of leaving for the United States is that at the *finca*, the people around you are also peasants. By contrast, in the United States you lose your customs. Even those who have just been for a month over there come at us all the time with their 'OK'. I would love to go there, too. But I wouldn't want to go wet<sup>91</sup>. I am going to try to get a visa. No one wants me to go, but I have got this idea. I wouldn't go for a long time. If one stays for a long time over there, one is changing a lot.'

*Another expression of the negative perception of passive time among local people is the desire for television. Traditionally, as has been explored above, there was no specific time for leisure. Relaxation comes with the natural slowness of work, built into the daily tasks of subsistence. This was a passive form of relaxation. Temporalities of television, by contrast, express a desire for more active modes of leisure. Television enables a broad range of movement, a broad choice of movement and quick movement. People claim a right for movement and they claim a right for leisure. Television sets free inner movement.*

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89 Both villages are about half an hour away, if taken into account the foot-march to the bus, waiting for the bus and the time for the bus-ride itself.

90 A *finca* is the land property of a ranch owner. In Guatemala, the fertile coastal area is distributed into huge *fincas* while land in the highlands is less fertile and with every generation more segmented. Peasants from the highlands used to go to the coastal area for earning money as day labourers.

91 English: '*Irse mojado*' (To go wet) means to cross the border between Mexico and the United States through the river 'Rio Bravo'. This way of border crossing is illegal and it involves a long and dangerous foot-walk through the mountains.

On Thursday, Manuel and I got cable TV in our room. We had planned to get a legal connection, for 60 *Quetzales* a month. When Manuel's mum heard this, she told us that the neighbours had offered her to get a connection to their cable TV and to split the monthly costs. The company, according to the neighbours, would just come to check the connection if one failed to pay the monthly rate on time. As they would pay always at the first call, there would be no risk. We agreed, and the neighbours' son installed the cable. Manuel's brother got quite excited as well. Four days later, while Manuel and me were out, he built a connection to his TV in the other room. Cable TV is very popular in Guatemala. The way we did it is the only way most people here can afford it. It is seen as mobilising daily existence: it enables one to achieve a distance to the passive co-existence with the local given.

Manuel introduces his friend Mario to the headphones that he has installed at the TV. With these, he can watch as much telly as he is used to and I can have as much silence for work or relaxation as I am used to. Mario sits down and we talk a bit. He does not understand, why we need headphones. 'And why?' he asks. 'In Guatemala, television is the form how we relax. When you enter a room, the first thing is to start the TV. The TV is running in the background all the time.' Mario goes on: 'When my wife and I married, the first thing we thought about was where we could get a TV from. The people from Almolonga<sup>92</sup> are said to be a bit richer than people from other villages here in the area. They export to Honduras, El Salvador and Mexico. There is a joke here in the area that says that you may enter any house in Almolonga, there will never be missing the television. There might be no oven or no bed, but two things will be never missing – the television and the pick-up<sup>93</sup>. Sometimes people have a big screen from Sony, which is much more expensive.'

Later, Manuel and I reflect about Mario's comment. Do people find a TV more important than a bed? Manuel replies that in Guatemala, people would not have much chance to move around, and if they would not have a TV, it would be so much more boring, and very unjust. His mother for example would not go to the *feria*<sup>94</sup>, because the exhibition salon would cost three *Quetzales*. The bus to go there would cost three *Quetzales* as well and together this would be already so much money that she would better stay at home (while her husband and sons would go). Television and radio would be important means of mobility. They would get something else into people's heads and function as a means of transportation. Often, it would be not so much

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92 A village in about ten minutes bus-ride distance from Xela.

93 An open van.

94 The annual village festivity.

the content of a particular show or film, but rather some technological noise and flow of Images all day long running in the background by which people would create an atmosphere where one would feel OK. There would be a strong priority for action-films.

I recall that in one of the interviews with teachers at the Spanish school, a daughter from a wealthier *mestizo* family in *Xela* expressed the local fascination by television to the extreme. She said: 'I am sleeping with television. All the rooms are equipped with a big television. In the house, there are eight televisions in total.'





## CHAPTER 3

### 'TODO SIRVE'<sup>1</sup>: THE PASSIVE SELF AND THE GUATEMALAN MARKET

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION: IMMANENCE AND TERRITORIALISATION

In the previous chapter, lived time was naturally framed by the actual given. Tradition provided a frame for lived time to emerge passively. In this chapter, by contrast, there is no frame. Lived time appears unbound, in a state of 'immanence'<sup>2</sup> where all distinctions are gone and absolute movement is set free. Immanence is the absence of any kind of pre-given structure. Duration, the virtual, has gone actual. Space has become time. On the level of matter, everything appears to be in a general state of movement. While in the previous chapter, duration appeared as a mode of relating to the actual given, in this chapter the three characteristics of duration – simplicity, heterogeneity and continuity – characterize the material organisation of the actual given itself. There are hardly any distinctions between the virtual and the actual. There seem to be few overall principles that would allow for structure to emerge. There seems to be hardly any actual distinction between the human and the non-human or between waste and value.

In this chapter, the self within immanence shall be called a 'passive self'. The passive self is an example of the convertibility between time and desire. It relates to the time of the given through affection. Letting oneself be affected by the given also falls into the realm of desire. In Bergson, the passive self gets defined through time. Through relaxation, the self leaps from an active state in which it encounters the world on the actual plane of structure, into a passive attitude towards the given in which it encounters the given on the virtual plane of lived time. In the realm of lived time, everything is image. Images are in absolute movement. The self perceives its own body as an im-

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1 Engl.: 'Everything is useful'. *Doña Toria* and *Doña Maria* used this expression constantly. When there is little money, improvisation is essential and nothing gets thrown away just so.

2 See Deleuze/Guattari 1987, pp. 266-7.

age, too. Implicitly in Bergson, the passive self relates to the world through affection. The body of the self is an affective image. Affection passively contracts impulses from the material world and the body of the self passively responds to these. The passive self gives resonance to the material given. The emphasis in Deleuze's reading of the passive self (with reference to Bergson among others) is on the dissolution of actual form in the virtual realm of time. In Deleuze, the passive self is a dissolved self. Underneath the self which acts, there are 'little selves which contemplate and which render possible both action and the acting subject'.<sup>3</sup>

In their collaborative work *A Thousand Plateaus*<sup>4</sup>, Deleuze and Guattari offer with the notion of territorialisation a concept of the passive self that is explicitly grounded in affection. In general, *A Thousand Plateaus* is much more about de-territorialisation than about territorialisation.<sup>5</sup> De-territorialisation is productive dissolution. Affection passively contracts an image from the material given and thereby opens up the given territory toward somewhere else. This is reminiscent of Deleuze's reading of Bergson. The notion of territorialisation in the plateau of the refrain in the middle of *A Thousand Plateaus*, however, comes before the productive dissolution of the given. Where de-territorialisation refers to the given, territorialisation refers to the passive self that is the invisible condition needed for de-territorialisation to take place. Territorialisation is something existential. In that, the notion seems to owe more to the work of Guattari and to his background in psychoanalysis.<sup>6</sup> In Guattari, in order to contract the images that in Deleuze's reading of Bergson become little selves, the passive self needs some kind of felt territory to start from.<sup>7</sup> The self needs to feel an inner territory before and in order to let itself be attracted by impulses from images within the material world and to make something productive with these. Where the active self, the Ego, works via a logic of exclusion by defining what it is and what it is not, the passive self, the affective feeling of the given through one's own body, works via a logic of attraction by building up territory. To understand the self as passive self becomes in Guattari a perspective for living within the chaos of immanence. It is a perspective for internally build-

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3 See Deleuze 1968a, p. 75.

4 Deleuze/Guattari 1987.

5 Compare *ibid*, pp. 594 & 609.

6 Psychoanalysis seems to suggest an opening up of the notion of the passive self towards desire, rather than time. Although Guattari generally refers to desire, (for example in Guattari: 'Ritornellos and Existential Affects', in Gary Genosko (ed) 1996: *The Guattari-Reader*, chapter 14), there is also a consideration of time (for example in Guattari 1992, pp. 16, 18, 30).

7 See Guattari 1992, chapter 1.

ing up territories on a singular basis in every given context anew as external, collective and long-term territories increasingly break apart.<sup>8</sup>

In his own work, Guattari explains territorialisation through the concept of the emergent self developed by child researcher Daniel Stern<sup>9</sup>. Stern, in Guattari's reading, describes the relation between the infant and the world from birth up to the age of two. He distinguishes four stages. First, there is an atmospheric fusionist relation to the world; second, there comes the exploration of the capacity for action; third there is the experience of affection which goes together with the realisation that there are both sharable and non-sharable affections. Finally there is the development of language, which goes together with representation as dominant mode of engagement with the world. In Guattari's reading, below the level of language, the self territorializes within the world according to an 'aesthetic paradigm'<sup>10</sup>: the self lets itself be affected by the world. Attraction of images from the world is initiated by a 'refrain'<sup>11</sup>. A refrain is an affective motif, an interest that starts off a process of territorialisation. As a moment of unification, the refrain holds the emerging territory together:

"The refrain works as an attractor for territorialisation: the detachment of an existential 'motif' (or leitmotiv) installs itself like an "attractor" within a sensible and significational chaos. The different components conserve their heterogeneity, but are nevertheless captured by a refrain which couples them to the existential territory of my self."<sup>12</sup>

In the concept of territorialisation, aesthetic relationality with the world is not just an expression of a phase of early childhood.<sup>13</sup> Rather, life-long, aesthetic relationality coexists as the working mode of the unconscious with representational relationality, the working mode of consciousness. Throughout life, the self can encounter the world both on the level of lived time and on the level of representation. Aesthetic relationality is not just a movement towards the actual given, but also differentiation from it. Through the passive selection of images from the actual given on the plane of lived time, the self distances itself

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8 See Guattari: 'Toward a New Perspective on Identity', in Genosko (ed) 1996, chapter 19.

9 Daniel Stern 1985: *The Interpersonal World of the Infant*.

10 See Guattari 1992, p. 7.

11 See for example *ibid*, pp. 15-18.

12 *Ibid*, p. 17.

13 See for example *ibid*, pp. 10-13, 22, 28.

from the material given through building up its own territory within the given.<sup>14</sup>

The self, in Guattari's notion of territorialisation, is a heterogeneous reflection of dynamics that go beyond the individual. To approach the relation between the self and the world on the level of territorialisation is for Guattari not only a question of aesthetics, but also a question of ethics.<sup>15</sup> It raises awareness both of relationality in-between people and of relationality in-between people and nature. To view the self passively related to the world, rather than as a closed entity, raises awareness of one's own impact on group-dynamics<sup>16</sup> and of one's own impact on the depletion of natural resources such as the ozone layer, clean water or the rain forests. It also raises awareness of the impact of the social and the environmental on one's own well-being.

"Our survival on this planet is not only threatened by environmental damage but by a degeneration in the fabric of social solidarity and in the modes of psychical life, which must literally be invented. The refoundation of politics will have to pass through the aesthetic and analytical dimensions implied in the three ecologies – the environment, the socius and the psyche. We cannot conceive of solutions to the poisoning of the atmosphere and to global warming due to the greenhouse effect, or to the problem of population control, without a mutation of mentality, without promoting a new art of living in society."<sup>17</sup>

The following section will show in what way Deleuze and Guattari's theory of territorialisation in the plateau on the refrain in *A Thousand Plateaus* is an expression of Guattari's concern with what has been called here the 'passive self'. In this text, Deleuze and Guattari introduce a nuanced vocabulary for the dynamics that take place between processes of territorialisation and the affective environment:

The theory of territorialisation in *A Thousand Plateaus* is derived from ethology. To focus on processes of territorialisation among animals emphasizes affect, the domain of the passive self, rather than rationality, the domain of the active self. However, Deleuze and Guattari examine the dominant theory on territorialisation within ethology

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14 This dimension of territorialisation is more emphasized in Jessica Benjamin's reading of Stern, see Jessica Benjamin 1988: *The Bonds of Love*, chapter 1, and chapters 5 & 6 of this book.

15 See Guattari 1992, p. 8.

16 See Guattari's concern with group therapy (ibid, p. 6); see also Guattari: 'Subjectivities: for Better and for Worse', in Genosko (ed) 1996, chapter 17; and more broadly Genosko 2002, introduction and chapters 1 & 2.

17 Guattari 1992, p. 20.

(set forth by Konrad Lorenz<sup>18</sup>) in order to reject it. Lorenz explains territorialisation as behaviour. For Deleuze and Guattari, a focus on behaviour leads to a linear and one-dimensional explanation.<sup>19</sup> From a perspective on the self, behaviour is action. Action is the effect of the complex dynamics that take place before action, as a pre-condition for it. On this level of the active self, territorialisation is self-defence. Lorenz holds that every territorialisation goes back to the same cause – aggression. Lorenz argues that animals defend their territory against other animals of the same species or against natural enemies because this has proved to be an evolutionary advantage for the species. Then no one else takes the female, the newborn can grow up in peace and there will be enough food for every member of the group. The most aggressive male gets the best territory. Behaviourism explains territorialisation through the active self, as an evolution of the means for self-defence.

Although every territorialisation, according to Lorenz, goes back to aggression, there are various non-violent modes of defence because this can be an evolutionary advantage for the singular animal as well. If a straightforward fight among birds can be replaced by singing or the exposition of coloured plumage, or if dogs, cats and rabbits can display through urine or other odour-secretions the boundaries of their home turf, energy that would have been put into fighting can be saved and utilised for other activities.<sup>20</sup>

Alternatively, the account of territorialisation that Deleuze and Guattari offer, builds on resonance. Resonance highlights the activity of the passive self. It is a term from the realm of music. Music as an alternative to aggressive self-defence emphasizes listening, reception and thus the openness of the self to the world. When territorialisation is grounded in resonance, action becomes an expression of the dynamic that the world passively sets free inside oneself. The activity of the singular being becomes an expression of the passively built up territory in-between the being and the world. Territorialisation takes place through expression. Activities that mark a territory express resonances to environmental vibrations.<sup>21</sup> There is harmony between a territorialising expression and the collective dynamic within the given because everything vibrates according to the same sound. Territorialisation becomes a kind of making music with the world. Making music with the world and with others becomes a constant dynamic and a constant challenge of everyday life.

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18 See Deleuze/Guattari 1987, pp. 315-16.

19 See *ibid*, p. 333.

20 See for a summary of Lorenz's argument, drawn from his 1963-book *On Aggression*, Ronald Bogue 1999a: 'Art and Territory', in Ian Buchanan (ed): *A Deleuzian Century?*, pp. 86-88.

21 See Deleuze/Guattari 1987, p. 312.

The language of music seems to suggest an emphasis on the beautiful. However, resonance does not substitute aggression, it merely focuses in its explanation on a different domain. It focuses on the passive rather than the active self. Deleuze and Guattari introduce territorialisation in three sequences<sup>22</sup>. First, there is an unstable centre of intensity. Second, this centre encircles itself. Now it has become something like a felt home ground. Third, as soon as the home ground is stable enough, the circle will open up and a line of flight will depart towards somewhere else. These three images suggest the necessity of a felt territory in order to let oneself be affected by the world. As long as there is a necessity for a felt inner territory, there is also the danger that this feeling will disappear. Deleuze and Guattari describe how a 'territorial mark' is built up, for example, when there emerges a dynamic within the realm of time through which the 'critical distance'<sup>23</sup> of a territory is felt to be in danger of collapsing into a 'black hole'.<sup>24</sup> When something violates a territory from without or from within, the 'passive self' puts up a territorial mark as a 'poster'<sup>25</sup> to regain its inner balance. With a focus on resonance, aggression becomes an energy that expresses itself and that might come from many different impulses other than a perceived danger. Aggression loses its implication of destructiveness when it is seen as the force behind an expression.

Any action, when perceived as a resonance to dynamics within the realm of affect, turns out to be the result of complex processes of synchronisation. The affective environment is a 'milieu'. Milieus are intensive environments beyond the state of immanence.<sup>26</sup> If a plane of immanence is a plane of intensity where movement is unbound and all distinctions are gone, a milieu constitutes itself through the affective relation of a member of a given species to a selection of these intensities.<sup>27</sup> Some intensities matter more than others. Not the whole environment as it is objectively given matters, but only those components to which a given species relates itself. Thus, a milieu occupies a specific selection of frequencies within a given intensive environment. Another milieu will occupy different frequencies according to its different species' needs.

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22 See *ibid.*, pp. 312-13.

23 See *ibid.*, p. 319.

24 See *ibid.*, p. 334.

25 See *ibid.*, p. 317.

26 See *ibid.*, p. 313.

27 I will use the term 'affect' when the focus of attention shall be the resonance between a self and an other. I will use the term 'intensity' when the emphasis is on the relative emancipation of the realm of lived temporalities from human engagement.

Milieus are in constant communication with each other. A milieu is held together through a 'code'.<sup>28</sup> A code is something that is similar among everything that belongs to a given milieu. Codes therefore are in a constant state of de- and re-coding. Codes have 'rhythm'.<sup>29</sup> A rhythm emerges at the border between milieus. 'Territories' emerge when rhythm becomes expressive.<sup>30</sup> While the milieu is virtual, the rhythm marks the process of actualisation and the territory is the actual expression of a rhythm. Territories emerge through taking up something from perceived resonances among milieus. The form of a territory is always only provisional. Territories transform whenever the tacit balance between ever-changing context-conditions tips beyond a certain critical limit of tolerance. Once a territory has emerged, it constitutes itself a 'polyphony',<sup>31</sup> of environmental relations. It establishes inner milieus, external milieus, membrane milieus and annexed milieus.<sup>32</sup>

In a theory of territorialisation grounded in resonance, formal impositions of values from a given environment and perceived intentions from within the passive self are on the same plane.<sup>33</sup> One acts as an external milieu component on the process of territorialisation and the other acts as an inner milieu component. Employing the vocabulary of music once again, Deleuze and Guattari speak of a 'territorial counterpoint' when an expression that marks a territory resonates to a component of an external milieu.<sup>34</sup> When a territorial mark resonates to a component of an inner milieu, it is a 'territorial motif'.<sup>35</sup> In the realm of ethology for example, if a bird call marks a territory, this may relate to a territorial motif when it expresses fear, hunger or mating disposition or to a territorial counterpoint if it expresses rain, danger or sunset.

The level of the active self works according to a rational principle grounded in need, while the level of the passive self works according to an aesthetic principle grounded in pleasure. The more the leap from the realm of the active self into the realm of the passive self succeeds, the more the territory expresses joy, rather than necessity. In order to transmit joy towards its environment, an expression has to have found a hold in itself. Joy is a criterion of whether something is expressive in its own right, independent from its functional context.<sup>36</sup> Following the

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28 See *ibid*, p. 313.

29 See *ibid*.

30 See *ibid*, p. 315.

31 Heterogeneity expressed in a terminology of music. See Guattari 1992, p. 21.

32 See Deleuze/Guattari 1987, p. 314.

33 See Guattari 1992, p. 4 and Deleuze/Guattari 1987, p. 317.

34 See Deleuze/Guattari 1987, p. 317.

35 See *ibid*, p. 317.

36 See Ronald Bogue 1999a.



terminology of music, if there is joy, the territorial motif becomes a 'rhythmic character' and the territorial counterpoint transforms into a 'melodic landscape'.<sup>37</sup> It is a question of individuation of a self from its environment whether a process of territorialisation manages to emancipate itself from the actual, or whether the concern with need of the active self still expresses itself through the territorial mark. For example, a birdcall is an expression of something, while a bird song has become an expression in itself.<sup>38</sup>

Guattari calls aesthetic territorialisation the 'machinic dimension of subjectivity'.<sup>39</sup> As explained in the section on methodology in the introductory chapter above, a machine is a productive unit within the realm of intensity. A machine produces as long as its working parts communicate with each other. In a perspective that escapes the implication of the human, one can say that territories open up to each other through 'machinic couplings'.<sup>40</sup> Any kind of intensity to which a passive self relates can produce a machinic coupling and then a line of flight towards somewhere else will take place. Various machinic couplings can take place at the same time. When a given territorialisation expresses itself through various dimensions, such as sound, colour, odour, gesture and position at the same time, Deleuze and Guattari speak of 'machinic operas'<sup>41</sup> that get released. If machinism, the communication of intensities, has individuated itself both from the self that provided the resonance necessary for it to emerge, as well as from the material object in the given environment that provided the affective impulse to which the passive self related, 'consistency'<sup>42</sup> emerges. Consistency is a feeling that affect has acquired its own dimension of materiality.

### 3.2 EMPIRICAL EXPLORATIONS

In the realm of passive time, there are constantly processes of territorialisation taking place. A concept of territorialisation grounded in resonance helps to understand these processes not in terms of defence, but in terms of communication. Resonance characterizes territorialisation on a Guatemalan market as highly provisional, highly heterogeneous and ever-changing in adaptation to ever-changing inner and outer context-conditions. The notion of the self opens up. The empha-

37 See Deleuze/Guattari 1987, p. 318.

38 See Ronald Bogue 1999b: 'Minority, Territory, Music', in Jean Khalfa (ed): *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Gilles Deleuze*, pp. 127-8.

39 See Guattari 1992.

40 See Deleuze/Guattari 1987, pp. 333-35.

41 See *ibid.*, p. 330.

42 See *ibid.*, pp. 327-37.

sis in territorialisation by resonance is on interaction, rather than on separation. The first part of the chapter will give an account of the market as a plane of immanence. Duration, the virtual, has gone actual. Everything seems to be simple, heterogeneous and continuous. The second part of the chapter will give an account of territorialisation through resonance. Territorialisation through resonance is grounded in immanence. Against a general background of virtual movement and affect, there emerge ever-provisional actual forms of territory. The third part of the chapter will give an account of territorialisation beyond the focus on the human. Affect emancipates itself from the object that produces it and from the self that perceives it. Affect produces some kind of form in itself. The market, in this third part of the chapter, appears as a plane of consistency. Vitalism has been found in this chapter in forms of conceptualising selfhood in the realm of lived or 'passive time', below the level of the subject and its identity.

The markets on which this chapter is based are the market at '*La Terminal*'<sup>43</sup>, the market at '*La Democracia*'<sup>44</sup> and the '*Mercado de las Flores*'<sup>45</sup>. '*La Terminal*' is the central market for Quetzaltenango. Vendors from other markets buy wholesale produce by the sack in this market, but individuals also shop there. The market at the place in Xela that is called '*La Democracia*' is the second most important market in Quetzaltenango, occupying the entire centre of zone three of the town. An important part of commerce takes place outside the market hall, in the surrounding streets. Many people buy products from '*La Terminal*' to sell them here more expensively. Both markets are open daily from seven o'clock in the morning to six o'clock in the evening. '*Las Flores*' is an open market close to where I lived. It is the fourth market in size in Quetzaltenango. The market is open daily, but finishes at lunchtime. On sale is mainly fresh produce for the daily consumption of the people living nearby. In addition, this chapter draws on notes from visits to the periodic markets in the highland towns Momostenango<sup>46</sup> and San Francisco de los Altos. Momostenango is a town about an hour's bus-ride away from Quetzaltenango. Momostenango has a market in the middle of the town every Sunday. The centre of the town really consists of three marketplaces connected to each other. San Francisco de los Altos is a small town about an hour distance by bus ride from Quetzaltenango. Every Friday, there is a market occupying the centre of the town and all the streets branching off from that. The market in Momostenango, the market in San Francisco de los Altos and the two bigger markets in Quetzaltenango, '*La*

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43 English: '*La Terminal*' means 'the final bus station'.

44 English: '*La Democracia*' means 'democracy'.

45 English: '*Mercado de las Flores*' means 'flower market'.

46 See map in appendix.

*Terminal*' and '*La Democracia*', are the most important markets in the southern highlands of Guatemala, both in terms of size and in terms of the range that people and products travel to the market.

### 3.2.1 The Market as a Plane of Immanence

*In a first encounter, a crowded Guatemalan market, perceived through a Deleuzian lens, appears like a plane of immanence. Duration, the virtual, has gone actual. There are hardly any distinctions between interiority and exteriority. There seem to be few overall principles providing homogeneity. There is hardly any distinction between the human and the non-human or between waste and value at the market. There seems to be hardly any actual temporal structure. There is little reduction of complexity in the name of functionality. The threshold for becoming part of the market is very low. The given appears in terms of sensation, rather than rationality. In contrast to the previous chapter, though, duration here is not about depth, but about fleetingness and ephemerality. The following first section of the chapter will introduce the market as a plane of immanence by way of the three characteristics of duration<sup>47</sup>: simplicity, heterogeneity and continuity.*

#### 3.2.1.1 Simplicity

*Immanence – duration that has gone actual – is the absence of any distinction between interiority and exteriority.<sup>48</sup> The open market is a space of extreme poverty. The means of territorialisation, of staking some ground out of immanence, are the most basic. There seems to be little difference between having a stall and not having a stall. There are only the most basic versions of professional tools such as balances or bags. There seems to be a strong tendency towards simply picking up what is around anyway. Improvisation seems to be essential.*

#### **Everyday shopping at '*El Mercado de las Flores*'**

On Monday the first thing I do when I come to the market is to check the garlic that an old man is offering together with lots of herbs and spices in the front of the market, outside, at the wall. I ask for a *Quetzal* of garlic, and the seller *folds a bag out of a bit of old newspaper*. I fill one garlic more in, he agrees, I pay and I am off.

I ask for flour. The stall offers it per pound, from an open sack. I hesitate a bit. There is a higher risk of illnesses when buying from sacks of rice, pasta, flour, dried beans, dried sweetcorn, herbs or

47 See above, p. 21.

48 See Deleuze/Guattari 1987, p. 156.

sugar. It is said to be safer to buy the sterile pre-packed versions. But I agree and the selling woman fills some flour into a little red plastic bag.

After I agree to buy a pound of tomatoes, the woman takes out a balance. Two small plastic pots are held through four stripes to the respective ends of a straight wooden stick. The stick is held through two stripes as well at both ends. These are tight in the middle. There, the measuring woman holds the balance in equilibrium. Into the one pot, she puts bronze measures from a little set which together weights one kilo, but which consists of several measures of different weight that stick one in another, like the Russian babushka dolls. One weighs one pound, another one a quarter of a pound, another two ounces, another one ounce. You or she then fills up the other plastic pot with vegetables until the two plastic pots are in equilibrium.

**Manuel characterizes in a conversation the attitude towards business at the market:**

“You have two hands, two feet and a head. And you are going to use them.”

**3.2.1.2 Heterogeneity**

*Immanence – duration that has gone actual – is the absence of any supplementary dimension to that which transpires upon it.<sup>49</sup> There are few abstract overall principles that would provide homogeneity. Commerce in the market is organised by individual short-term opportunity. There is a vast heterogeneity of things all in one heap. There is a vast heterogeneity of people coming through by whatever means, each one on their own terms. Everything is singular. Everything is multiple. There is one singular line of territorialisation next to the other, over and over again, in great density. The whole market appears like a quilt. New bits, similar to what was there already, have been attached whenever there was more need, space or clients. The limits of the market are fuzzy. The same products can be bought at various places. Various sellers are mobile.*

**De-centred spatial Organisation**

The market at ‘La Terminal’ has moved the farthest away from the original market hall in Xela. There are two points of entry when coming from the main street. One leads into the open-air area. The other one is a paved street. It leads into the original centre of the market, the

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49 See Deleuze/Guattari 1987, p. 266.

hall. The **open-air area** is dominated by *pacas*<sup>50</sup>. These are huge heaps of second hand clothes from North America. They are piled up without order on the ground or on a number of tables for people to search through.

The path from the open-space area turns over into a **plastic- and tin-roof covered area**. This is the lower centre of the market. It is the most confusing part. Tin-roofs are installed provisionally. Paths are all over the place. I still get lost, feeling as if I cannot see the forest because of all the trees around me. I let myself be driven from the masses of people, trusting, by now, that I will come out somewhere. It feels like in a huge labyrinth. I leave brain-orientation aside and orientate myself by the objects and subjects that attract me on the way. In the middle of this area there is something like a quiet and traffic-less hole. There are a few *comedores*<sup>51</sup>, and some space to wash dishes. In its sudden quietness this part appears a bit like the inner side of a hurricane vortex.

The second point of entry to the market, when coming from the buses, is the **street**. It leads to the hall, the original centre of the market. The street is as long as the whole open part of the market. It is a centre of commerce in itself. Vegetables, textiles, batteries, plants, wooden chairs and tables as well as vegetables and fruits are on offer. This part of the market is still dominated by its function as street, though there is hardly space for a car to come through. People are sitting and selling along both sides. The street culminates in a place in front of the hall, which has become one more provisional market centre in itself. I would go there to look for spices, such as dried chili for example<sup>52</sup>.

The **hall** is dominated by its darkness and by an incredible density of objects and smells. Sweat, dust and objects such as meat or herbs intensify their odour in the closeness of the market hall. At some points, the alleys appear like avenues. Products from both sides of the way are stapled in a manner that they meet over the passers-by's heads. Those who are walking by go through a kind of forest of things and of smells –and of people, for usually it is very dense. On the right side, there is an entire row of butcher stalls. Some light comes through the wooden high roof and through the entrances from two sides. Nevertheless it is much darker than outside or than in the plastic-roofed area. One depends much more on one's sense of touch for orientation. No matter how dense it is, the women find space to balance the baskets full of objects on their heads.

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50 English: 'Paca' means 'bundle'. See below the section on *las pacas* towards the end of this chapter for more introduction and photo 12 in appendix.

51 Open places where one can buy and eat hot food.

52 See photo 11 in appendix.

The **ends of the market** on both sides are dominated by the intermeshing of sellers, rubbish, traffic and some police officers. Towards the bus terminal, the margins of the market have become one more centre of commerce in itself. Here, mainly fruits from open sacks are sold. People are sitting in the dust behind their produce. There is no roof against the sun or against the rain. The heap of rubbish in-between that owner-less dogs are searching for bits of food is stinking away right next to the people who are selling. At the other end, the breezes of exhaust fumes from the main street are producing a similar kind of natural limit to business activity.

### Objects (small selection)

**Fruits:** There are bananas, more than anything else. Twelve cost two European cents (translated). There are normal bananas, red *platanos*<sup>53</sup> and baby bananas; there are oranges and pineapples; there are coconuts and lemons; there are papaya and melons (watermelons and honey-lemons); there are clementines and *jacote* (tasting like apricots), grenadines, peaches apples, grapes and black currants. There are also various kinds of nuts, most of all peanuts. There are peanuts with shell, without shell, with chili, with barbacoa-sauce, with salt, and hacked into small bits.

**Vegetables:** There are black beans, red beans, green beans, thick beans and peas. After black beans maybe the most prevalent kind of vegetable are carrots, tomatoes, onions (normal size and small size, for salads), potatoes, cauliflower, broccoli and *huisciles*<sup>54</sup>. Tomatoes and onions are here indispensable in nearly every kind of food, as basic as chicken. There are avocado, peppers, cucumber, lettuce and white cabbage. There is a whole area where leaves of '*machate*'<sup>55</sup> are sold in huge bundles. The leaves have the size of a rolled-up sleeping bag. They are used to envelop the traditional *patches*.

**Bread:** There are various kinds of bread on offer. The main distinction maybe is between sweet bread (with sugar) and bread without sugar. Of the breads without sugar, *pan frances*<sup>56</sup> is the basic form (long, hot-dog bread format). There are various kinds of variation of *pan frances* on offer and also lots of sweet breads. The sweet breads taste like sand-cake. '*Coronas*' (crowns) are maybe the most popular

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53 Bananas for cooking. They look like a big sort of banana, but have a different taste.

54 A local vegetable. It is green and in texture and taste somewhere in-between courgettes and kohlrabi.

55 Leaves from a local plant that look in their huge size like banana-leaves. People use them for enveloping patches or *chuchos* (sweetcorn dumplings, filled with some spicy meat and gravy) to give them a better flavour.

56 English: 'French bread'.

of these. *Coronas* are served together with hot chocolate. Bread is a luxury here. Tortilla are basic; bread is additional. There is also a lot of toast bread on offer. It is packed in square packages and wrapped in plastic. People eat it with the traditional *patches*.

**Spices:** There are eleven kinds of chili on sale.<sup>57</sup> Basically there are red kinds of chili and green kinds of chili. The red chili is much hotter than the green one. Then there are dried and fresh kinds of chili. And there are big and small kinds of chili. The biggest one is the one that in Europe is known as peppers. It is called *chile pimienta*. The smallest sort of chili is the *chiltepe*. It has little more than peppercorn-size. *Chiltepe* is green. It is used for *chirmoles*, the salsa that goes with *tortillas*. The basic question is whether the chili is not so hot, hot or very hot. The hottest chili is the *chile siete caldos*. People talk of it with great respect. It is a proof of being *macho*<sup>58</sup> and being ‘washed with all waters’ if one dares to eat this one pure. I do not know anyone who would do this.

There is as well a considerable variety of technological and household objects on offer at the market. Everything is on sale at various places. In Momostenango at the market I have once counted 68 places where one could buy tomatoes.

### **Mobility**

Many of the sellers of ready-made food are mobile. There are the taco sellers, the banana bread or sweetcorn bread sellers, the jelly sellers, the ice-cream sellers, the yucca-puree seller, and the *enchilada*-, *doblada*-,<sup>59</sup> cake-, or hot dog sellers. There are as well the sellers of various sweets that one can buy. The sellers enter the buses, or go through the streets. Being more mobile than others is a business advantage. The *ceviche*<sup>60</sup> seller has a bike, the ice-cream sellers have their ice-cream in a little hand cart in front of them, the jelly sellers have their offerings on a tablet in front of their stomach. Those who sell plastic flowers or balloons are equally better off if they carry their objects on their back.<sup>61</sup>

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57 See photo 11 in appendix.

58 A ‘real’ man.

59 *Tacos*, *enchiladas*, *dobladas* are sweetcorn-based food that come with various toppings or fillings of vegetables, cheese, minced beef or spices.

60 A seafood cocktail.

61 See photo 8 in appendix.

### 3.2.1.3 Continuity

Immanence – duration that has gone actual – is the absence of any dualism.<sup>62</sup> There is hardly any distinction between human and non-human, and between waste and value at the market. Everything is just de-territorialized matter, swirling around, side by side. The luxury of lace borders is separated just by the plastic bag in which it has been carried to the market from the rubbish heap on which it is being sold.<sup>63</sup> The exhaust fumes from the big street are on one plane with the nose of the seller. An Evangelical preacher and women's underwear are sending out their messages side by side.<sup>64</sup> Turkey-necks, girl-necks and bottlenecks from Coca Cola are swirling around on the same level.<sup>65</sup> There is a tendency towards human bodies being just bits of moving flesh, on one level with all other forms of matter.

*Immanence is the absence of any dualism. There is no outside. Everything seems to be allowed. Everything is in.*<sup>66</sup> *Nearly the whole range of subjects and activities that life consists of are to be encountered in the market. The threshold for becoming part of the market is very low. There is no exclusion in the name of functionality.*

#### **Heterogeneity of Subjects inhabiting the Market not directly involved in Selling and Buying**

**Dogs.** In every market there are huge owner-less dogs who brush around one's legs. They always imply the risk of being bitten and contracting rabies.

**Preachers.** Some of them have a microphone, some of them have a cassette recorder or a complete stereo-set, some of them are equipped with accordion – the music will make their message flow better into people's minds. They have their pocket Bible with them, standing there and preaching. Most people pass by and some stop, listening for a while.

**Children** are everywhere. They are selling, hanging around their mother's skirts, passing the time that they have to stay with their mothers selling at the market. In Momostenango I met a group of children who made a game out of catching *gringos*<sup>67</sup>. The children were hanging themselves onto foreigners' legs and arms, asking for a bit of money. Then they run off to the next foreigner and the same procedure started again. ('There is another one!').

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62 See Deleuze/Guattari 1987, p. 20.

63 See photo 7 in appendix.

64 See photo 10 in appendix.

65 See photo 9 in appendix.

66 See *ibid.*, pp. 156-7.

67 Local pejorative term for European or US-looking foreigners.



**Drunk people**, usually men, lay around in the middle of the path. People make a curve around them when passing by and no one seems to bother. It happens about once or twice per market visit that one has to take care not to run over a drunk person.

**Gamblers.** Some people play for money on the market. There are three cards on a table. Then they change their position and the gambler has to guess the location of a particular card. If he wins, he gets 100 *Quetzales*; if he loses, he has to pay 100 *Quetzales*. A number of men stay around and watch.

### **Wide Range of Activities displayed at the Market**

Manuel and I are having lunch with a friend of his. Federico has done a degree in sociology in Guatemala City. He asks from time to time on what I am currently working. I tell him that I am currently working on the market. I tell him that I am interested in finding out what the market means for the people who are selling there all day long. Federico replies: 'I can tell you what the market means for them. It's their life.' I was contemplating afterwards about what that could mean. One really has the feeling that the people are living at the open market. All age groups are represented. People are talking, playing and fighting. They are bored, they are eating, breast-feeding, sleeping and urinating. The whole range of life seems to take place at the market. There seems to be no exclusion. The dominant impression is time, rather than space. The market is a place where one is often better off when one lets time go off its own way, letting the hours pass by. Things tend to happen in a way one cannot control or predict. One can just accept the way things are and inhabit what is available. One is better off when being flexible enough to leave action-orientation a bit aside whenever the situation demands this. There is a tendency towards the disappearance of any kind of structure into lived time.

### **Getting lost**

I take the path at the very right side of the market down to the bus-terminal in order not to get lost. I do not get lost on this way. I get lost, however, when I try to find a way back from the bus terminal. The bus terminal is located at the lower end of the market and I wait to go in the opposite direction, back towards the entrance of the Minerva<sup>68</sup>. I drop somewhere into a plastic-roofed path between two wooden selling-huts. There is not much on offer on this way. There are male toilets, which I remember from smell and sight. Then there is a candle-and a music-stall. This is already a bit more right side. I find my way into more lively areas through the chaos of paths and huts. Today, I remember that even at that stage I was not really worried that I might

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68 A Greek-style temple built by a former mayor.

get seriously lost. By now I have a feeling for the dimensions of the market. The previous times, however, the market was always like a world in itself. There are so overwhelmingly many impressions. There is so much immediacy. There is no space left in my mind for any kind of overview.

### Getting stuck

The market is a slow-go-area. The flow of people passing by often gets stuck, because of men with their hand carts loaded with saleable objects, such as chicken or turkeys in baskets, covered with a net, just the heads of the animals looking through, watching around, probably scared.<sup>69</sup> Slowness is also due to carrier-boys with huge platforms on wheels...just barely fitting in the more spacious paths that lead through the market. The marketers pay these people to carry their produce from the place where one is selling to the street where a car should be waiting. The paths are already filled from the passers-by. And then there are these self-made carts, which, despite the density of the paths, take half of the width of a path just for itself. Although the paths are already crowded with people, these boys always find their way through. It is like in the second class buses<sup>70</sup>, when people try to come through to enter or leave the bus: they manage to do so, although you think, 'no, there is no way, every single centimetre is already filled with human flesh, sweat and noises'.

### Waiting

I am with *Doña Toria* and Don Arsenio at the market at '*La Terminal*'. After the first five minutes of entering the marketplace, Don Arsenio has disappeared. *Doña Toria* and I sit down on some stairs and wait for him. We are looking around, chatting. Sometimes *Doña Toria* stops the sellers who are passing by to negotiate the prices and have a look at the products. I am amazed by her tranquillity. There seems to be something like the art of waiting. For the first fifteen minutes or so, my mind is focused on Don Arsenio. I get a bit tense, because he lets us wait there for such a long time. *Doña Toria*, by contrast, seems to me to be just sitting there. She seems to give herself into the times at the market, forgetting what we are waiting for. The more I imitate that from her, the less tense and bad humoured I am. The less I focus on what we are waiting for, the less this time is a lost time. After more than an hour or so, *Doña Toria* finally says: 'I wonder where he is.' She goes back to look for her husband. When she does not<sup>71</sup> find him, we leave. By chance, we meet him at the next crossing of two paths.

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69 See photo 9 in appendix.

70 See below chapter 5 of this book.

71 Sweetcorn-based food to go.

He declares that he was looking for us. It is only a few minutes that she seems to be angry with him.

### 3.2.2 The Passive Self: Territorialisation through Resonance

*The market is a realm of action. There is a clear goal: marketers come to the market in order to exchange objects against money. In sympathy with Deleuze and Guattari one can say that doing business is grounded in movements of territorialisation. The market then is an assemblage<sup>72</sup> of innumerable singular lines of territorialisation. Territories at the market are hardly separated from each other by material walls (as in shops) or by formal regulations. There is little actual territorialisation. This makes the dimension of virtual territorialisation particularly important. On the level of the virtual, prior to the realm of structure, the self passively negotiates its territories in resonance to affective impulses. It receives these impulses from the actual given. Everything is movement and affect. Through resonance to perceived intensities, the self stakes out some kind of home ground out of the immanence of movement and affect. Then, action can take place.*

#### 3.2.2.1 Milieus and Territories

*Territorialisation grounded in resonance emphasizes vulnerability. The focus is on the communication between the self and the dynamics within given milieus. Form is improvised and ever only emerging – ‘todo sirve’.*

##### 3.2.2.1.1 Complex Synchronisations<sup>73</sup>

*Territorialisation consists in a complex synchronisation of global and local, actual and virtual movements. Many of the people to whom I speak receive their objects from far away. At the market in Quetzaltenango, second-hand clothes come from the United States, firewood comes from the Pacific Coast and vegetables come from Guatemala City. The movements of objects delineate a given business milieu. Rather than actively choosing what he or she would like to do, the marketer passively stakes out his or her business territory by connecting to what is available. In the third example, movements such as the ageing of food, appetite, heat, transport or wood show how the market territory communicates with various milieu-components.*

72 A conjunction. See Deleuze/Guattari 1987, pp. 503-5 and in passim.

73 See Deleuze/Guattari 1987, p. 329.

### **Indigenous elderly woman, maybe sixty years old, selling second hand clothes at ‘La Terminal’**

She is sitting under a plastic roof behind her heap of clothes on the floor with some younger people. She tells me that it is difficult to earn a living here at the market. Sometimes one can earn 50 *Quetzales* a day. The clothes are delivered from the US to Guatemala City. From there they come to Xela, where she gets them for 5-6000 *Quetzales* (can that be?). Then she has to sell them. Sometimes things just do not go out. She sells the clothes for five, ten or 20 *Quetzales*. (*Doña Toria* later holds that from 50 *Centavos* even, you get some good clothes there at times!) Sometimes at the end of a day, her stall has made 100 *Quetzales* deficit, the woman tells me.

### **Young indigenous woman, 20 years old, selling vegetables at ‘La Democracia’**

I ask the woman whether she also takes part in the process of cultivating the vegetables. At first, she does not understand me. No, she buys them from the market at ‘*La Terminal*’. Every morning there the people come with their vans from Guatemala City and sell the vegetables to the *rescatones* (middlemen). They sell per sack or per case, and therefore the products at ‘*La Terminal*’ are at their cheapest. Around Xela, it is too cold to grow tomatoes, for example. At the coast, only tropical fruits are grown. This is why every morning the vegetables come all the way from Guate<sup>74</sup>. The young woman is less involved in the life-process of the vegetable than I had assumed!

### ***Doña Olga, about 60 years old, selling atol de arroz con leche and atol de helote*<sup>75</sup>**

*Doña Toria*: ‘When *Doña Olga* sells all her *chuchos* and all her *atoles* in a day, then maybe in the end she has 100 *Quetzales* for a day’s work. But business is irregular. The food is her capital. The *chuchos*. The *atoles*. But the food is getting old quickly. And then no one wants to buy it anymore. Then it does not get sold anymore. In the afternoon already this is the case. Until twelve o’clock noon the *atoles* get sold. Thereafter people just want lunch. Business is discontinuous, difficult to plan. One day yes, one day no. Now, in July, no one wants to drink *atol*. It is too warm. Everyone just wants to drink *aguas gaseosas*, soft drinks. Besides, so much money has to be deducted, if you have to pay men to carry the big baskets. For the market stall maybe 100 *Quetzales* a month. The family has bought a new car recently, due to long-term health-problems of *Doña Olga*’s daughter and son-in-law. Now,

74 Local abbreviation for Guatemala City.

75 *Atoles* are home-made indigenous drinks from milk-rice (‘*arroz de leche*’) and sweetcorn cob (‘*helote*’).

Mario (her son-in-law) collects *Doña Olga* from the market by car in the evening, and gets her there in the morning. So now it is easier. Before and if this does not work, *Doña Olga* is walking, with the basket full of *atoles* on her head. This is heavy! Sometimes the basket changes position and *atol* is running out. And it takes so much firewood, if one is selling *atoles* every day. Sometimes the wood does not start burning then, as in the old times, when it was fetched in the forests around Xela. Now the wood is coming from the Pacific coast. It is burning well.'

### 3.2.2.1.2 Chances for Territorialisation

*People who sell on the Guatemalan market do not have professions, but formally unqualified jobs. This seems to make passive resonance to chances for territorialisation particularly important. Gender impacts the chances for territorialisation: it determines the degree of de-territorialisation from a given milieu that is available to one. In the following example a little boy speaks about chances of a different future through education, through different work experiences and through having control over a part of the money he earns. By contrast, a young woman is given far fewer chances to form her own territory on the market. She did not go to school. She can keep no money for herself. She works full time seven days a week. She sees her past, present and future as the same. Nevertheless, she still has some chances for territorialisation. These are characteristically different from those of a boy. Her perspectives are marriage and pregnancy.*

**Little boy, selling Jeans at the market at 'La Terminal'**, at a main path on the left side of the market. He is 11 years old, and has been selling at the market for one year. He is in the fifth grade at school. Now it is the holiday season, but he is working only half days, so that he can work and go to school at the same time. He started working at the age of eight. As a shoemaker! He did this for four years, until he started at the market. He has five siblings at home. 'Home' is somewhere in Xela. None of the others is working at the market. One is making *corte* (traditional indigenous skirts) and one is making *hilo* (thread). The others are still small. They all live together. He does not know many people at the market.

The boy is employed by the lady who has rented the stall in front of which he is sitting. He has to sell ten pairs of jeans per day in order to satisfy her. He earns 40 *Quetzales* a week. Q25 of that he gives for *gastos* (expenses) to his family. 15 are for himself. With that he buys 'his things' – not sweets, his clothes! The shoes and the trousers and the sweater he is wearing! It is enough for him, he says, he is getting along. He met the woman for whom he is working because she is his

neighbour. She asked him. The jeans he is selling cost 18 to 20 *Quetzales* each – the woman seems to make a good business with giving him Q40<sup>76</sup> a week!

### **Young indigenous woman, 20 years old, selling vegetables at ‘La Democracia’**

A pound of tomatoes costs Q1.40, negotiable to Q1.25. The young woman earns about 20 *Quetzales* a day. None of this money is for herself. She has to give it to her parents. Her three siblings are selling at the market as well. By combining all their money, they can get by. The young woman never went to school. I ask her whether she can read and write and she vaguely says that she nearly taught herself how to do it. She is not married yet, does not have children. She is 20 years old by now, and for five years she has had this place at the market. She has always worked at the market, before getting her own market stall she has helped out at the place of her mother or elder siblings. She thinks that she will always do this job, maybe 40 years longer. Every day, seven days a week, from eight o’clock in the morning to six o’clock in the evening she is sitting there.

#### **3.2.2.1.3 Territory Converters<sup>77</sup>**

*A given territory passively changes when there is a change in the underlying dynamics of the milieu of which it is a product. Territorialisation of the two atol-sellers in the following examples consists of doing the same movements over and over again, for years and years. Thereby, a territory emerges. Various milieu-components impact territorialisation. These are given different power to convert the territory. In the following two examples, one of the two atol-sellers allows her body to become a relatively stronger territorial motif to her work activities than the other. When her legs started to hurt, Doña Toria responded: She stopped selling in the streets and set up a permanent stall at a market. Later still, she stopped selling at all. Through giving resonance to the intensity of hurting, there occurred a relative conversion of energy-flows. Territorialisation converted into a direction that seemed a more fitting expression of the dynamics underlying her current situation. Also in relation to the money she earns, Doña Toria manages to convert the given work-milieu in a way that allows her to decide where the money goes. By contrast, Doña Olga does not allow her tiredness to convert her working rhythms. Her body sets up tiredness as a poster<sup>78</sup>. It signals: ‘Care for me. You have to sleep more or*

76 Short for Quetzal, the Guatemalan currency.

77 See Deleuze/Guattari 1987, pp. 325-6.

78 See above, p. 103.

*I will collapse. You are violating the critical amount of sleep that I need in order to support you.' But this poster is not allowed to become a territorial motif to the working activities. Doña Olga ignores it.*

**Doña Toria, about 60 years old, selling atol de arroz con leche and atol de helote.**

'We have been suffering a lot', she says. *Doña Toria* had sold *atoles* from her 15<sup>th</sup> birthday onwards. *Atol de arroz con leche* and *atol de helote*. First in the street, with a carrying bag full of glasses and a can full of *atol*. She did not sell at the bus terminal to the bus passengers – that seemed her to be too dangerous, but she went through the streets and knocked at front doors. At some point, she did not want to sell in the streets anymore and started selling on the market. Later still, the legs hurt so much that she stopped doing this as well.

Now she helps out washing the glasses for *Doña Olga* from time to time. *Doña Olga* is selling *atoles* and *chuchos* at the '*Mercado de la Democracia*'. *Doña Olga* is paying *Doña Toria* ten *Quetzales* for washing the glasses. *Don Arsenio* does not know about this payment. He thinks she is doing the job for free. If he knew about it, she would have to give *him* the ten *Quetzales*. She keeps the money for herself. What is she buying with the money for herself? For what is she saving? The ten *Quetzales* that she earned last time, *Doña Toria* spent on a packet of sugar...there is always something!

Sometimes *Doña Toria* still thinks about selling on the close to home '*Mercado de las Flores*', but that would mean that everything at home would remain undone – most of all the washing. And there would be no one to look after her mother. It is easier to sell with a partner, having two people selling there. However, her mother is too old and too weak to accompany her. If her younger child had been a daughter, it would have come to the market with her. Since it is a son, this is not possible.

**Doña Olga, about 60 years old, selling atoles de arroz con leche y de helote**

*Doña Toria*: '*Doña Olga* goes to bed at one a.m. and gets up at four a.m., three hours later, to get herself ready for the market. In the morning, the *atol* has to be prepared; in the evening, glasses have to be cleaned.' 'Why does *Doña Olga* have to make her life difficult with such inconvenient working times?', I ask: 'Why can she not get up at seven o'clock in the morning, go to the market at nine o'clock, get her utensils together at three o'clock in the afternoon, go home, clean the glasses and at six o'clock in the evening end her working day?' 'No,' *Doña Toria* replies. 'At six o'clock in the evening the market closes down and only towards the end, between five o'clock and six o'clock, glasses are coming back. *If they come back at all!*'

### 3.2.2.2 Rhythm

*Rhythm emerges at the border between milieus. Territory develops when rhythm becomes actual. Rhythm emerges through resonance. At the Guatemalan market, passive resonance is crucial due to the openness of a market-territory. There is no clear-cut differentiation of territories. Territories constantly open up, overlap and communicate in ways that one can just engage with. Rhythm expresses itself through nuances, such as looking away, through building up sound walls and through gestures. Passive territorialisation requires tacit perception, tolerance and attentiveness.*

#### Mugging

*The rhythm at the market receives impulses from mugging. The marketers are aware of the possibility of mugging. However, they passively have to live with this risk. The only way to protect oneself seems to be to give resonance to what is going on.*

**Luis, about 30 years old, selling herbs and spices.** Good, he says, that he hasn't got to go to the capital himself, because it is so dangerous there. Robbery, assaults – in Xela it is dangerous as well, but not that much. Yes, of course, one has to take care, otherwise they steal one's money – or the spices. (After saying this, he himself tries to cheat me on the spices I buy from him. I receive about one third of what one usually gets for one *Quetzal*).

**Doña Toria, about 60 years old, selling atoles de arroz con leche and atol de helote.** 'This job is difficult. You turn around for a moment to give out some change, you turn your back to the bag with the atol and the glasses, and then someone nicks the bag with all the glasses.' Doña Toria stands up and performs the movements. 'Glasses disappear, glasses break, and one cuts one's finger with the broken pieces of glass.'

#### Competition

*The rhythm at the market receives impulses from competition. Competition takes place between market sellers who offer the same produce and therefore occupy overlapping milieus. The atol seller in the following example passively has to live with the aggression of fellow sellers. There is not much she can do. The atol is the only way she can earn some money, but so it is for the other sellers as well.*



**Doña Toria, selling *atoles de arroz con leche* and *atol de helote*.**

‘When I was selling *atoles* at the market, once there was this woman who was selling *atoles* near me. She pushed me when I passed her way, coming with all my *atoles* and glasses. All the glasses broke. By now, she is talking to me again, since I am no longer selling at the market. Often, people are making nasty remarks about you behind your back, or making nasty remarks to the clients behind your back when they return the glasses. “Her *atol* does not taste good,” for example. If one would sit down at the end of the market, maybe the marketers would not say that much, but there the police might ask one for the health certificate that most people do not have, although they are required to have it. The police and the *muni*<sup>79</sup> want to keep the market centralised. There are always problems, but I also made a lot of friends.’

**Indigenous elderly woman, about sixty years old, selling second hand clothes.**

‘In earlier times,’ she tells me, ‘things were different at ‘La Terminal’.’ There was only an open field. No plastic roofs, far less people. Then, afterwards, it became difficult to get a place. One had to rent a market stall for quite a bit of money.’ She did not want to tell me how much this was. At first, in those times, one of them had to come at 3 a.m. to defend the rented space, because other people would try to build up their produce as well at this good position. Now the market is closed at night and the stall is closed off. It is neither necessary nor possible anymore to negotiate one’s space in the middle of the night.

**Manuel.** ‘If you would sit down at the ‘Parque Central’ with some shoe-polish to join the row of shoe-shiners, you would get heavy problems with the boys already working there. They would probably hit you right away and make you leave their territory. The Parque Central is in strong hands. It seems to be informal work what is going on there, but no newcomer would be allowed in there. After all, shoe shining is a quite well regarded job here in Xela. The worst you can do to make a living is currently fire breathing. That is really low.’

## Music

*The rhythm at the market receives impulses from music. Music stakes out territories. Through music, rhythms in-between territories express themselves.*

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79 Colloquial abbreviation for ‘municipal authority’.

**Young indigenous woman, 20 years old, selling vegetables at ‘La Democracia’** In the background there is music, from a big loud-speaker on the street. This music is playing as loud as it currently does all day long. I ask her whether she likes the music that is playing now (techno). She does not like it. But at other times, she likes the music. Her favourite is Dido<sup>80</sup> and she also likes *Vincente Fernández*<sup>81</sup>, *Los Tigres del Norte*<sup>82</sup> and *Los Bukis*<sup>83</sup>.

### 3.2.2.3 Formal Impositions

*Milieus and stratifications intermesh.*<sup>84</sup> *Milieus build up through dynamics within the realm of lived time. They express themselves through affective vibrations. Impositions, by contrast, are stratifications. They capture. They are static. The imposed stratifications at the open market, however, are likely to be encountered through affective resonance, as if they were milieu. At the open market, people seem to have very little means to meet imposed stratifications in a formal way, be these political, economic or natural. Informal rules and local knowledge seem to be important in order to know what is really going on, what one really has to expect and what one can really do in order to come through. Improvisation and risk-taking seem to substitute for mechanical rule-fulfilment.*

### Political Impositions

**Manuel.** ‘Working at the market is tough. Some weeks ago, when I was buying salad at the market, there were these two women fighting. They nearly hit each other. The one was shouting: “I am older, I am far longer here at this place – for so many years. This is my place!” The other countered, as well shouting: “I have got the papers that show that this place is legally my place. I have got the ticket!”’

**Doña Toria on the question: ‘What are the requirements for entry to selling at the market?’** ‘Formally, one needs a ticket from the

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80 A contemporary British pop star.

81 The most famous interpret of Mexican *ranchéras*-music, a genre that is concerned with facts and fantasies surrounding the everyday life of Mexican ranch owners.

82 A *rancheras* band whose music expresses specifically the culture of those Mexican people who live close to the border between the United States and Mexico – on both sides of the border. This type of *ranchéras* is called *TexMex*, a mixture of the words Texas and Mexico.

83 A Mexican band specialised on romantic songs. The band was most famous during the eighties. By now, the singer of the band, Marco Antonio Solís, has embarked on a solo career.

84 See Deleuze/Guattari 1987, p. 337.

market administrator, and a health certificate by the *municipalidad*. The latter states that one got one's lungs checked and got done other tests to rule out the possibility of introducing serious illnesses to the market. People often do not have these papers. It is too expensive to achieve them, given the small amount of money that they earn.'

## Economic Impositions

### Everyday shopping at 'El Mercado de las Flores'

I want to cook these ready-made chicken breasts from 'Pollo-Rey'<sup>85</sup> that I found three days ago. The 'Mercado de las Flores' offered them for 14 *Quetzales* and the supermarket 'La Despensa Familiar' had them for 19 *Quetzales*. At the open market, they are lying outside the refrigerator, for clients to watch. When I ask the seller, she admits that they have to be chilled and usually she has them in the refrigerator, just now they are out for prospective clients to watch. This means that they could not be frozen again?

On Friday, I am searching for a stick of margarine 'Mirasol'. On the shelf of the place I stop by, I discover only a large pack of this brand, so I think the stall does not have what I am looking for. But the selling woman opens the pack and takes out one of the sticks, closes the pack again and puts it back onto the shelf.

## Impositions by Nature

### Everyday shopping at the 'Mercado de las Flores'

I go to the market to get some lime for a carrot salad. When I enter the hall, there is still a slight shock of excessive colour and nature acting on me from all sides. The seller to whom I go this time is the one where I bought cauliflower yesterday. She smiles at me and seems to recognise me. *She is breast-feeding a kid*. I ask for four limes for a *Quetzal*. We agree on three. She stands up from her seat, holding her kid to her breast that goes on drinking. She leans over her vegetables while stretching out her hand towards me to put the three limes into a plastic bag. Then she receives her *Quetzal* and sits down again.

I also want to get some 'Salsa Natura'. This is a popular brand of a ready-made tomato sauce with different flavours, added vegetables or meat. At the stall where I ask I am served by an elderly, nearly deaf lady who seems to be illiterate. She holds to me a plastic pot with some 'Salsa Natura'- packages. All have 'Ranchera'-flavour (tomato with hot chili). I tell her that I am looking for cheese-flavour. It takes

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85 Local brand of plastic-wrapped chickens.

some time until she understands the difference. I read out to her the labels on the packages that she offers me.

### 3.2.2.4 Joy

*According to Deleuze and Guattari, territorialisation can be differentiated into different degrees of individuation. The more expressive a particular act of territorialisation is, the more individuated is the territory. When there is joy emerging from within, territorialisation transforms from an expression of something through territorial motifs and counterpoints, into an expression in its own right through rhythmic characters and melodic landscapes.*

### Playfulness

*The two shoeshine boys in the following example express an intense urge to do something by all means available. Often in the street-kid-working milieu that they inhabit, sniffing glue seems to be the only means available to come through the miseries of daily life. One of the two boys in fact quit sniffing glue only a year ago. In the encounters I had with the two, they seem to express a line of flight from the miserable milieu of the street towards somewhere else. This energy seems to express itself in relation to religion in the fifth paragraph, in relation to education in the fourth paragraph, with regard to reliability in the first paragraph, in relation to solidarity and leisure in the third and sixth paragraph, and regarding childhood play in the seventh paragraph.*

*The two boys seem to earn far more money from their energetic and joyful encounters with tourists than from shoe shining. Their begging seems to me to express itself in an incredibly playful way. It looks as if the two have managed to build up home ground for themselves. There seems to be some kind of distance from the everyday misery of life in the street. From their own territories, it seems to me, they launch their own actions. Because they launch their own actions, rather than clinging to the actions of others, the two boys do not appear as if they were begging.*

*There are several stages of territorialisation present here: in the first and third paragraph, the setting up of posters demonstrates the possessiveness of a territory. In the third, fifth, sixth and seventh paragraph there is communication of territorial marks with internal motifs and external counterpoints. In paragraphs three and seven expressiveness emancipates itself from its functional context. It seems to me as if there is joy in its own right, not just making fun in order to motivate people to give more money.*

Today I have lunch with the shoeshine boys that I have met recently, Ricardo and Pablo. I meet Ricardo in front of 'Tecún'<sup>86</sup>, the place where I write my emails. He offers to shine my shoes and I accept. We first met about half a year ago. I was having a pizza outside 'Tecún', and he and his friend Pablo came along and wanted to have some money. I gave the first five *Quetzales*, which was a lot. I told him to share with the second one, but *he said that would not work*. So I told the second one, Ricardo, next time he would get something. Some months later, I met Ricardo again, and he asked me for money. I said 'No.' This was again at 'Tecún'. *He reminded me of my promise to give him something next time*. I said, 'Yes, you are right,' and gave him five *Quetzales*. Then we met twice in the 'Parque Central'. He asked me for a *Quetzal* and I gave him one.

Then I met him once with Manuel at 12 December, the *Día de la Virgen de Guadalupe*<sup>87</sup>, in the 'Parque Central' when this was very crowded. I told him, I would invite him for a Coke to 'Tecún'. He suggested, I could do so right now. I said, 'No, not now, at the moment I do not have time.' He suggested, I could give him the money for the Coke and he would go and get it himself. And I replied, 'We could go together and talk a bit.' And that was where he seemed to get scared. He looked at me suddenly with much more distance. Then I gave him a *Quetzal* and off he went. Since then I have not seen him again. When I come through the *Parque Central* just then he is not there. Before the 12<sup>th</sup> of December he was always there, somehow.

Four days ago I met the two of them in the 'Parque Central', and I had already been looking to see whether or not I would see him. He recognised me and came running over, his friend behind him. Ricardo was *fencing me off from his friend*. I was *his* contact. *He asked for two Quetzales, one for him and one for his friend*. It felt to me as if we were both glad to meet again. Today we sat down in front of Tecún. He is shining my shoes. He offers *to teach me some Quiché*<sup>88</sup>. *I invite him for a Coke and a pizza*. Then his friend comes. He gets a Coke as well and we all have one third of the pizza. They borrow a pencil from a man at another table and ask me for some words in *Quiché* that I would like to have written down in my notebook. I tell them that I have to see the words in front of me; otherwise they would not stick in my head. The taller and probably older one, Pablo, is writing and the other one is pronouncing the word in *Quiché* that I ask for in Spanish. That is funny!

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86 Read [tɜ:kʉ:n]. A local pub, called after Tecún Umán, the Maya emperor who fought and lost the battle against the Spanish conquistadors.

87 An event in the catholic year-cycle.

88 One of the 23 Indian languages in Guatemala, spoken around Quetzaltenango.

Many of the shoeshine kids dope themselves with *pegamento* (glue), but my two companions seem to be both very clear. They say that maybe they will go to school in Cantel<sup>89</sup> in some weeks, at the beginning of February. Ricardo, the smaller one, will go into the third grade of primary school. He is from Momostenango, where everyone speaks Quiché all day long. But from beginning on he has learned to speak Spanish as well. Ricardo tells me about the classes that he is going to have. Today he has to buy *cuadernos* (exercise books). For his maths, Spanish, *Quiché*, social study and natural study classes - seven altogether. Each of them costs Q3.50. He has to earn this money all by himself, through shoe shining! The other one, Pablo, tells me that one could earn 20 *Quetzales* a day through shoe shining. I am very impressed. But it is already about twelve o'clock noon and Ricardo has, including the 2 *Quetzales* from shining my shoes, made only 4 *Quetzales* so far.

Then, Ricardo *starts humming along with the music by Bronco*<sup>90</sup> that emerges in the background. I ask him whether he likes it and he nods. Then I ask whether he also likes the music by *Los Bukis*. He tells me that he is Evangelical and that he is not allowed to listen to such music, just to other music. So, I ask for his favourite bands. He replies that his favourite music is *music that is about God, about the love of God and for God*.

Then he asks me whether I have been to the swimming pool in Almolonga. I tell him that I have, but that this is already half a year ago. Ricardo tells me that he goes there once a month. He asks when I will be going next time, and whether Manuel and me could not cross the 'Parque Central' so that he could come with us! This Sunday he would be *helping to build a wall of a house*, but maybe next Sunday?

Ricardo has been working for one year by now as a shoe-shiner, he tells me. But when he goes to school, he will stop doing so. 'No more shoe-shining', he says. We are making collapsible hats and boats from paper. The two boys can fold a ship into a shirt (of the captain from a drowned ship that was hit by a lightning), and then fold this shirt into a pistol. Ricardo can even fold a camera out of paper! I ask them if it has been difficult to start work at the 'Parque'. Ricardo says 'no', the other says 'yes'. I ask them what they think would happen if I would come to the 'Parque Central' with shoe shine equipment...as a new competitor! They laugh, but do not really reply. Then I say that I have to go to write my email. I pay and we are leaving. When I return from the Internet-café, Ricardo is still there, looking for clients. We smile and greet each other.

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89 A village a distance of about 20 minutes bus-ride from Quetzaltenango.

90 A Mexican rancheras band that was very popular during the eighties.

## Idleness

*Market sellers seem to just sit there a lot of the time, passive, in-between their objects. When a client comes, he is directly addressed and served. There is little aggressiveness in the approaching of clients. Despite the pressure to make money by any means, sometimes the functional seems to change towards just enjoying oneself, sitting there and letting time pass by, seeing what happens. This kind of joy seems to be deeper than the functional. It inhabits the time at the market through the giving of one's own time. These moments of idleness are reminiscent of the depth of duration in the traditional home.<sup>91</sup> Among this idleness, communication easily takes off. Then, territorialisation seems to emancipate itself from the necessities of daily misery. Through the joy that the idleness expresses, territorialisation seems to become something in itself.*

### **Young indigenous woman, 20 years old, selling vegetables at 'La Democracia'**

Here at the market everything takes a lot of time. The young woman is sitting there under a sunshade between raffia baskets and wide trays. The tomatoes are placed on a colourful cloth; the *huisciles* are bedded on *machate*.

There is a lot of communication. Market women are passing by, greeting in *Quiché* or Spanish, then for a short while we are 'alone' again. I sit down at the steps beside the seller and start writing some notes down. Then the young woman starts talking to me and I realise that all the market women around are observing what I am doing. One of them says, '*jno se va!*' (she is not going away). I raise my head to the seller and ask her whether I am sitting at her place. She says, 'No, don't worry. Keep sitting there, it is all right.' All around are laughing. Then the young vegetable seller starts talking to me, asking me what I am doing, and we start a conversation.

### **Doña Olga**

I go over to *Doña Olga*. She is selling in the row where all the *comedores* are offering food-to-go: *Enchiladas*, *dobladas*, *chuchos* and *atoles*. She is standing on a turned over case. In front of her, on the counter, different clay pots with *atoles* are lined up. The *chuchos* are in a raffia basket, wrapped in-between woven cloth to keep them warm. Then there is a bucket with water to wash the used glasses and plastic mugs. Behind her there are staples of big raffia baskets. In

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91 See chapter 2 above.

these the cans of *atol* are carried to and from the market on *Doña Olga*'s head. Along the half-high wall that separates *Doña Olga*'s stall from her neighbour's place is a bench where her clients can sit while eating and drinking. As well in front of the counter there is a bench. Maybe altogether six people find place there at a time. In front of the place people are passing by. *Doña Olga* is greeting many and many are greeting her. Now, in the afternoon at about 4:30 p.m. there are still a few people around, eating her *chuchos* and drinking her *atoles*. A young girl is sitting there when I arrive, then a middle-aged couple is coming along and an elderly man with some electric equipment that he is carrying around. *Doña Olga* is cleaning big leaves of *machate* with a leafstalk. This is to wrap the *chuchos* she will be preparing tonight for tomorrow. She seems tired, yawns often. She appears very calm, somehow wise as she is sitting there, inviting people, chatting with each one a bit about personal occurrences. She appears smiling, tired and friendly. She seems happy to see me. She offers me one of her *atoles de helote* and an *enchilada* from a neighbour's *comedor*. I tell her what my research is about and she seems interested.

### 3.2.3 Territorialisation and Consistency

*From a machinic point of view, the passive self is dissolved. On the plane of immanence, territorialisation starts as an affective impulse from the given and then carries this away towards somewhere else. Territorialisation takes place out there, in the given. There is a strong feeling of being sucked up by the affective mass of a market. One is touched by a sensual complexity that goes far beyond the tacit range of the actual objects. There is a constant bodily alert. One orientates oneself by vibration. The entire body becomes a registering surface when moving through the intensity of a market. Intensities have individuated themselves from the material contexts out of which they emerged. Out of the machinic coupling of intensities there emerges a plane of consistency. Objects as well as subjects seem to dissolve into one affective mass through their communicating territorialising expressions.*

#### 3.2.3.1 Vision

##### **Green-ness**<sup>92</sup>

Vegetables and fruits on the market are openly lying there, just so, in huge heaps on the tables or on the ground. Their colours and smells come to you, instead of you coming to them. They address you from all sides, often also from the ground where people are sitting in front

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92 See photo 11 in appendix on red-ness.



of what they have on offer. The intensity of colour is amazing. The green of broccoli, carrot- and onion-weeds, huisciles, cucumbers, avocado and lettuce. Of course, on one level there is the heap of green and here are you, clearly separated. But more dominant is the intuitive engagement with the market's manifold durations through my duration. I pay attention to the dynamic of merging that takes place on an affective level between the greenness and me. On an affective level, one becomes green. When one enters the market hall in Zunil<sup>93</sup> green is everywhere. It is not just a visual encounter. It is much more. It seems to transgress limits of different levels of sense-impressions. Green seems to be 'loud', occupying frequencies. It seems to be big and strong. It is an active movement of sensation that goes far beyond the actual limits of the material form of the objects. In this elusive form, the colour of the vegetables merges with their smell, with the silencing movement of dust and with the yelling and chatting of people. All becomes one, opening up towards each other.

### Intimacy

Brassieres are displayed in a way that goes clearly beyond need-fulfilment and into the realm of desire and fantasy. Big sizes with big cups in skin colour are lined up. Men's underwear by contrast is not displayed that openly, but rather packed in plastic and sold in packs of three. When I take a photo of lined-up brassieres, the two men who are selling them are laughing. It seems to me that they would not have laughed in the same way if I had taken a photo of a vegetable stall. Manuel found the photo to be in bad taste. To his mother I would not even have shown it. At home, *Doña* Toria and *Doña* Maria dry their brassieres behind the chicken hut, out of sight of the patio. Although there is no sun and the washing takes two additional days to dry. There seems to be something shameful surrounding the intimacy of brassieres. This intensity is made productive when they are displayed like posters in the market stalls. Once at the market in Guatemala City, I observe two boys, about nine and 11 years old, selling brassieres. They obviously have great fun with these things, despite all their business-orientation. It is about imagination. At stake seems to be flesh, pleasure, rawness and adulthood. It also looks to me, however, like a disrespectful sell-out of female sexuality that attacks or attracts the passer-by from afar. Colour comes in here as well. If the brassieres would have been black or coloured, they might look like fashion, like bikinis. But these huge skin-coloured ones just look scary.

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93 A village a distance of about 15 minutes bus-ride from Quetzaltenango.

### 3.2.3.2 Smell

#### Meat Odours

Meat is sold openly, as are so many other things here on the market. It has a very strong odour, hanging or lying around in long rows. During my first market visits, I thought that I would fall over unconscious from the smell if I walk too slowly through this row. I cannot imagine how anyone could sell this produce all day long! When I tell *Doña Toria* about this impression, she says that she does not even notice the smell of the flesh. Another impression is the view of so many bloody cadaver-bits lying around this row...and the people in-between the displays seem to be walking through a forest of dead flesh. In the back of the stall, behind the seller, cow cadavers hang on hooks. On the counter cow-feet are displayed, which people here use for soup. Then there are all kinds of different sausages: *salchicha*, *chorizo* and *longaniza*.<sup>94</sup> The various kinds of sausages are hanging in long strings like a kind of ornament from a rod above the heads of the people who are selling at the counter. Then there are the inner organs of the animals – heart, liver and kidneys. These are on offer at the counter as well. A wave of odour merges with the sight of rawness and pure nature, forcing one into a momentary assemblage with the product when passing by. Flies increase the sensation of disgust from the odour as well. They alight on the same meat parts that are soon sold.

#### Nice Odours

Many odours work like sensual advertisement – like perfumes. This goes for things that are sold in slices, such as watermelon, pineapple and coconut. It goes also for the things that are sold from sacks, such as the various kinds of chili. The fresh leather from the shoe stalls transmits waves of odour passing by. Then there are the perfumed candles and the dried medicinal plants such as leaves from the rose of Jamaica, Camomile or leaves from the fig tree.

#### Sweat Odours

From time to time (actually rather frequently) one gets touched by a wave of odour of cold sweat. This happens when someone who has not taken a bath recently passes close by. Diego<sup>95</sup> says that it is not just scarcity of water, but really culture that makes people in the highlands often wash themselves only once a week, or once every fortnight. People think that their skin would peel off if they would bath themselves more often. The ‘one-day-in-the-week-is-washday’-rule of thumb seems to go for quite a lot of people here on the market. It does

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94 Frankfurters and different types of local pork sausage.

95 Someone with whom I conducted an interview at the Spanish school.

not go for people in formal social institutions like for example universities.

### 3.2.3.3 Sound

#### Negotiating

Prices are not displayed as fixed in written form on the open market. One has to ask for them and then negotiate. Shopping without fixed prices requires communication. Sellers establish two price categories, one with negotiation, the other without, in order to make their produce more attractive. I receive a shopping list from *Doña Toria* and instructions from Manuel on how much one usually spends on each product. Then I go to the weekly market at San Francisco de los Altos. At mid-day the market is already over. People come from far away and participate from 4 a.m. onwards. While at the market, they buy stuff themselves and later they sell it again right there for a higher price. Prices are context-dependent. You are quoted higher prices if you are a man or if you are a tourist. In those cases, people think you are not so informed about what one really would pay for the objects on sale.

#### Chatting

Everywhere the market women are chatting: *Doña Blanca*<sup>96</sup> serves me while chatting to someone else, but smiles at me and signals that she recognizes me. By the time I put the change in my purse, she already is addressing another person passing by: '¿*Qué busca?*' (What are you looking for?), '¿*Qué le damos?*' (What do we give you?).

#### Advertising

Sound is an important medium to build up territory on the market. The absence of built walls in the market space and the many alternative possibilities to buy the same product, suggest attracting the attention of the passing people by sound. Music stalls have their cassette recorder running to attract passers-by. Usually attraction is sought not through high-tech advertisement, but with the seller's own voice. The higher the pitch of the voice, the more variation between high-low or crescendo-decrescendo, the quicker the words or the more repetitions there are – everything potentially increases the degree of intensity that can attract passers-by. Rather frequently something playful enters in when men are competing with each other for the most effective repetitions.

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96 A market woman who is acquainted with the family I live with. So we address each other by name and chat a bit when we meet.

- ‘Veinte por cinco, veinte por cinco, veinte por cinco!’<sup>97</sup>
- ‘Papas, papas, papas, papas, papas, papas!’<sup>98</sup>
- ‘Achiote alQuetzal, al Quetzal, al Quetzal, al Quetzal!’<sup>99</sup>

### Sounds not directly related to buying or selling

What does one hear at any one moment in a crowded market? Many uncoordinated lines of sound move next to each other and produce an impression of intensive oneness. Many of the sounds are not directly related to selling. At stake are spirituality, nature and childhood. Diverse sound sources accumulate in any given impression.

- ‘La palabra de Dios; Dios oiga a usted!’<sup>100</sup>
- Chicken cheeping
- ‘Clacker’, a children game where two balls on a string have to be moved in a way that they meet downward once and upward once. So many kids have it here, everywhere one hears clack, clack, clack.

### 3.2.3.4 ‘Machinic Operas’

#### Selling from Open Sacks<sup>101</sup>

Sweetcorn, black beans, flour, rice, pasta and sugar are sold from open sacks. From a machinic point of view, the open sack provides an entire ‘opera’ of expressions. There is the intense sound of emptying the product from the big sack into smaller packages to be taken away, the intense vision of natural colour (the yellow of the sweetcorn, the black of the beans, the white of the rice), the smell of fresh and open products and the word-exchange of negotiation about the price.

However, people I have spoken to and lived with in Guatemala tend to perceive what Deleuze and Guattari call *machinic opera* much more in the artificial than in the natural. The artificial is the special, the exciting. The natural is the normal. There is an attraction to the flatness of the artificial, to the mass product.

#### Plastic

Plastic is a relatively recent achievement here in Guatemala. *Doña Toria* emphasizes that it has improved the life of women doing homework immensely.<sup>102</sup> It is lighter to carry, it does not break, it is available in all kinds of colours, and it is cheaper. For a long time, the tra-

97 English: ‘twenty for five’ (*Quetzales*).

98 English: ‘Potatoes’.

99 A local, red spice, here announced to be sold for 1 *Quetzal*.

100 English: ‘The word of God; God will listen to you!’

101 12.11.2007 See photo 11 in appendix.

102 See above, chapter 2, pp. 63 f.

ditional alternatives – glass or clay – looked much more attractive to my European eyes. But while in the market or in the street selling *atoles*, or when carrying home water on one's head or when washing the dishes, glass or clay must be really horrible. It can break and it can leave splinters in one's hands. A second example for the advantage of plastic are brushes. The besom made from natural materials constantly sheds the brushwood from the wooden stick that makes up the brush. Therefore the plastic broom is better from a practical point of view. Then there is the colour. The besom comes in natural brown tones, while the plastic version comes in all imaginable colour combinations, the brush part and the stick usually in different colours. People here seem to prefer the bright joyful colours of the plastic broom. A third example for the popularity of plastic are flowers. There are more plastic flowers on offer than real ones. Cut flowers, potted flowers and climbing plants are available as plastic imitations.<sup>103</sup> So are dahlia, aster, and even pansies. Most real flowers are symbolically linked to the cemetery. People buy real flowers only during the first two days of November, the 'Days of the Dead'<sup>104</sup>. On the level of lived time, the colour of real flowers envelops the obscurity of death. Plastic flowers are more colourful and they are indefinitely durable.

### Christmas Light Strings

It is December and all imaginable variations of Christmas lighting are now available at the market. The strings of a hundred or more little lamps usually come in colour and blinking, and often even with music, playing a Christmas song when they light up. These strings of lights are used here in Guatemala most of all for the nativity plays that are built in houses for Christmas.<sup>105</sup> These *nacimientos* often take up half a room. This is a Catholic tradition, representing the Holy Night with Joseph, Maria and the little Jesus Child in the crib in the stable, the animals, the shepherds, the angels and the rural area around Bethlehem. The Christmas light strings contribute in the most impressive way to the impression of affective density (Deleuze and Guattari: 'consistency') at the Guatemalan market. They seem to give all they have, the more action and effect the better. The various colours blink in different rhythms and sequences to Christmas-melodies. At the market at 'La Terminal' there is a whole table full of these light strings! They are all bleeping along in their various technical and one-dimensional melodies and in their various uncoordinated rhythms. Also with regard to Christmas cards, the tendency seems to be 'the more electronic the better'.

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103 See photo 8 in appendix.

104 See above, chapter 2, p. 80 ff.

105 See above, chapter 2, p. 86 f.

### 'Las Pacas'

The basic distinction concerning clothes in Guatemala is between '*ropa americana*' and '*ropa típica*'. The former are second hand clothes from the United States. The latter are *huipiles*<sup>106</sup> and *cortes* that the indigenous women are wearing. The second hand clothes from the United States are sold at '*las pacas*'. As mentioned above, clothes can be so cheap here, from 50 Centavos onwards. The indigenous clothes by contrast start from 300 *Quetzales* for a simple everyday *huipil*, 150 if you do the adornments yourself, and 800 *Quetzales* for a really splendid and special one. It is said to be often difficult for an indigenous woman to stay with her '*ropa típica*' tradition due to a tension between a generally discriminated-against position in society, the costs for the traditional clothes and the attraction by Western products. *Doña Toria* therefore buys the *huipiles* new, but without decoration. She makes the decoration herself, to save money. But she loves looking through the *pacas*. I ask her, if she ever felt seduced to wear '*ropa americana*', because it is so much cheaper. She shows me her apron which is made from a shirt from the *pacas* that her husband re-tailored for her. She tells me that she would feel ashamed with wearing trousers. Her sons keep telling her that she should wear trousers, to have warm legs, but she does not want to.

The clothes that are on offer at '*las pacas*' are cheap, indifferent, purely functional and in terms of intensity, compared to the indigenous clothes, to me they appear 'flat'. There is no singularity, no individual handicraft, no woven-in spiritual meaning and no deep identity. However, this emptiness gets its own dimension of territorialisation at the market: kids enjoy themselves by 'taking a bath' in the clothes.<sup>107</sup> They de-territorialize the clothes from the US from being clothes to being toys. Due to the flatness of the clothes, the children can joyfully build-up territories on the market in a way they would never be allowed to do with the hand-woven indigenous clothes.

### 3.3 CONCLUSION AND LINE OF FLIGHT

*The Guatemalan open market, as it has been presented in this chapter, works according to a logic of passing rather than perfection.<sup>108</sup> Improvisation is essential – coming through on whatever terms available, with hands and feet – territorialisation through resonance. Orientation takes place through lived time, rather than through pre-given*

106 Traditional indigenous blouses with symbolically-loaded colourful adornments.

107 See photo 12 in appendix.

108 Ronald Bogue characterized the logic behind territorialisation in the plateau of the refrain as 'passing, not perfection'. See Bogue 1999a.

*structure. The supermarket, by contrast, works according to a logic of perfection. There is planning and standardisation of structure. Structure, rather than lived time, is the dominant impression. The open market, when brought together with the supermarket, appears as a social formation based in duration. It is a context-dependent, heterogeneous, sensually rich plane of immanence. The supermarket, by contrast, appears as measured-time environment – characterized by regularity, rational planning and independence from context-conditions. The open market expresses a relation to the supermarket. It is that which gets excluded from the supermarket. The open market might be the more long-standing social formation and it might dominate in terms of quantity. But supermarkets are there, at least in bigger towns. Among the people I lived with and talked to, there is a strong line of flight of desire towards supermarket working- and shopping-conditions as well as towards supermarket products.*

The supermarket is a centralised space, organised through imposed structures. There is one ‘perfect’ solution for the entire market, and even for other markets of the same chain. Rhythms and intensities in the supermarket are maximally homogenised. They are set up according to plan by the management. There is one brand. There is one type of bag, one type of basket and one type of clothes for the sellers. There is one place where all the Coca-Cola bottles are placed. Every employee in the supermarket is paid by the same person. There is one music in one volume. There is one temperature. There is one building. There is one starting-time and one stopping-time.

The supermarket seems to be an elitist space in Guatemala. The majority of the population is excluded from both selling and shopping there. This is due to the lack of economic, social and cultural capital. In the end, though, it is due to the lack of money. The majority of the Guatemalan people do not have the money to pay eight *Quetzales* for a tin of black bean purée when you can get a big pack of the same produce for Q2,50 at the open market and cook them yourself, or grow the beans in your own field. The supermarket is the space for tinned, plastic and global products. There is a strong line of flight on the open market towards these products. In the plastic products and in the second-hand clothes at the open market there expresses itself a strong line of flight towards the supermarket.<sup>109</sup> In Xela, the majority of the Guatemalan population does not have the background of formal diploma- and certificate-based education from nine years schooling necessary for an employment as seller in the local supermarket ‘Paiz’. There is a strong line of flight, though, towards such employment. According to Manuel, an employment in supermarkets, banks and McDonald is the

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109 See above.

favourite job perspective of the majority of young women in Guatemala. Moreover, people who buy at the open market go on Sunday afternoons for a walk with their families through the local Hypermarket (an over-size supermarket, built four years ago around the corner from the open market at *La Terminal*).

The supermarket in various respects seems to provide a 'perfect' way while the open market works by the logic of 'passing'. In pragmatic terms, passing is less than perfect. For shopping, this includes hygiene (independence from bacterial contextual conditions), independence from climatic conditions, order and security. For selling, this includes regularity of income, regularity of working times, security of pension and emergency income. In terms of lived time, however, the open market produces a joyful, bodily feeling of absolute presence. In terms of lived time, passing is more than perfect. Again, the Deleuzian focus on lived time helps to bring to light a dimension of passive existence that seems to me to be everywhere present in Guatemalan everyday life, but that in the action-orientated relation to the market that those I lived with in Guatemala tend to adopt, remains invisible and silent.





## CHAPTER 4

### 'MAÑANA'<sup>1</sup>: BECOMING-ACTIVE AND THE UNPLEASANT

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION: THE PASSIVE ENCOUNTER WITH THE UNPLEASANT AND THE AFFIRMATION OF LIFE

For Deleuze, the previous chapters have shown, passivity is the superior mode of living the present. It allows the present to open up to the realm of lived temporalities. This chapter will show in sympathy with Deleuze how passivity is also the superior mode of living the present in the encounter with the unpleasant. The theme of the unpleasant is taken up by Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition*<sup>2</sup> as part of a critique of the Freudian concept of the death-drive.<sup>3</sup> The theme of the death-drive, as the chapter will show, provides a further example for the convertibility of lived time and desire. Deleuze offers his reading of the Freudian death-drive as a bringing to work of the three passive syntheses of time that he had introduced before. From 1911 onwards, Freud identified the pleasure principle as the main regulating instance within conscious and unconscious psychic life. The pleasure principle can be lived actively, through the search for pleasure, or reactively, through keeping unpleasure away. In 1920, in '*Jenseits des Lustprinzips*'<sup>4</sup>, Freud revised his view when he postulated that there is a compulsion for repetition in psychic life that is more basic and more pri-

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1 Engl.: 'Tomorrow'. This is a common expression for delaying something that shall not be given space in one's present into a seemingly precise point in the future. In practice, however, *mañana* is a release into an open future. In Guatemala, this is a common source for unpleasure. See below.

2 See Deleuze 1968a, pp. 96-128.

3 For a general introduction to the Freudian argument see Laplanche/Pontalis (ed) 1967: *The Language of Psychoanalysis*; Mertens/Waldvogel (ed.) 2000: *Handbuch psychoanalytischer Grundbegriffe*; Wright (ed.) 1992: *Feminism and Psychoanalysis. A Critical Dictionary*.

4 English: 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle'. Freud 1920g: 'Jenseits des Lustprinzips'. GWXIII, pp. 1-69.

mordial than the pleasure principle. According to Freud, a common feature among all phenomena of repetition is that above all, they bring the subject unpleasure. Therefore they could not be explained solely through the pleasure principle. Freud interpreted the compulsion for repetition as visible expression of a death-drive. He introduced the concept of the death-drive in this context.

Freud set up an opposition between the life-drive (Eros) and the death-drive (Thanatos). The energy of the life-drive was for Freud a binding energy. The energy of the death-drive was a destructing energy. The death-drive in Freud is a force that strives towards an earlier state, namely towards the stasis of inorganic matter (Nirvana-principle). Freud thought that life and death work together as dualism of forces in every living entity, from the single cell upward. For him this meant that besides the tendency towards life, development and reproduction, every living being also strives towards death. From the philosophical side, the theoretical explanation for the proposed dualism of drives has been severely criticised.<sup>5</sup> By theorists of the so-called object-relation school within psychoanalysis, however, the dualism between life- and death-drive has been used to understand aversive affects in the relation between a self and an object.<sup>6</sup> In Freud, the compulsion for repetition is motivated by the attempt of the repressed to return from the unconscious, to where it was expelled, into consciousness. The compulsion for repetition aims to master the repressed in order to dissolve the energetic fixation between the Ego and the repressed and thereby to release the past present into the past. The repressed past present got expelled into the unconscious part of memory because at some point in the past it overwhelmed the Ego. The return of what once overwhelmed it poses a threat to the Ego. On the level of experience, the level of lived time, the return of the repressed is reminiscent of death in that it threatens the Ego with annihilation. The representation of death causes reaction. Going on from this, but in a more Nietzschean way, the present chapter wants to define the unpleasant as something that threatened the well-being of the Ego.

In line with object-relation theory in psychoanalysis, in this chapter the unpleasant shall not be something from the unconscious, but something grounded in the relation to objects in the actual present. Object-relation theorists such as Otto Kernberg<sup>7</sup> have made use of the concept of the death-drive as destructive force in order to problematise the encounter with the unpleasant. According to Kernberg, the en-

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5 See for example Keith Ansell Pearsson 1997: *Viroid Life*, chapter 3.

6 Mertens/Waldvogel (ed., 2000) is a contemporary handbook on psychoanalysis for practitioners. It has a strong emphasis on object-relation theory.

7 See Kernberg 1992: *Aggression in Personality Disorders and Perversion*.

counter with the unpleasant is a challenge because it sets free a reactive potential aimed at the destruction of life. Deleuze<sup>8</sup>, by contrast, wants to show in a Nietzschean argument how death and life are *not* opposite drives. Deleuze argues that death is not a reactive, but an active force.

‘Becoming-active’ is the essence of Deleuze’s reading of Nietzsche.<sup>9</sup> This chapter wants to contribute to an understanding of becoming-active, which is a technique for encountering the unpleasant through the affirmation of life. Becoming-active highlights the power of passive time. On the level of consciousness, everything is reactive force. Everything is seen from the perspective of a person. The level of consciousness is the level of active time where action takes place. On the level of the unconscious, by contrast, everything is active force, because there is no representation. There is only intensity. The level of the unconscious is the level of lived time where a passive encounter with the given takes place. Becoming-active shows how action in-midst of the unpleasant can be active, rather than reactive, when it emerges out of lived time.

An unpleasant affect is a reactive force. A self perceives something as unpleasant and, in accordance with the pleasure principle, rejects it. The reactive intensity underlying an unpleasant affect can be transformed into an active intensity through its contemplation by a self in passive time. When contemplation becomes action, a selection takes place on the part of the will. In Deleuze’s Nietzsche, the will grounds action in the active affirmation of pleasure, rather than in the reactive defence against displeasure.

“Becoming-active, [...], presupposes the affinity of action and affirmation; in order to become active it is not sufficient for a force to go to the limit of what it can do, it must make what it can do an object of affirmation. Becoming-active is affirming and affirmative, just as becoming-reactive is negating and nihilistic.”<sup>10</sup>

#### 4.1.1 The Affect: Unpleasure as reactive Force

In Freud, Deleuze argues, death is a reactive concept because death appears as representation.<sup>11</sup> Any affect, however, involves representation. According to Kernberg, who translated drive theory into affect theory, on the level of the self, an affect links a perceived intensity with a mental representation. On the level of representation, an affect

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8 Deleuze 1968a, pp. 96-128.

9 Deleuze 1962.

10 Ibid, p. 68.

11 See Deleuze 1968a, p. 104.

links an object representation to a self-representation.<sup>12</sup> Deleuze circumvents representation. He gives a fascinating and detailed account of affect, but he focuses on the level of intensity. He describes how a repetition of a former present (the Freudian repressed) is not an automatic repetition of the same in the actual present, but a complex inter-relational dynamic in the realm of intensity, based on the resonance of a passive self to an object in the actual present. In his account of affect, Deleuze does not differentiate between pleasant and unpleasant affects or between pleasant and unpleasant objects. All this belongs for him to the level of representation, which is not what he is interested in.

Kernberg's account of affect goes beyond that of Deleuze in that he takes representation as the upper level of affect back into view. On the level of representation, the affect expresses itself in concrete fantasies and desires. Kernberg gives an account of aversive fantasies and desires that take place in-between a self and an object that the self has represented as unpleasant. He does this through an account of the dynamics that take place in the realm of intensities. Deleuze, in unfolding these dynamics in general, without specifying the affect, brings to work three passive synthesis of time that for him are constitutive of the unconscious: contraction, resonance and differentiation determine what happens with a bound intensity within lived time.<sup>13</sup> The Deleuzian account serves to understand the production of an affect of unpleasure as a reactive intensity. It then serves to understand how to transform the reactive intensity into an active intensity.

"It is these three syntheses which must be understood as constitutive of the unconscious. [...] The repetition-binding, the repetition-stain, the repetition-eraser: the three beyonds of the pleasure-principle. The first synthesis expresses the foundation of time upon the basis of a living present, a foundation which endows pleasure with its value as a general empirical principle to which is subject the content of the psychic life in the Id.<sup>14</sup> The second synthesis expresses the manner in which time is grounded in a pure past, a ground which conditions the application of the pleasure principle to the contents of the Ego. The third synthesis, however, refers to the absence of ground into which we are precipitated by the ground itself: Thanatos appears in third place as this groundlessness, beyond the ground of Eros and the foundation of Habitus."<sup>15</sup>

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12 See Kernberg 1992, pp. 8-10.

13 See theoretical introduction to chapter 2.

14 [Read: the unconscious, J.M.]

15 Deleuze 1968a, p. 114.

For Deleuze, as for Kernberg, a drive is bound intensity. Binding is a passive synthesis in which a self contracts an intensity from the present. At the level of each binding, a little ego is formed in the Id. The contracting passive self fills itself with an image of itself in contemplating the excitation that it binds. Binding, or the passive synthesis of contraction-contemplation, thus forms little egos in the unconscious. A little ego is a narcissistic local image of the self that works in the enveloping logic of the unconscious.

“Investments, bindings or integrations are passive syntheses or contemplation-contractions in the second degree. Drives are nothing more than bound excitations. At the level of each binding, an ego is formed in the Id; a passive, partial, larval, contemplative and contracting ego. The Id is populated by local egos which constitute the time peculiar to the Id, the time of the living present there where the binding integrations are carried out. The fact that these egos should be immediately narcissistic is readily explained if we consider narcissism to be not a contemplation of oneself but the fulfilment of a self-image through the contemplation of oneself by the fulfilment of a self-image through the contemplation of something else: the eye or the seeing ego is filled with an image of itself in contemplating the excitation that it binds. It produces itself or ‘draws itself’ from what it contemplates (and from what it contracts and invests by contemplation). This is why the satisfaction which flows from binding is necessarily a ‘hallucinatory’ satisfaction of the ego itself, even though hallucination here in no way contradicts the effectivity of the binding.”<sup>16</sup>

After the binding, a twofold development appears. In one direction, the bound intensity integrates through an active synthesis onto the level of the actual. The actual works according to a ‘reality principle’.<sup>17</sup> On the level of the reality principle, which is the level of active time, scattered intensities unify into representations of whole objects. A bound intensity unifies into a whole object. The whole object now is the goal of the self’s affect. The whole object, not just the bound intensity, appears as unpleasant. At the same time all the composing and contemplating little egos integrate into a global Ego. The global Ego is the active part of the self. It works in the logic of representation and strives for integrity of the self. The test of reality mobilises all the activity characteristic of the Ego. The Ego, or the active part of the self, lives the pleasure principle in that it judges the perceived representation as satisfying or menacing. An unpleasant affect activates self-preservative drives and thus an urge to negate the object.

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16 Ibid, p. 97.

17 See *ibid*, pp. 98-99.

"Active synthesis is defined by the test of reality in an 'objectal' relation, and it is precisely according to the reality principle that the Ego tends to be 'activated', to be actively unified, to unite all its small composing and contemplative passive egos, and to be topologically distinguished from the Id. The passive egos were already integrations, but only local integrations, as mathematicians say: whereas the active self is an attempt at global integration."<sup>18</sup>

At the same time, in another direction, the bound intensity extends on the level of passive syntheses.<sup>19</sup> On this level, the bound intensity of the little ego becomes a virtual centre. The virtual centre is the part within the actual object that arouses displeasement<sup>20</sup>. Unpleasement starts in the actual object, but extends through the resonance of the bound intensity in a passive self. The virtual object connects to the past. The unpleasant object opens up through the resonance of a passive self into the realm of the full time modus of the past. The pure past qualifies the virtual object. Every little ego that gets produced from a bound intensity envelops some instance from the past of the self that relates in some way to the present affect of unpleasure.<sup>21</sup> All the dimensions of resonance are part of the unpleasant affect. However, the virtual centre and all its dimensions of resonance lack something in themselves. The virtual object is defined through absence.

"Virtual objects belong essentially to the past [...] the pure past [...] does qualify the virtual object; that is, the past as contemporaneous with its own present, as pre-existing the passing present and as that which causes the present to pass. Virtual objects are shreds of pure past. It is from the height of my contemplation of virtual centres that I am present at and preside over my passing present, along with the succession of real objects in which

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18 Ibid, p. 98.

19 See *ibid*, pp. 99ff.

20 In relation to the reality principle, Deleuze uses the term 'real object'. In order to integrate the present argument in the overall thesis, I use instead the term 'actual object'.

21 Kernberg uses the term 'peak-affect-states'. (Kernberg 1992, pp. 13-14). Similar to the concept of the little egos bound from the virtual object, the concept of peak-affect-states offers a conception of the virtual object beyond the restriction to erogenous zones (Melanie Klein: breast, vagina, penis). In both peak-affect-states and little egos, any sensation that is involved in producing a virtual centre can be bound. These can be contracted from both actual objects and actual movements. Both the concept of the peak-affect-state and the concept of the little ego enable one to take the object into view not only as a source for libido, but also as a source for aggression. The concept of peak-affect-states stresses the past of the self, while the concept of the bound little ego puts emphasis on the present object.

those centres are incorporated [...]. Although it is deducted from the present real object, the virtual object differs from it in kind: not only does it lack something in relation to the real object from which it is subtracted, it lacks something in itself, since it is always half of itself, the other half being different as well as absent. This absence, as we shall see, it is the opposite of a negative."<sup>22</sup>

The missing part constantly circulates in the field between the actual object and the virtual object. The missing link is the reason underlying an unpleasant affect. The actual object disguises the missing link and the virtual resonances displace it. Disguises and displacements mask what is really at stake in an unpleasant affect. The missing part of the virtual object conducts the entire dynamic of disguises and displacements from its unknown position. The missing part of the virtual object is what holds the entire intensive field between actual object and actual self together.

#### 4.1.2 Differentiation: Unpleasure as active Force

Deleuze distinguishes between a reactive and an active conception of death.<sup>23</sup> The reactive conception of death refers to death as an object of representation. The affect of unpleasure that has been described in the first part of the chapter, worked on this level. First, the reactive conception represents the annihilation of the person, similar to the representation of the unpleasant in the first part of the chapter. Second, death as representation comes from without. Again, there is an analogy to the description of the affect of unpleasure given in the first part of the chapter, in that the threat is represented through an object in the actual present. Third, the representation of death also comes from the past. This sounds familiar as well: past representations envelop themselves to the actual representation of the unpleasant through the resonance of a passive self.

(Death has two aspects) "The first signifies the personal disappearance of the person, the annihilation of this difference represented by the I or the ego. This is a difference which existed only in order to die, and the disappearance of which can be objectively represented by a return to inanimate matter, as though calculated by a kind of entropy. Despite appearances, this death always comes from without, even at the moment when it constitutes the most personal possibility, and from the past, even at the moment when it is most present. The other death, however, the other face or aspect of death, refers to the state of free differences when they are no longer sub-

<sup>22</sup> Deleuze 1968a, pp. 101-2.

<sup>23</sup> See *ibid.*, p. 113.



ject to the form imposed upon them by an I or an ego, when they assume a shape which excludes my own coherence no less than that of any identity whatsoever [...]. The Freudian conception refers to this first aspect, and for that reason fails to discover the death instinct, along with the corresponding experience and prototype.<sup>24</sup>

Deleuze, in contrast to Freud and Kernberg, is interested in a conception of death as pure intensity. Death, again, is destruction. It can again be equated with the destructive energy of unpleasure. Unpleasure is bound from the virtual object. The unpleasuredness that the self bound from the unpleasant object produced a narcissistic image of the Ego mediated by the object (a little ego). The narcissistic libido brings the little ego back from the object into the self. At that moment the narcissistic libido loses all binding dimensions. This theoretical explanation makes sense in that with Freud, a drive is always a mix of binding and destructive forces. A destructive drive is a drive with fewer libido. Libido is the binding energy that lets itself be attracted by the world. When the drive loses its libidinal dimensions, all that remains is a neutralised, displaceable energy. All content gets lost. The drive, through losing its libido, transforms itself into Thanatos, the death-drive. Thanatos is the prolongation of Eros. It is time 'empty and out of joint'.<sup>25</sup> It is a straight and destructive force. It is a neutral, dead body of time.

Through the transformation of Eros into Thanatos, the space in-between self and object transforms itself into a recording surface. This dynamic constitutes the core of Deleuze's philosophy. Somehow there emerges a dragging tension. It forces to the surface something from in-between the intensities involved in the encounter. Thanatos destroys from below the double libidinal bond to the actual and the virtual line of intensity in-between self and object. Thanatos sucks into its whirl nuances from all the intensities involved into the intensive field in-between self and object. The whirl is a movement of differentiation. Something emerges in-between self and object that was not there before and that expresses exactly the intensive relation between the forces involved in the encounter. Everything remains on the level of that what is (intensities), rather than on the level of that what shall be (fantasies). Yet, what emerges goes beyond the different forces involved in the given. There is creation. The encounter between the forces involved is like a question to which the emerging material is like a response.

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24 Ibid.

25 Ibid, p. 111.

"[...] Thanatos is completely indistinguishable from the desexualisation of Eros, with the resultant formation of that neutral or displaceable energy of that Freud speaks. This energy does not serve Thanatos, it constitutes him: there is no analytic difference between Eros and Thanatos, no already given difference such that the two would be combined or made to alternate within the same 'synthesis'. [...] It is all in the same movement that there is a reflux of Eros onto the ego, that the ego takes upon itself the disguises and displacements which characterize the objects in order to construct its own fatal affection, that the libido loses all mnemonic content and Time loses its circular shape in order to assume a merciless and straight form, and that the death instinct appears, indistinguishable from that pure form, the desexualised energy of that narcissistic libido."<sup>26</sup>

Why does the neutralisation of Eros take place? There must be a repulsion by the self. On the level of the real series, there was repulsion in that the self-preservative drive rejected the unpleasant representation. The 'No' to the unpleasant object expresses itself as reactive force. On the level of the virtual series, there is only attraction. However, attraction can disappear and then there remains an energy that is neutral. The 'No' on the level of intensities is a neutral, empty, but active force. It is Thanatos. The transformation of Eros into Thanatos on the level of the virtual does not require unpleasure as condition for neutralisation. Any difference that meets difference sets free a movement of differentiation. The only condition is that there is some kind of intensity that brings different forces together.

The world of intensities is, with Deleuze's Nietzsche, the world of the will to power.<sup>27</sup> This world is different from the world of affect in any Kernbergian sense in that there is only intensity. The leap into 'passive time' constitutes the entry and binding constitutes the exit from the world of intensities. The world of intensities consists of active forces. Active forces are forces that are driven by an inner will to power. Every active force strives to unfold its inner will to power. The will to power is a 'Yes' to life. The will to power consists of the own urge for life and, simultaneously, of the capacity for letting oneself be affected by the life inherent in other forces. With Deleuze's Nietzsche, every force is driven by a power in itself that emerges in contact with other forces, but that follows its own, inherent directions. In the world of the will to power, every force is something in itself independent from the contact with other forces, but at the same time a force would not exist without interaction with other forces.

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26 Ibid, p. 113.

27 See Deleuze 1962, chapter 2.

Deleuze's reading of Bergson's concept of life as movement of internal differentiation<sup>28</sup> comes to mind here. Repulsion, in this conception, takes place because the self affirms its own difference in the encounter with the difference of the virtual other. The 'No' is effect of a 'Yes'. The 'Yes' is the self's affirmation of its own will to power which is its own will for life or, one could also say, its own will for pleasure. The affirmation of the own will for pleasure and simultaneously the capacity to let oneself be affected by the other makes the encounter with the difference of the other productive.

"To affirm is still to evaluate, but to evaluate from the perspective of a will which enjoys its own difference in life instead of suffering the pains of the opposition to this life that it has itself inspired. To affirm is not to take responsibility for, to take on the burden of what is, but to release, to set free what lives."<sup>29</sup>

Death as an active movement of differentiation emerges where both unpleasant and unpleasance remain active forces that touch each other, but that, albeit in hierarchical relation, do not negate each other. Unpleasure can become an active force where it does not negate neither the other nor the self. The destructive energy inherent in the movement of differentiation is not directed against the other nor against the self, but against the status quo. The movement of differentiation breaks up the given constellation within the intensive field in-between a self and an object.

"[...] coupling between heterogeneous systems, from which is derived an internal resonance within the system, and from which in turn is derived a forced movement the amplitude of which exceeds that of the basic series themselves."<sup>30</sup>

Deleuze calls this dynamic with Nietzsche the 'first aspect of the eternal return'<sup>31</sup>: Differentiation in-between different forces makes return to the surface all those intensities from the abyss of time that are involved in a given tension between the forces that encounter each other. This first aspect of the eternal return is a physical principle. Differentiation naturally produces a virtual picture of all the intensities that are involved in an intensive field in-between a self and an object. However, it takes a 'second aspect of the eternal return'<sup>32</sup> to affirm life

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28 See chapter 1 of this book.

29 Deleuze 1962, p. 185.

30 Deleuze 1968a, pp. 118-9.

31 Deleuze 1962, p. 47.

32 Ibid, p. 68.

in-midst of the unpleasant. The realm of the will to power is the realm of passive time. Action requires the binding of intensities. Through binding, scattered intensities from the realm of passive time get integrated into the goal-orientated, structured movements of active time. The will to power acts at the passage from passive time to active time as an ethical principle. The ethical principle is the second aspect of the eternal return. It will be shown in what follows how on the basis of this principle, ‘active forgetting’<sup>33</sup> can induce the selection of pleasure from unpleasure.

#### 4.1.3 Binding: The active Forgetting of Unpleasure

The principle of active forgetting is grounded in the assumption that only a selection of those intensities that are given will be bound. The active self can decide that its own will to power shall select what gets bound. When the will to power as the urge for unfolding one’s own life selects what gets bound, unpleasant intensities will not be attracted.<sup>34</sup> Unpleasant intensities at this stage would be forces that negate the life of oneself or an other. Unpleasant intensities at this stage would be forces that suffer from life. Again, there is a ‘No’ to unpleasure grounded in a ‘Yes’ to life. The ‘Yes’ to life is a ‘Yes’ to pleasure.

This second ‘No’ is ethically driven by the will to power through the eternal return. Behind this thought is the demand to live the present in a way that there should be so much joy that it would be Ok if any given moment would repeat itself eternally. The present shall be lived with regard to a future that affirms life in that it affirms whole-hearted engagement and pleasure. When a self lives this conviction, the unpleasant can be actively forgotten. The urge for life then determines action, rather than the attempt to resolve a perceived unpleasure. Through concentration on what the own will wants in the binding of the own next movement, the self can do active rather than reactive movements. Then, action can be not only active but also expression of an affirmation of life despite the affirmation of the given as unpleasant.

“Nietzsche’s argument can be summarised as follows: the yes which does not know how to say no (the yes of the ass) is a caricature of affirmation. This is precisely because it says yes to everything which is no, [...] The Dionysian yes, on the contrary, knows how to say no: it is pure affirmation, it has conquered nihilism and divested negation of all autonomous power. But it has done this because it has placed the negative at the service of the

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33 See *ibid.*, pp. 68-71.

34 *Ibid.*

powers of affirming. To affirm is to create, not to bear, put up with or accept."<sup>35</sup>

## 4.2 EMPIRICAL EXPLORATIONS

The second chapter of this book has shown dimensions of passive time within the Guatemalan home. Time seemed to stand still, full-time. This also means full-time encounters with the unpleasant. The unpleasant is something that contains in some disguised form a threat to the active self and that therefore urges for change. However, for the people I stayed with in Guatemala, everything tends to happen in the same living space. There are no walls that protect from the full-time encounter with the unpleasant. Nor do people avoid the unpleasant through planning. For the majority of the population, there is no money and no social infrastructure for preventing the encounter with emergencies through insurances or other forms of security. There are no structural shock absorbers against the unpleasant. The active self's desire for self-preservation against the unpleasant cannot be actualised. Therefore, people have to encounter the unpleasant passively.

With Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche, there is an unconditional 'Yes' to a life without shock absorbers. Only when the realm of structure is left behind, there opens up the realm of passive time, with its implied connection to the power of life. Only through an unconditional orientation by passive time, the will to power as the urge for life can be perceived. Life becomes the way to encounter the unpleasant. The way people cope with the unpleasant seems to be to affirm the given and just to set their own action as one more movement into this. The way to live within a given of that there is no expectation that everything is pleasure seems to be to concentrate on the own action and to make sure that this affirms life and to actively forget the unpleasant rest – to become-active. Vitalism has been explored here as going with a double affirmation of life beyond negativity.

The first part of the empirical explorations in this chapter wants to give some examples of the field of active forces underlying an unpleasant feeling in passive time. The virtual field underlying an unpleasant feeling includes forces from the actual present and forces from the past of the self. The material suggests that the missing virtual link is a threat to the Ego. It circulates in all dimensions of the unpleasant affect. The second part of the empirical explorations in this chapter wants to give some examples of solutions produced through a movement of differentiation between the active forces at work in an object that has been perceived as unpleasant and the active forces un-

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35 *Ibid.*, pp. 185-6.

derlying the displeasement of a self. The solutions, it will be shown, respond exactly to the affirmed dynamic of forces underlying it. The third part of the empirical explorations in this chapter wants to explore the concept of active forgetting through some empirical examples. Evaluation, differentiation and active forgetting are all part of an active engagement with the unpleasant, based in passive time and in the affirmation of life. The chapter concludes with a line of flight on what looks like attempts by people in Guatemala to find means for orientation that are more secure, more predictable and more reliable than the orientation by the flickering movement of the own urge for life. With Deleuze's Nietzsche, such desires would be expression of a 'becoming-reactive'.

"Everything that separates a force from what it can do he [Callicles] calls law. Law, in this sense, expresses the triumph of the weak over the strong. Nietzsche adds: the triumph of reaction over action. Indeed, everything which separates a force is reactive as is the state of a force separated from what it can do. Every force which goes to the limit of its power is, on the contrary, active."<sup>36</sup>

#### 4.2.1 The Affect: Unpleasure as reactive Force

*Every unpleasant affect involves an object from the actual present and an aspect of the self.<sup>37</sup> On the actual level, the self reacts with a 'No' towards this object. The Ego represents the unpleasant object as a danger for the self. The Ego's 'No' defends the self in a movement of destruction directed against the object. The unpleasant object gets negated.<sup>38</sup> A leap into lived time allows evaluating what is really at issue in an unpleasant feeling. On the plane of lived time, there is no representation. There are only intensities. The self is intensity and so is the unpleasant object. On the plane of intensity, the self can affirm the unpleasant object in all its complexity.<sup>39</sup> Through evaluation, the unpleasant object gets affirmed, but not accepted. It gets affirmed as a*

36 Ibid, p. 59.

37 See Kernberg 1992, chapter 1.

38 See Kernberg 1992, chapter 2.

39 See Deleuze 1968a, p. 114. Deleuze contrasts the abstract *representation* of death as destruction to the lived *experience* of death as destruction. Only as abstract representation, death poses a threat to the Ego. In *Difference and Repetition*, however, it appears as if destruction shows itself only as intensive force, i.e. as lived experience, in the unconscious. In *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze (1962) gives a more convincing account. There, both consciousness and the unconscious are about lived experience. Consciousness is about reactive forces, while the unconscious is about active forces. The challenge is to live active, rather than reactive forces.

*plurality of active forces. Letting oneself be touched by an unpleasant affect allows interpreting it. Evaluation interprets the field of conditions of an unpleasant feeling.*

#### 4.2.1.1 Locating the Affect of Unpleasure: The actual Present

*The following material suggests that death is not something unpleasant in essence. The value of death depends on the concrete play of forces underlying it in a concrete encounter. Only if the play of forces produces a threat to the Ego, an actual object will be perceived as unpleasant.<sup>40</sup> Evaluation allows one to perceive the play of forces underlying the perception of an object. On the level of representation, the Ego perceives a whole object as unpleasant. On the unconscious level of intensities, however, the whole object disperses into a constellation of forces that underlies the object. It is this constellation of forces that produces the impression of unpleasure.*

#### Killing Chickens

Around the time when I arrived, mid of June 2002, two new chickens arrived at the house where I stayed during the fieldwork. The chickens, as the two dogs, the cat and the duck, use pretty much the same living space as human beings. (Only the squirrel is in a cage.) They walk into all rooms in the house. The chickens, as the other animals in the house, even eat the same food as human beings, basically *tamali-tos* or *tortilla*. (Only the squirrel lives on banana.) Though the animals do not have names, in various ways they are treated like members of the household.

On Saturday afternoon, when we return from the market, *Doña Toria* and *Don Arsenio* kill one of the two chickens for cooking *Estofado*<sup>41</sup> on Sunday (15<sup>th</sup> of September, Liberation Day<sup>42</sup>). They bind the feet together and hang it by the feet, head down, over the *pila*. *Don Arsenio* holds the chicken, *Doña Toria* holds a sharp knife – and then she cuts through the throat of the chicken. The head and the body are moving for some moments, although they are separated, and then the chicken is dead. They put a tin container in the *pila* under the chicken body, so that the blood can run out. Then they put the chicken in a bucket of boiling water to loosen the feathers. Then *Doña Maria* plucks the chicken body.<sup>43</sup> Later she cuts the rest of the throat off and

40 See Deleuze 1968a, pp. 109-110. Deleuze describes the co-existence of 'No' and 'Yes' in the passive self towards the unpleasant object.

41 Local indigenous meal. *Estofado* consist of chicken meat, a spicy gravy and rice.

42 On September 15, 1821 Guatemala gained its independence from Spain.

43 See photo 5 in appendix.

parts the thorax of the animal to take the inner organs out – kidney, liver, guts, lungs and heart. The next morning the animal will be cooked with onions to accompany the gravy for the traditional meal. During the killing, the other animals in the house are around. I wonder that the cat, the dogs, the duck, even the other chicken come so close as if there is no chance that they might be the next one to hang up there, head down. It seems that to them, the one who had just died was completely different from those who are still alive.

I am so fascinated by the materiality of the process. It is not brutal. It is just nature. I do not feel sorry for the animal, it is OK. That is food, and this is the way things are going and things have to go like this. It is a very serious act. Everyone seems to know what he or she has to do. People are working hand in hand. This is preparing a party the Guatemalan way. The chicken has grown for three months, and now it is ripe for being eaten. It is not such a bad smell and it is not that loud. The chicken does not cheep, nor the other one that is still alive. It is a very concentrated, silent and intense act. *'Ya le enseñamos como se mata'* (now we've taught you already how to kill), says *Doña Toria* after cutting the throat of the chicken. The whole process takes maybe two hours. It is raining constantly.

In what does my fascination consist? Coming as chick or as chicken to the house becomes for a moment in my perception the difference that decides about being or not being killed by these wonderful people whom I like and trust so much. The difference between them and me becomes uncannily small through signs as diverse as the time of arrival (in both cases three months ago), the food (*tamalito*), the living space (kitchen, bedroom and *patio*) and the noun used to describe the respective living being (chick and chicken). For no one but me the chicken seems to envelop a link to the own Ego. The chicken's temporality implies being killed. Even for such peaceful people like *Don Arsenio* with his strong Catholic faith, killing the chicken is part of life, of eating.

In San Martín<sup>44</sup>, the normality of a chicken's death in traditional life is repeated. There, I once saw how three chickens in a row were

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44 A village in the coastal area, close to Retalhuleu (see map in appendix). There, I spent a week in a community of refugees from the recent civil war in San Martín. The community was associated with the NGO where I conducted interviews and participated in trips to the countryside. I stayed with Francisca, her husband Alfonso and their teenage twins Andrés and Antonio. The people in the community came originally from the area around Huehuetenango in the northern highlands of Guatemala (see map in appendix). They fled after a massacre occurred in their village. The massacre took place, because the army suspected people from the community to collaborate with the guerrilla. Francisca had joined the *guerrilla* when she was twelve years old, together with two of her elder siblings. She has spent 15 years in exile in Chiapas,



killed in the way described above. It was Sunday afternoon and the various brothers and sisters of Francisca and their families met for a family reunion. The men were sitting in the shadow, drinking beer and talking. The women were in the kitchen hut in the *patio*. Through the open door one could observe how one chicken after the other was slaughtered, blood running out of the hole from the cut off throat, etc. All the guests were watching. Then the women cooked, everyone ate the chickens and we all seemed to have a pleasant time.

### Guerrilla Warfare

Writing about the chickens reminds me of Francisca telling me about her time in the *guerrilla*. There was such a huge difference between the way she described how people from her group died and the way she described how some of the Guatemalan soldiers died. The latter sounded like killing flies. The former sounded like the passing away of human beings. Francisca was twelve when she joined the *guerrilla*, who were sometimes coming to the village at night, visiting the houses of recruits to guide them into the mountains to fight for their justice with arms against the own government. The soldiers, she told me, came to the villages and sometimes spilled gasoline over the houses and then set fire to them, so that the 'innocent people' inside would die in their sleep. People had to gather together in a house (sometimes everyone, including women, the elderly and children; sometimes all men in one house and all women in another; sometimes only the men) and then the house was lit. For Francisca this was outrageous. For me as well. Rios Montt's 'politics of the burnt earth'<sup>45</sup> where so many 'innocent' people died, without being able to defend themselves.

15 minutes later, I ask Francisca about everyday life in the *guerrilla*. She tells me about an attack on a farm where about 400 soldiers were stationed. *Campesinos*<sup>46</sup> would come to the farm in order to ask for work. The soldiers, Francisca explains, were waiting for the *campesinos* in order to kill them. The soldiers wanted to kill 'innocent people', willing to work for a living. Francisca's *guerrilla* group, about 23 people, came to the farm in the early morning. One of them went inside where the 400 soldiers were sleeping. He positioned a

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southern Mexico. When she and her community wanted to return to their village near Huehuetenango after the official end of the war, another community was living there. The Guatemalan government then assigned Francisca's community their current place in the coastal area. Francisca earns money with weaving.

45 Ephraín Rios Montt was president of Guatemala from 1981-2. During his presidency, the worst massacres of the entire civil war took place under the name of the 'politics of the burnt earth'. See chapter 1, p. 41.

46 English: 'Peasants'.

bomb in the middle of the sleeping people, lit the fuse, and ran off as fast as he could. He ran back to the group that had been waiting at some distance. The bomb exploded and about 200 of the soldiers were killed in one blow. The surviving soldiers started to fire on Francisca's group. Francisca is enacting the scene. But, she proudly finishes, they didn't get anyone of her group.

There is a lot of emotion in the way that Francisca recounts the event. However, in contrast to all the compassion for the death of *campesinos*, and the threat to life that her own group was exposed to, killing the soldiers sounded like a successful strategic game. Through Francisca's words, the soldiers had become inhuman. There seemed to be just hate for the other. The other's killing activities seemed to be evil; the own killing activities seemed to be innocent. On the actualised level of words, the difference between the evil other and the innocent self seemed to have been raised to such a degree that the death of the other allowed for no link to the own Ego. There seemed to be nothing unpleasant about the death of 200 soldiers. Killing the soldiers, like killing the chickens, had to be done. And it seemed to be not without its own peculiar pleasure.

#### 4.2.1.2 Opening up the Affect of Unpleasure: Envelopment

*An unpleasant object always extends beyond the spatial and temporal boundaries of the actual given. The complex play of envelopment opens up an object in the actual present towards the resonance with the full-time of a passive self.*

#### Excreta

Here in Guatemala the urine from others is strikingly present in everyday life. The open *patio* makes people use chamber pots at night. The chamber pot is brought in the morning to the *pila* and emptied out through a hole in the ground that leads to the drainpipe. Then it is cleaned with fresh water. Throughout the day the pot stays there in the open, visible for anyone in the *patio* next to the *pila*. The pot is perfectly clean as it stays there throughout the day. However, the imagined urine makes the difference between it being something pleasant and something unpleasant. The texture, the form and the position of the clean chamber pot become enveloped in the impression of unpleasantness. When the dishes get cleaned there are plastic mugs in the *pila* above the chamber pot. When the washing gets soaked there are plastic buckets on the ground to the right hand side from the chamber pot. The plastic links the pot that is used for urine with the pots that are used for drinking and the pots that are used for washing. Urine comes into an uncanny closeness with drinking and washing. The immanence of the excremental (that the Ego wants to get rid of)

with the nurturing (that it feels attracted by) must have threatened the Ego.

The pot's bright blue shines in the morning sun. However, the bright blue envelops a contrasting sign of urine that stays. The illusion of urine that stays, rather than being flushed away immediately, adds to the unpleasantness of the chamber pot. The imagination of its sound while flowing into the chamber pot and its smell while staying in the open pot the whole night through, makes urine, in my imagination, uncannily exposure the one who urinates to the other people in the family bedroom. The exposure of the unclean must have posed a threat to the Ego.

Old newspaper is used as toilet paper. The sense of the newspaper is completely different when it is placed on the lid of the water-box in the toilet from when the paper lies on the kitchen table. Just the place makes the difference that makes the latter one unpleasant. The newspaper located in the toilet envelopes in its sight the anticipated roughness from wiping one's bottom with it. Further, there is enveloped a certain uneasiness concerning the used toilet paper. Right beside the toilet there is an iron bucket. Here in Guatemala, one must not flush the used toilet paper away as the pipes are not wide enough. So everywhere there are waste bins in the toilets, usually open ones. The used toilet paper is there in the bin and one can see exactly the wet shape of the female vagina or the brown stripes from shit on it. That is a very intimate and personal affair. One can position a clean paper square over the used paper square, just to hide the signs of one's toilet visit. The seemingly chance position of the paper bits in the used paper bucket can make all the difference between pleasantness and unpleasantness.

The paper is torn into pieces before using it. In torn form, it is one step closer to toilet paper than when it is just lying there on the water box. The bits are about the size of an adult's hand. They can still be read. An interesting envelopment of shit and news arises when the toilet paper is read before wiping oneself with it. You read: ah, Bush wants to start a war against Iraq, ok (and wipe your bottom with it). Ah, margarine is going to cost at the '*Despensa Familiar*'<sup>47</sup> only one *Quetzal* fifty-nine, and I have paid recently two *Quetzales*, well, never mind (wipe your bottom with it). Ah, this was the bus accident in Huehuetenango from beginning of September where 50 people died and the bus went down the hill into the river, that was so horrible (wipe your bottom with it). The written letters transmitting news envelop in their sight the anticipated stripes of shit smeared onto it a moment later. The envelopment produces a co-existence between the new and the de-used that seems to neutralise the new(s).

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47 A local supermarket.

Every morning *Don Arsenio* carries the iron bucket into the *patio*, sets fire to the used paper and puts a sheet of metal as lid over it, in order to keep the smoke down. With an iron stick he moves the burning paper. Then the bucket is carried back to the toilet and the new day can start. When the toilet paper gets burnt, smoke disperses in the air above the bucket. In the imagination, residues of shit or urine vapour dispersed through the air of *patio* and kitchen. The unpleasant finds its way in invisible form into every corner of everyday life. The smoke can be seen and smelt. The shit can't be. Envelopment is a question of imagination. However, it can make all the difference between pleasantness and unpleasantness. In discovering the threat to the Ego behind an unpleasant object, the real image of smoke has principally the same power to act as an image from fantasy.

### Trash

In San Martín in the family of Francisca, I encounter the most impressive gesture characterising waste disposal in the old style: you go outside the house, in front of the veranda. Then you reach back as wide as you can with one arm. Then you throw the mandarin skin, the eggshells, the potato skin or whatever as wide as you can over the *patio* into the rich vegetation of banana plants, cotton shrub, palm trees. '*Se pudre*' (it decays). Basically the same happens with trash and plastic waste. This is collected in a bag and carried to a slope at the margin of the community. There it gets thrown over the border down hill – just out of sight. Hm. With Fredy from the NGO I was working with, I talk about this in an interview. Young people leave the rural communities and go for work or fun to the towns. Then they bring cans and things one can buy in shops back for their families to try. For example sugar gets now sold in plastic bags, in earlier times things were wrapped in leaves. The homemade *atol* is served in glasses; Coca-Cola comes in cans. Potatoes are now more popular when fried in oil, before they were cooked in the steam from the water where chicken gets cooked. Oil comes in plastic bottles from the towns. In earlier times, people could subsist on their own terms, with what they produced themselves. There was only organic waste that seized away by itself. By contrast, the tin and plastic containers stay. Slopes and rivers show just too explicitly that things are changing. The slopes of riverbeds are often full of rubbish and the water is contaminated. Only slowly the displeasure that the artificial wrapping implies becomes apparent. People have to learn that the trash in the long run poses a threat to their health because it stays.

## Recycling

In town, certain items of trash can be exchanged for branded presents or money. This becomes the decisive moment that alters the play of forces underlying the item of trash from something unpleasant into something pleasant. On certain days, 'Anchor', a milk powder brand, makes announcements on '*Estereo Cien*' that you get presents if you come to the radio station with two tin containers of 'Anchor' milk. *Doña* Toria only has an empty bag from 'Anchor' milk. But she and her husband rush to the other end of town to the market at the Terminal bus station (incl. waiting this journey takes one hour by bus). There they buy two empty tin containers of 'Anchor' milk (for three *Quetzales* or so). These are sold there especially for the '*Estereo Cien*'-advertising campaign for 'Anchor' milk in the radio. They hurry with the empty containers to the radio station (located towards the centre of town, incl. waiting about 45 minutes by bus away from the market). There the people from 'Anchor' milk check that there is not already a hole stamped with a nail into the bottom of the tins. Such a stamp would be a sign that the same tin has been brought to the radio station and awarded with a present already before. If there is none, the people from the radio station mark the tins with such a hole.

Then *Doña* Toria can select her presents: plastic products in the colours of the brand from 'Anchor' milk. She receives six containers in different shapes in which rests of food can be kept fresh or in which sugar or some other powder can be stocked. The way home from the radio station is about 15 minutes foot-walk. When she comes home, *Doña* Toria shows me the objects that she has received. She seems to be so happy. She and her mum, *Doña* Maria, explore the plastic containers in an incredibly respectful way. All the useful features of the largest container are touched with hands and with words. One can open the whole upper part. One can open one part of this upper part, in case the content is fluid. One can carry the container on a little plastic handle at the side. The container would not break into bids, even if it would hit the floor. In the same way, *Doña* Toria is collecting empty plastic bags from '*Natura*'-tomato-sauces and margarine packages from '*Mirasol*'. There are periods of usually some day's time in the year when a particular one of these interactive rubbish-games is on. At other times, with other products, someone knocks at the door and when you open you win some 'present', if you can come up with the required number of empty packages or with the required slogan. Television advertisement in Guatemala is full of these forms of interactive games.

Eggshells can also be pleasant; *Doña* Toria is collecting eggshells. She has different sources where to get them. One bakery that is situated beyond the cemetery, maybe one kilometre away, is selling her the eggshells that they use for their cakes. From time to time she car-

ries them home in a big tub on her head. Apart from that, her aunts in the neighbour house, Manuel and me are collecting eggshells for her as well. *Doña Toria* is painting them in bright colours (one colour per egg), with stripes or points.<sup>48</sup> Then she fills them with confetti that another woman from the neighbourhood, *Doña Julia*, is producing. Finally she closes the hole through which she filled in the confetti with a colourful bit of china paper. Manuel's cousin, Carmencita, packs the prepared confetti-eggs in packages of hundred. These are then stored in the family's bedroom. There are meanwhile about 7000, she tells me. In mid February, at carnival time, the bags of hundred get sold in the nearby park 'El Calvario', and at the front door of the place we live, for eight *Quetzales* a bag. The whole year through *Doña Toria* and *Doña Maria* are working on this.

Isn't there a threat to the Ego implied in making a living from rubbish? For *Doña Toria*, as she assures me, this is the fascinating part: nothing gets wasted. Not even rubbish. For *Doña Toria*, the relative lack of money must have posed a bigger threat to the Ego than to give her time to rubbish. It doesn't matter that the effect has more to do with virtual than with actual reality. The presents from 'Anchor' milk do not respond to an actual necessity. At the place where we live, an entire storage room is filled already up to the roof with plastic products. Even the eggshell project is not necessary in any material terms. Manuel explains that it is more the feeling of adding to the family's income than an actual increase in income that keeps the eggshell project going.

#### 4.2.1.3 Understanding the Affect of Unpleasure: The disguised Threat

*Every one of the forces enveloped in the encounter with an unpleasant object entails in disguised form that which triggered the 'No' of the Ego towards the unpleasant object.*<sup>49</sup> *There are two levels. On a more concrete level, forces express repulsion towards an unpleasant object. Behind all these forces, however, there is the threat to the Ego as a kind of motor or general principle that brought the various more concrete instances together. The motor is disguised. Once encountered, however, it can be retrospectively found in all of the concrete repulsions.*

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48 See photo 6 in appendix.

49 See Deleuze 1968a, p. 102. The virtual object expresses the absence of what is really at issue.

### Night at Francisca's

During the night, the door to the bedroom is closed. Francisca tells me to wake her if I want to go out to use the toilet. I feel uneasy with this. What does this uneasiness envelop<sup>50</sup>? If I call out her name, for sure the twins and Alfonso will awake as well. I am reminded of when I was a little girl of around three years old and at night I would go to my mother's bed and wake her to sleep next to her. An alternative would be to touch Francisca's arm, moving it softly until she awakes. Would that not be too close? Everything is dark. I do not want to use the flashlight for that might equally awake everyone else in the bedroom. Alfonso lies next to Francisca. Isn't there a chance that his arm would be around her arm? No, I will not do the touch-thing. Instead, despite the heat, I will not drink too much in the evening so that the night might pass without my bladder demanding immediate action. The unpleasant object is not the door, but the movement of Francisca locking it. If I had asked her to position the key in a place where I could access it and to show me the mechanism of the lock, the act of her locking the door would not have become unpleasant. Then the locking of the door would not have posed a threat to my ability to go to the toilet.

I lie on the floor. Rustling from Alfonso and Francisca. It is a soft sound, but apart from that there are only mosquitoes buzzing. So it appears loud. Somehow it appears louder than a rustling from the direction of the bed of the twins. Probably this is so because I expect less intimacy among the twins than among the couple. The rustling attracts attention because I don't want to feel like an intruder. Then there is another rustle. This one comes from right behind my head. There must be a mouse, probably a mouse hole, for the sound stays. This time my 'No' is stronger. Something has to change. I touch for the stinky mosquito lotion and pour a thick line at the wall in the head-area of my raffia mat to mark my territory. It seems to work. For a while the rustling stops. The second rustling must have been a more unpleasant object than the first, because it signals that spatially and in my options to defend myself, I am on the same level as mice. The Ego seems to feel more threatened.

A fart. I am not completely sure from which direction it came, whether more from straight ahead where Alfonso and Francisca are sleeping or whether more from my right side where the twins have their bed. Somehow I'm sure that this won't have been Francisca. Nor the twins, probably. Why am I irritated by the fart? This is so macho. Making one's rude noises the present of other people seems to come close to ignoring others altogether. In my perception, the fart signals a lack of recognition<sup>51</sup>. The perceived threat envelops a sudden aware-

50 For a definition of envelopment see above chapter 2, p. 56.

51 A notion of recognition will be unfolded below in chapter 6.

ness of my vulnerable position as a stranger in the bedroom of Francisca's family. The Ego responds.

Francisca is the first to get up in the morning, at about 4.30 a.m. She goes out in darkness, probably in order not to awake the others. About an hour later, Alfonso follows. He switches on the electric light and leaves it on. I feel myself getting annoyed. There would have been less annoyance if the unpleasant action had come from Francisca. Since I had attributed the fart last night to Alfonso, the lack of recognition signalled already from his direction increases through light being left on. The bright neon light makes it difficult to fall asleep again. Now there is less privacy than in darkness. The unpleasantness of the light envelops being exposed more directly to the presence of the others. I keep my eyes closed when someone goes by. This circumvents the necessity to say anything at this early hour. It re-installs privacy. I could have stood up, go to the light-switch and switch the light off again. However, I am the stranger here, despite all the kindness of Francisca and the others. The twins are still in the room. I don't know how things usually are here. I don't want to offend or irritate anyone.

With closed eyes, listening and tacit bodily perception become more important. The loudness of the footsteps indicates whether these are near my mosquito net or further towards the door. If the sound of steps comes to a hold, I imagine someone changing T-shirts, shorts or underwear. The standstill of steps produces some tension. I don't feel that comfortable with the idea of one of these men undressing here next to me. The real issue seems to be the proximity of unknown men undressing next to me. The twins are OK. They seem so shy. With Alfonso, I always feel a bit uneasy. He seems a bit rude and unpredictable. Underneath the perceived tension seems to be a threat to my security.

Judging by the steps that have passed by, one of the twins must still be under the mosquito-curtain to my right. I concentrate on finding my shoes when coming out under my mosquito-curtain into the neon light. There is no exchange of looks and no exchange of words. I try to remain passive, in the sense of inactive. Passivity allows for orientation by concrete intensities, rather than giving in to the general position that I want to be on good terms with these people. Generally, I don't want to ignore them. However, although there is some pressure to connect, I avoid letting them become part of my present. When the shoes are on, I concentrate on the next step, going through the *patio* to the *pila* to brush my teeth. Thereafter in the kitchen, where Francisca has prepared *tortilla* for breakfast, both twins are there and we talk. It was just too early and too intimate to connect when getting up. Only now in the kitchen, does the threat to the Ego make itself retrospec-



tively known. Now it becomes clear how all my former movements have been expressions of it.<sup>52</sup>

People are sleeping in their clothes. In the morning one's T-shirt gets straightened with the hands and the new day can start. However, the temperature change from night to day is extreme. At nine o'clock in the evening when we usually go to bed, it is too hot to cover oneself with a bed linen. In the middle of the night, it is so freezing cold that the bed linen is hardly enough. Usually I take off brassier and socks before sleeping and in the middle of the night I wake up from the cold and pull over a sweater, tracksuit trousers and socks. Due to the presence of the others, I try to avoid noise and flashlight when feeling for the sweater in the darkness. The unpredictability of how signals of possible intimacy might be interpreted by the three men makes me take off the brassier in a hidden way under the bed linen. The unpleasure of coldness enveloped the presence of the other people, as the found solution shows.

One evening, Francisca and I are chatting while we are sitting on the edges of our sleeping-places. When it seems that the communication expires, I turn the mosquito net over my head and lie down on the *petate*<sup>53</sup>. The woven curtain now establishes some kind of visual distance. Francisca remains sitting on her sleeping-place. A bit later, she starts talking again. First I remain lying on my *petate*, talking to her from that position. Then this distance seems inappropriate to me, no longer fitting to the level of intensity re-emerging between us. I sit up and turn the mosquito-curtain again over my head. Somehow the correlation between visual distance and felt intensity receives my constant attention. I feel that the tension could become unpleasant if it was ignored. The tension envelops on the one hand the possibility to offend Francisca and on the other hand my general sleepiness after a busy day.

#### 4.2.2 Differentiation: Unpleasure as active Force

*Living spaces, promises and insects imply dimensions of unpleasure for the people involved in an encounter with them. The way the unpleasant is encountered is through affirming it as the given. It is lived with. The unpleasant remains a constant plurality of active forces. One's own perspective is inserted as one more active force into the dynamic. In the encounter of active forces, differentiation takes place. In Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche, differentiation is a forced movement that emerges through the tension in-between the unpleasant as active force (the actual object) and unpleasuredness as active force (the*

52 See Deleuze 1968a, p. 102.

53 English: 'Raffia mat'.

virtual object). Where unpleasdedness emerges directly from the encounter with an unpleasant, in the realm of active time, the realm of representations, it is a reactive force. With Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche, however, in the realm of lived time before the affirmation of unpleasdedness there comes the affirmation of the own will to power. Lived time when adopting the perspective of Deleuze's Nietzsche, is the realm of active forces. Active forces in Deleuze's Nietzsche are forces that strive to expand their inner will to power. This is something like their inner urge for life. The affirmation of the own will to power makes unpleasdedness emerge secondarily, as effect of the own 'Yes' towards life.

Then, unpleasdedness is an active, not a reactive movement. It is the effect of the affirmation of the own activity and the activity of the other. The movement of differentiation is expression of the intensity of the involved will to power. Forces involved in differentiation are always active or reactive in relation to other forces. The force with the most intense will is the most active force. It makes other forces obey its will. By the same token, forces that are obeying in relation to the movement of differentiation with other forces are reactive although taken in themselves, they are active. The balance between activity and reactivity in a given movement of differentiation builds on all context conditions available, though it is never the case that all possible conditions are taken up.

#### 4.2.2.1 The Degree of Differentiation

The will to power is the capacity to let oneself be affected by the given.<sup>54</sup> It determines to what degree the movement of differentiation becomes an active force. A movement of differentiation is as active as there is will to power. The will to power, the capacity to let oneself be affected by the given, envelops experiences and expectations. If one is used to that things are as they are (as in the following example of the weather in the patio), a table or a room full of obsolete things will not affect one as something that has to be changed (as in the following examples of Francisca's kitchen-table and Manuel's room). Differentiation in the following examples suggests that people are used to affirm the given. People seem little used to affirm the own will to power as a force that displaces the given. The degree of differentiation just covers the most functional basics.

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54 Deleuze 1962, p. 63.

### The *Patio*

The *patio* at the house of the family where I stay for the time of the fieldwork makes the different rooms appear like little huts. When one goes from one room to the other, one goes through the open air. The *patio* exposes the people very directly to the temporalities of the weather. Throughout the entire year, during morning and midday the centre of the house seems to be the open space with bright, warm sunshine. Everything appears incredibly open and light. One is constantly outside. The fig tree in the *patio* becomes the centre of the house. However, in the rainy season from April to October, from about three o'clock in the afternoon there is continuous rain. When one goes to the toilet or to another room one becomes wet. When it starts raining, every other activity is dropped for a moment and rapidly the not-yet dried clothes are gathered up and taken inside. In the room the clothing is distributed over chairs and tables so that it won't get mouldy. Until the next morning, when the sun will shine again and the washing can be transferred back onto the line, everything is messy and humid. The rain is affirmed as a given condition of existence. People live with the unpleasant. They do not constantly complain. There seems to be no point in trying to remove the unpleasant altogether. It is there. People just introduce small differences that enable their subsistence in-between the given.

Due to the height of Quetzaltenango (2300 metres above sea level) and the tropical location, there is a huge change of temperature within the day-circle. The sun in the *patio* warms up the living space every morning. When there is no sun, all that remains for warming up are the wood-fire, woollen ponchos, blankets and hot drinks. These solutions to the problem of coldness entail a fare amount of shivering. People seem to arrange themselves within the unpleasant. Their displacement of the given seems to me to concern just the basics of subsistence. As well, the light in the home comes mainly from the *patio*. *Doña* Toria and *Doña* Maria hardly ever use electric light in the kitchen during the daytime. The kitchen, like many rooms in traditionally built houses in Guatemala, does not have windows. Although there is electricity, Manuel's mother and grandmother do not use the lamp if only the two of them are there (both being women!). Until it gets completely dark, they often sit in the cold and dark, looking into the fireside. The upper part of the door is open and it is raining outside. In the countryside there is often no electricity provision at all; one has candles and goes to bed at about 7 p.m. when the daylight disappears. At the house where I live during the time of the fieldwork, the electricity supply would allow for a 'No' to the impact of the coldness and darkness of a rainy afternoon. However, the will to power also envelops the gender of the two women and the limited availability of money. In practice, darkness and coldness get accepted.

### Francisca's Kitchen

The table in the kitchen of Francisca is always packed with all kinds of things. In the middle there is a big grinding stone, covering half of the table. Then there is a *tortilla* machine. Then there is a big plastic pot with dishes. If there are bags or a killed chicken around, it is likely that these are left on the table as well. When Francisca and Alfonso are eating, everything remains on the table. The two just clear enough space for a plate and a cup beside all the mess. Their will to power relates to the functional. Displacement of the given does not express an effort for style.

The table is an expression of the kitchen as a whole. A naked bulb is hanging from the ceiling. Light also comes from two windows. These are square holes in the wall. A wooden shutter can close them off. The shutters are bolted by turning a bit of wood around on a nail. The floor is paved. The stove is a knee-high stone construction with a fire-hole and a chimney. The biggest thing in the room is a one metre wide and two metre high iron silo for the storage of sweetcorn. Various chairs are scattered around. They are of various kinds, randomly collected together. Huge slats of lath wood are leaning in one corner. Some raffia baskets filled with dried sweetcorn or black beans are left somewhere on the floor.

The silo is a very modern arrangement. The oven is more modern than the one at the house where I stay for the time of the fieldwork. Windows and chairs are far from self-evident in the Guatemalan countryside. Francisca is very attached to the kitchen, above all because she compares the way she is equipped now with the unsettled way she lived in Mexico during refugee-times. There, she tells me, the local government had installed a law according to which Guatemalan refugees had to change houses every two weeks. Guatemalans would not get longer contracts. This was meant to prevent the refugees from settling down. In short, in Francisca's kitchen, everything could be much more basic. However, the atmosphere is dominated by functionality rather than style. Things appear like raw materials. There is no colour on stone, wood or iron, no curtain, no lampshade. Displacement of nature is limited to the functional.

### Manuel's Room

In the room where Manuel and I live, there is an atmosphere of comfortable decay when I come. Many things within the given refer to contexts that Manuel has little to do with. Manuel has left things as they are. He just transformed various things provisionally into a table. On the left side of the room, as one enters, there is a broken stove with oven. The oven hole is transformed into a storage space for old packages of tomato sauce etc. The stove is used provisionally as a table for freshly washed clothes and various other things. Then there is an old,

broken blue plastic sofa and two armchairs in the same style. The armchairs are stored away onto the sofa, with their legs towards the ceiling of the room. The underside of the seat is provisionally used as a table. Onto it there is placed a plastic case with spices and herbs for cooking. Then there is a black bookshelf popped between the blue plastic furniture and the oven. It is not in use, just stored away. Its top is used provisionally as a table. It carries cases of various things. On the right side of the room next to the entrance door there is an old *marimba*. The instrument is out of tune; it cannot be used anymore properly for playing melodies. It is provisionally used as a table. On it there are located clothes, jackets and backpacks. There is one proper table. However, on top of it is located a broken radio-cassette recorder. The cassette cannot be used; the door for the cassette deck is broken off.

The room is kept rather dark. Darkness gets affirmed, although there are two windows towards the *patio*. The windows have curtains in front of them. The curtains are of light textile with flowers on it, two different kinds of patterns for the two different windows. The windows, however, are permanently closed and the curtains as well. There is another window in the ceiling. It is stained dark brown from dirt. There is no ceiling-light in the room, just an empty holder for a neon-tube. Light comes from an old desk lamp. It has a homemade lampshade in dark purple that Manuel made in primary school when he was a kid. The lampshade is left beside the lamp. Manuel was surprised when we later thought about installing more light in our room and I insisted on a lampshade. He considers this to be a waste of light. 'Why? First we install light and then we take off half of it again?' Affirmation of the own will to change something within the given is left with the most functional. No effort for style. No effort for comfort. No effort for beauty. Just functionality. The lamp is located on the *marimba*. In order to switch on the light, one has to kneel down below the instrument, grope in the dark for the plug and connect it.

Manuel's presence hardly appears within the given. In the left side corner from the entrance, there are about four sacks that originally carried sweetcorn. They are full of sorrow doll-packages. These belong to *Doña Toria* and *Doña Maria*. The old, broken blue plastic sofa is a present from a distant relative of the family. When he migrated to the United States for work, he no longer had a use for it. The old *marimba* belongs to *Don Arsenio*. He can play on it. Manuel, *Don Arsenio* and I re-furnished it some five years ago in a two-day effort. On the wall, there are three calendars, hanging one over the other. Each one has a picture on it and some advertisements. This is a type of calendar that one gets for free at the end of the year in the shops and cafés where one is known as a good client. People here use these calendars like posters. Once I had seen eight of them hanging side by side in the

same room. As in Manuel's room, they were both from present and past years. Below the calendars, there is a clock in form of a plastic teapot. I associate the calendars and the clock with Manuel's mother.

Manuel has only cleared one corner of the room for actual use, just covering the basics: a double size bed and in front of this a table with a TV on it. This is where he has been living for the last four years or so. His will to power has affirmed his own basic needs. However, it has engaged in differentiation with the various things in the room only far enough for Manuel to subsist in co-existence with it.

#### **4.2.2.2 Differentiation and the Hierarchy of Forces**

*Promises are made. But everyone knows that there is no reliability and no predictability involved in making a promise. People are used to that promises are not kept. There seems to be no expectation that people are able to abstract that far from the diverse and ever-changing momentary context-conditions that there could be taken for granted something like responsibility for keeping a word that has been given. The common way to cope with this is to interpret the promise according to the will that it expresses. Promises operate within the realm of lived time, on the plane of the will to power. Differentiation expresses the relation of the different will to power to each other. Every force that is driven by its own will to power is an active force. Nevertheless, active forces are in a relation of hierarchy to each other. The force with the biggest will to power is the most active force. The force with the lowest will to power is the most reactive force. Forces that make other forces obey their own will to power are active. Forces that obey the will to power of other forces are reactive. Usually, among the people I lived with, especially the more traditional ones, the unreliable force made the responding force reactive (see the following examples under the heading 'The Affirmation of the Given') Some people, however, found ways to affirm their own will in a way that unpleasure triggered a movement of differentiation that relatively displaces the given hierarchy of forces (see the following examples under the heading 'The Affirmation of Unpleasure').*

#### **The Affirmation of the Given**

*Both on the personal level and on the level of institutions, the way people cope with unreliability is to affirm it as given. Concerning the other, a given promise is interpreted according to the desires, subjective perceptions and other contextual influences enveloped in it. Concerning the self, it seems more important to do what one actually does with good intention and conviction, than to do what one said one would do. An appointment takes place not when it is meant to take*

*place, but when the conditions are given that give sense<sup>55</sup> to the appointment. Orientation by the will makes an encounter the negotiation of a hierarchy among forces. In the following examples, unreliability is the active force while the waiting, trusting or otherwise responding force is left reactive.*

‘Very few people in our culture are punctual. Most people are 15 to 30 minutes late. Last Saturday I was invited to the birthday of a girl. The party was to start at three o’clock, but the people were there at five o’clock. And only then there were the cake and the *piñata*. Let me give another example. At university there is a time of inscription. And after that there is a period of ‘extraordinary inscription’, so being late is already planned in.’ (Mynor)

‘You know that I’m representative of our school in the association of Spanish schools here in Xela? The meetings there start at nine o’clock in the morning. The first two times I was there at nine o’clock exactly and no one else was there. Not even the president or the people who come by car. Now I am coming at half past nine as everyone else. Being late is normal here.’ (Mario)

‘Many people in this culture, including me, leave the house when they should be in the compromise. Some people then bring a book for such times of waiting, but most of us just sit there and occasionally start a conversation with someone else who is there. About anything – the weather, the family...’ (Mynor)

It is five o’clock in the morning. Manuel and I are trying to catch a bus to the Mexican border<sup>56</sup>. I ask one of the few men standing around when the first bus is going to come. ‘5.20,’ is the precise answer. The bus does not come at that time, nor an hour later. Manuel explains: ‘The man probably did not have a clue when the bus was meant to leave. He just wanted to give you an answer. He wanted to be polite. So he just said anything.’

Manuel had promised me to copy a cassette with music. Some months later I remind him of this and he replies that he is going to do it ‘tomorrow’. A year and a half later I finally receive the cassette. ‘We are human beings, not machines,’ was his reply when I occasionally complained. Empirically, this seemed to express a passive form of time

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55 This term will be unfolded as a Deleuzian concept below in chapter 5, see pp. 179-92.

56 We went to Tecún Umán, a border town called after the Mayan emperor who fought and lost against the Spanish conquistadors. See map in appendix.

management. He kept a list with the things to do. When there was time, he started with what he perceived as the most important point and gave to this all the time it took to accomplish. He ticked the task off the list. Then he looked for the next most important point and concentrated on this. Since there was usually more to do than he could accomplish, what remained undone in the evening, got released into an open future. Either the point made it onto the next list, or it got forgotten as not that important at the moment.

We are invited for three o'clock in the afternoon to the birthday of Papa Meme, Manuel's grandfather. I will go with grandma. At three o'clock she is sitting there in the kitchen, cooking *nixtamal*. When I ask her 'what about leaving?' she replies 'four o'clock, just quickly finishing off the cooking of the *nixtamal*'. At half past four we are ready to go. When we arrive, no one seems surprised or irritated about the delay.

### The Affirmation of Unpleasure

*Where there is not only the affirmation of the given, but also the affirmation of the own will to power, unpleasuredness can become an active force. The differentiation of unpleasuredness as active force can relatively displace the unpleasant. The unpleasant then becomes a reactive force in relation to unpleasuredness.*

'Here in Guatemalan culture, it is very badly seen by the people when the girlfriend comes earlier to a meeting than the boyfriend. This is the way it goes in this culture. The woman must not come on time. The woman always has to be a bit after. That is due to stereotypes in this society. For example, when Mynor and Miriam<sup>57</sup> have an appointment in a café at half past five in the afternoon, and she comes at half past five on time, and Mynor comes as well at half past five, but she, because she is German and Germans are very punctual, is a bit before him...other people in the café would think very badly of that. It isn't appropriate. But when I got to know my wife, we said we are going to meet at half past five and she came at seven o'clock! I gave her a phone-call to ask where she is, and she said: 'I'm coming already' – and me waiting here. Afterwards I realised that it wasn't an accident, but part of her normal conduct. We sorted that out. Because it is not good. I don't like that. Once I was waiting for five hours for her!' (Mario)

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57 A Guatemalan-German couple, close friends with people at the Spanish school.



‘There are lots of people in my community who don’t plan their time. Foreigners are punctual; by contrast we use to say ‘*de plano mañana*’ (so it will be tomorrow), ‘*va a esperar*’ (he will wait). Me personally, I am waiting only 15 minutes. When the person isn’t there, I am off. One hour is already a lot.’ (Julia)

It is the morning of 24 December. Manuel and I are in his Spanish school. I am waiting for Fredy from the NGO with which I could collaborate for the research. Fredy does not come. Manuel asks me: ‘Did you confirm the meeting yesterday?’ No, I didn’t. He explains: ‘Then don’t expect too much. It’s your fault. If you are interested in the meeting taking place, you have to confirm a meeting the day before. This is how it goes in this culture. That increases the chance the appointment will be taken seriously.’

‘I had a professor at university and she asked the class: “This class is going to start at five o’clock in the afternoon. When are you likely to come?” One student said, “5.20,” another one said “5.45”. “Ok,” she continued. “What will be the latest that you can arrive? Who will be that?” “Me,” someone said. “I can’t make it before 6.30.” “Very well,” the professor decided. “The class is going to start at 6.30 exactly. But at point 6.30 I am going to close the door and *no one* will be allowed in anymore.” And this was what she did and everyone was there on time, or even before that!’ (Mario)

‘The culture is being late. The ‘*Chapin-hour*’<sup>58</sup> (Laughing). Because everyone accepts it. If one doesn’t accept it and says something in contra, this is seen by the others as very square-headed. Therefore, one better keeps quite, because one doesn’t want to be criticised.’ (Mario)

#### 4.2.2.3 The Creativity of Differentiation

*‘A problem always finds the solution it merits, according to the conditions which determine it as a problem.’<sup>59</sup> Insects become a problem for people in the home I lived with. They become unpleasant in various ways. In order to affirm their own way of life against the insects’ ways of life, people in the following examples make use of clear water, bare hands or woven cloths. Chemicals would kill the unpleasant. In Guatemalan agriculture, so many chemicals are used that in some cases export of some kind of vegetable has been forbidden. Due to tradition and scarcity of money, the power of people’s will at home*

58 ‘*Chapin*’ is a local term for Guatemalan people. It expresses *cariño* (affection).

59 Deleuze 1969, p. 54.

*does not involve the use of chemicals. The unpleasant is lived with. It remains a constant active force. The 'No' is an active movement of differentiation. A movement of differentiation takes place in the realm of intensity. The peculiarity of intensity is that it envelops other intensities. All conditions that determine a field of forces underlying a perceived problem<sup>60</sup> get enveloped, exactly in their respective degree of involvement. This is the creativity of the movement of differentiation. It produces exact solutions for any given encounter of forces.*

### **Flies**

For the people in the home, flies are unpleasant. They are potential carriers of disease. The way, people encounter flies implies a 'No'. The 'No' does not destroy the other. For example, flies are not killed by chemicals. Rather, both flies and people affirm their respective will to power. The 'No' consists in an on-going differentiation between the flies' way to make use of the home-space and the people's way to make use of the home-space. Differentiation builds on given context conditions.

Everything is tapped with extensive woven cloths. In the kitchen the buckets with the used dishes waiting to be washed or with the cleaned dishes waiting to dry by air are always covered with woven cloths. This shall prevent flies as potential carriers of illnesses from coming into contact with people's food. Moreover, while eating or drinking, people constantly move one hand over the plate or cup. This prevents flies landing on food or drink. The movement of shooing is part of the atmosphere during mealtimes as characteristic as reaching into the raffia basket for new tamales. The fly is hardly shooed for long before it comes back.

In the *patio*, there is a wide plastic bowl full of water where the duck takes its bath. In front of the bowl, the duck gets its *tamalito*-food, crumbled. There is always a mess of *tamalito*-crumbles meshed with water in front of the bowl. Flies stay in the air above the food-bits like a dark cloud. When someone passes by, the pack scatters apart, just to come together again a moment later. At times, doors to rooms are closed just to keep the flies outside in the *patio*. The other day after lunch, we had a rest. The sun was shining outside. I wanted to open the door in order to let some sun in. Manuel intervened: 'why do you open the door? Then the flies come in!'

### **Lice**

Every morning, *Don Arsenio* pours water over the leaves of the geraniums. This is an effect of his 'No' to the lice that live under the leaves. Again, the 'No' does not destroy the other. There are chemi-

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60 See Deleuze 1969, pp. 52-7.

cals available. But *Don Arsenio* does not use them. They are too expensive. Rather, he affirms his interest in the plants. Between the difference of the other and the difference of the own will to power there emerges a spatio-temporal dynamic that sets free an upward movement of differentiation. It involves the presence of the lice, *Don Arsenio's* displeasance about the lice, as well as his interest in the plant and the limited availability of money. Differentiation ungrounds and passively synthesises them into a solution. *Don Arsenio* uses clear water. It works, though only for a day. The solution implies that the lice have kept him busy every morning for years and years already.

### Fleas

Fleas are so obviously only a nuisance for people. I want to scratch myself constantly. Fleas tend to keep people even more occupied than flies or lice, scratching the fleabites. Again there is the risk of illness. When Manuel had fleas, like his father with the lice, he did not use chemicals to eradicate them. Instead, every morning, he collected the little black eggs that one can see on the linen, into a plastic bag and threw them outside into the dustbin. The solution consisted in an ongoing affirmation of his way to make use of the bed against the fleas' ongoing affirmation of their way to make use of the bed. The eggs of fleas are tiny and increase in number incredibly quickly. Picking them up with bare fingers is like looking for a needle in a haystack.

Manuel affirmed his will to power against the fleas. Nevertheless, the unpleasant remained a constant active force. It was obvious where the fleas came from. The dogs and the cat have fleas as well. They bite themselves constantly. The duck picks fleas out of the fleece of the Pekinese-dog. Before this duck, there was another duck, maybe three years ago. That duck even died because it picked fleas out of the fleece of one of the dogs and the dog did not like it and killed the duck. Fleas are hardly visible for human eyes. They are so mobile in their high and wide jumps.

#### 4.2.3 Binding: The active Forgetting of Unpleasure

*Evaluation allows the description of an unpleasant affect in all its dimensions of reactivity. Differentiation allows reactive forces to turn into active forces. Active forgetting, however, allows the selection among active forces of those that affirm life. Forces, according to Deleuze's Nietzsche, are either active or reactive and they are driven by a will that is either a will to power or a 'will to nothingness'<sup>61</sup>. Active forgetting takes place at the moment of binding. Binding is the passage from contemplation to action. Scattered intensities from the*

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61 Deleuze 1962, p. 54.

*realm of lived time have to be integrated into larger, goal-orientated movements in order to become action. In becoming-active, the active self decides that every action that it will bind shall be an active, not a reactive movement. Forces that consist only in a negation of other forces shall not be bound. Only forces shall be bound that affirm life. Through an active decision, the unpleasant shall be actively forgotten in the realm of unbound intensity.*

*Binding is a passive synthesis. How can the active self make sure that the passive self will select only intensities that affirm life? An active force is one that goes to the limit of what it wants to do. The ethical principle that every action shall be an active movement implies that orientation will take place through the will to power. Binding selects intensities that respond to the will. If the highest values that a will is capable of bringing up are lived, the present will acquire its maximal weight. An eternal repetition of any present moment would be the maximal deflection of the lived present into the future. The thought of the eternal return assures that the will is given its maximal power in flashing up in an encounter so that the present is lived with its full weight.*

*The global Ego represents unbound unpleasure as threat. It defends itself with reactive movements. Becoming-active as ethical principle enables the circumvention of the global Ego. In 'becoming-active' the focus is on the singular movement, not on the self. If the active self concentrates on its own actions being active rather than reactive, it can work against the global Ego's natural tendency towards reactivity. The 'No' of the global Ego does not then refer to unbound unpleasure, but to the effect of this, the reactive defence of the self. There is no expectation that there possibly can be a present without unpleasure. The aim is not to detect and disarm every source of unpleasure. Rather, the aim is to let oneself not be driven into defence by the unpleasant. For Deleuze's Nietzsche, active forgetting in this sense is a mode of critique of the unpleasant given.*

#### **4.2.3.1 Active Forgetting and Selection**

*The affirmation of life, in Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche, is an ethical decision that is grounded in the thought of the eternal return and expression of the will to power.<sup>62</sup> It concerns the moment of selection in binding intensities from passive time into active time. The philosophical concept of the eternal return links to lived temporalities in Guatemala in that it is expression of a determination to live life to the full. To will has to do with joy<sup>63</sup>, with an affirmation of pleasure. It is*

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62 Deleuze 1962, pp. 68-9.

63 Ibid, p. 84.

*based in the detection and selection of life-energies. The following material shows how once a selection in the name of life has been done, the rest can (as in the following examples on herbs and pills) or must (as in the following example on contacts) be actively forgotten. There are forces that are determined by a will to power and there are forces that are determined by a will to nothingness. In Nietzsche, active forgetting shall prevent the latter from actualisation. The bad witch in the following example, by contrast, chooses the will to nothingness explicitly as her means of selection.*

### **Traditional Medicine**

Knowledge about healing with herbs or witchcraft is still alive in Guatemala. Even in a town like Xela, and much more in the countryside, everyone knows some kind of tea or symbolism that helps or harms against something. Action is led by intuition. One goes into contact with the other on the plane of lived time. The selection from the given is led by the will to power. If there are life-energies such as interest, trust or attraction flashing up in an encounter, the given option can be actualised. At the market, one gets leaves of the rose of Jamaica. Luisa says that they are good against cold. The herb-seller at the market says that they are good against kidney problems. When I talk to *Doña* Maria about these contrasting information, she comments that she does not care. She is going to try them out anyway. For sure they will be good against something. There is trust because there is will. *Doña* Maria has expressed the urge to do something for her health. She has complained about various problems concerning her heart, her eyes and her feet. She feels attracted by the possibility to do something for her health with the leaves of the rose of Jamaica. The will seems to outweigh the unpleasant. Apparently it does not matter that no one seems to know for sure in what way the remedy will affect *Doña* Maria's body nor whether the remedy will respond at all to her actual problems.

Witchcraft is a profession of perceiving and sending out intensities. There is good witchcraft and there is bad witchcraft. The action of good witches is grounded in a selection of life-energies by the will to power. The will to power binds energies that bring life. According to Francisca, life-energies are perceived through feeling one's blood move in the right arm. This is intuition done the professional way. When Francisca found out that she could perceive the movement of her blood in the encounter with illness, she knew she was a good witch. A three-fold movement of the blood in the right arm meant that there was a potential to increase and expand life. Once a potential has been detected, the rest of the given can be actively forgotten. Action will be determined by this one selection. The action of bad witches, by contrast, is grounded in the selection of death-energies. In this case,

not the will to power binds energies, but a will to nothingness. The will to nothingness attracts and binds energies that bring death or destruction. Equally, action is based on one selection of a perceived energetic potential. After selection, the intensive rest can be actively forgotten. This one selection will be brought to actualisation. Francisca gives me an example for both good and for bad witchcraft.

On good witchcraft: There was an old woman in Francisca's community who was so ill that her son from Mexico-City had already been called back to join the funeral of his mum. There seemed to be no hope anymore. The woman had given up. She said: 'Why spending more money on curing me, I better die.' She decided not to talk, not to eat and not to move anymore until she would die. Francisca was called for help. Francisca paid attention to the blood in her right arm in the encounter with the old woman. She felt the blood moving up from her elbow to her shoulder and down again, several times. This was a sign for that there was still life in the ill woman despite her high age. It looked as if death was immanent, but Francisca felt that the woman could be cured. Led by this intuition, Francisca cooked some tea together. She gave it to the patient. And really, after a little while, the patient asked for a glass of water. Later she asked for tortilla, so everyone could see that she was on her way to be cured. The next day, Francisca gave more of the medical tea she mixed. When the son came by plane from Mexico City to Guatemala City and then by bus to the community, he was crying, because he thought he would find his mother dead. He thought he would never again be able to talk to her. But people told him, 'Why are you crying? Go in, your mother is there, talk to her. She already is eating tortilla again.' He couldn't believe it and asked, 'so why did you call me down from Mexico City all the way if it isn't that bad with her?' But, Francisca comments, a few days before it had looked as if there was no way back into life for the old woman.

On bad witchcraft: Once an indigenous woman from another refugee community around San Martín came to Francisca and asked her whether she would teach her how to weave. The two met, but the woman did not learn much. She got so confused and felt so incapable that after the week, she had not finished the work they had started. She left the work with Francisca and refused to pay for the material and for the tuition, because it did not help her. The woman went off and Francisca was left alone, having no income for the time spent with this apprentice. Little later, Francisca got an eye disease. The eye swelled and she could hardly see anymore. She was concerned she would go blind. It was a very existential threat, since she could not see her weaving work anymore that gave her an income and a possibility to finance her sons' formal education. Moreover, her husband told her that he was not interested in a blind wife. He threatened to throw her

down the slope where the non-organic rubbish was disposed, in order to get rid of her. A blind wife seemed to have no more value than rubbish for him. Francisca got very scared. Creams and pills did not help. Finally Francisca went to a 'good witch'. The good witch found out that the eye disease was initiated through the work of a bad witch. Francisca's explanation was: The woman who had not learned weaving had gone to a bad witch. Weaving is the main possibility of women in these communities to earn money. Maybe the woman had set all her hope on the ability to weave. In any case she must have felt very much rage about the defeat in the weaving-tuition. She had ordered to destroy Francisca where she would be most vulnerable: in her capacity to work. The bad witch had sent out an illness to Francisca's eyes, because this was the most effective way to stop Francisca working. After detecting the source of the illness, Francisca's eyes could be healed. Today, the right eye is just a little bit smaller than the other one.

### **Modern Medicine**

The knowledge about natural and supernatural medicine is on the decrease. More popular is Western medicine. Western medicine is thought to be superior because its legitimacy is grounded in rationality, rather than in intuition. However, the way it is used seems to be driven by attraction and by active forgetting. In the local pharmacies, one can buy nearly everything just so over the counter, without prescription, and without blurb, just the single pill. This is one effect of a culture of poverty, where people cannot afford to buy a whole package of medicine. You have this little pill on your hand – orange, green, yellow, white, blue – but colour, form or flavour do not mean anything. You trust what you are offered on the basis of attraction more than information. On the plane of attraction invisible signs such as a belief in professional power intermesh with visible signs such as colour. During the last weeks, after the rainy season had stopped, cold was slowly setting in. Everyone in the house, one after the other, got flu. Manuel took pills that were recommended by Mario, whose sister is a doctor. Manuel's family took the pills that Manuel was giving them. They trusted in what he gave them, because Manuel had a friend who had a sister who was doctor. They also said they liked the colour. Due to the perceived attraction, the risk involved in taking by chance something that could harm rather than heal, got actively forgotten.

In traditional life, concrete contacts function as insurance in case of illness. Family and friends are supposed to help you out. Western medicine stands for abstraction from concrete contexts. In practice, Western medicine builds on contacts as well. The maintenance of good relations is essential. Only those contacts can be built on that are dominated by life-energies. If contacts are actualised in the case of an

emergency, conflicts in the relation have to be actively forgotten. Mario told me: ‘The brother of my wife is doctor. He is working in the IGSS<sup>64</sup> in Guatemala City and he has lots of contacts. My sister is also a doctor, so usually we don’t have problems with that. My mother was very ill two years ago. She lost her memory. We had to bring her to the Capital. It would have been very expensive to hospitalise her. But for us it didn’t cost that much. We had to pay only the costs of the medicine, but not the salary of the doctor. There is a contract among doctors about the close family of other doctors. We have an internist and a surgeon in the family. These are what you usually need. When you are a relative of a doctor, they usually do the necessary operations and they do them soon. For example if I would have to go to the hospital here, I would have to go to the public hospital. And when they would check my name and find out that I’m the brother of my sister who is doctor, they would give me the operation now rather than in three months, or never. Many people die because of lack of contacts. Although they have money, they are attended late or not attended well.’

#### 4.2.3.2 Active Forgetting and Higher Values

*Deleuze discusses through Nietzsche how nihilism, the depreciation of the given, can be disarmed.<sup>65</sup> If one approaches the given with values that go beyond the given from the outset, the given will appear as negative or not appear at all (as in the following quotation from Fredy). In this sense, higher values are a fiction. The effect of pre-given higher values is the negation of the given. If one gets rid of all values (the de-valuation of higher values themselves) and sticks with the given, one depreciates the given as soon as this is unpleasant (as in the following quotations from Mario and Luis<sup>66</sup>). Rather, negation has to be a quality of the will to power (as in the following quotation from Luisa). First there has to be the affirmation of the given. But then, there has to be the affirmation of the will to power. The will to power negates the unpleasant given. The perspective found through the flashing up of the will to power allows to actively forget the unpleasant given. Active forgetting works as long as one believes in the perspective that has been found.*

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64 The Guatemalan Institute for Social Security, IGSS, is the social insurance for those, employed by the government and better off private enterprises.

65 Deleuze 1962, pp. 147-8.

66 A teacher at the Spanish school.



‘When someone is so old that he cannot work anymore to earn his own money, there sets in the responsibility of one’s kids.’ (Fredy)

‘I don’t think that my children are going to maintain me when I am old. Since about 30 years ago this has changed here in Guatemala. Many children are going to the United States. Many people don’t want the grandfather in the house. Before, it wasn’t like this. It is good to have a business that produces money for one. But we haven’t thought much about this. Our jobs are not elitist enough for this. Jubilation is only for the people who are employed by the government. My father (who was professor at the University) now gets a pension of 2000 *Quetzales* a month, for two people. That is quite a lot. I live with five people on less.’ (Mario)

‘People in the countryside do not plan for the future. Because of illiteracy and lack of orientation. People think, ‘How can I give food to my kids?’ They just come through the present. Seven-year-old children go to the field with their *machete*. And the school? Children aged three to six go to school, no older. Father himself became malnourished, because he had been working on the *finca* all life long.’ (Luis)

‘I don’t have children. So I have to buy me a kid, which means to adopt one. The only thing is that you have to raise it for about ten years before it will work for you. Then in return you give the kid the land or house you have when you pass away. Here in Guatemala we don’t have a place for the elderly. What you do is you adopt a baby, because an older kid won’t want to be adopted. Sometimes they give a lot of children away at the hospitals. It doesn’t cost anything, as far as I have heard. Because there are many single mothers, or mothers of poor families.’ (Luisa)

#### 4.2.3.3 Active Forgetting and Critique

*Active forgetting is a mode of critique. Critique, for Deleuze in his reading of Nietzsche, is active forgetting. Active forgetting, with Deleuze’s reading of Nietzsche, means to be aware of the negative, but then to ignore it. Negative judgement then results in exclusion. The given unpleasant gets actively prevented from dominating, determining or limiting one’s activity. This is possible through orientating oneself by the principle of the will to power. For Deleuze’s Nietzsche, critique is ‘a thought that would go to the limit of what life can do, a thought that would lead life to the limit of what it can do’. It is a thought that would affirm life instead of a knowledge that is opposed*

to life.<sup>67</sup> Deleuze's concept of critique can be broadened from thinking to action. Acting in the face of the negative in the following example of Janet<sup>68</sup>'s car is an active, affirmative and aggressive force. It means to go for what one wants from life and to actively forget the risks implied in this. The thought of the eternal return comes to mind: Have as much fun in the present moment that it would be Ok if this moment would repeat itself eternally.<sup>69</sup>

### Pick-Ups

A common way of movement by people over the countryside is hitch-hiking on the transportation areas of small vans. By this way, there is a direct exposure to every kind of disturbance. People travelling this way are highly vulnerable in case of accident. Often one takes the risk because the will to come somewhere lets one forget the risk implied.

### Janet's Car

Janet, Edwin, their two year old daughter Christina, Manuel and I want to make a day-trip to a swimming pool in the coastal area. We are going there with Janet's car. The car was built in 1986 and Janet became the fifth owner when she bought it from another teacher at the school where she is working. Several things are out of order. Among the things I have noticed: there is no wing-mirror on the driver's side nor on the other side. On the other side there was never one originally and it is less important. On the driver's side it would have been important and there is still the bracket for it, just the glass is missing. One of the backside windows is smashed. The glass is still in place, but only just. It looks as if a stone has hit the window. The windscreen wiper on the passenger side is still there, but it is not working – it has to be pulled away from the glass so it does not damage it. The indicators seem to be out of order as well; when we have to turn around a corner, Janet rolls down the window and gives a signal by hand the way cyclists do. First it is less obvious, when the weather is sunny and the window is down anyway. But later, when the rain starts and fog and later darkness set in, it seems increasingly dangerous. Janet always has to roll down the window. Then both her and I on the back seat behind her get wet.

More dangerous is that only the driver's seat has a seat belt. However, Janet, the driver, does not use it. All sit unrestrained like people do in buses. Edwin, who sits on the passenger side, has the two-year-old daughter sitting on his knees. The girl often has one hand on the gear-knob, trying to move it for fun. Then Janet or Edwin push her

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67 Ibid, p. 101.

68 The wife of Edwin, a teacher at the Spanish school.

69 See *ibid*, p. 68.

hand away, but soon it is there again. On the passenger-side, there is still a plastic bracket for the seat belt, but nothing is tied into it. Twice I had the experience that local people start laughing when one uses a seat belt. Most of all, the car has no functioning shock absorbers. At the irregularities built into the street to make cars drive slower (the *tumulos*), we have to go down with the speed nearly to zero, for otherwise there is such a hard hit that the car seems to be damaged by it, leave alone us. All this does not seem to bother anyone but me. We want to go to the coast, and we go to the coast. Thanks to this car. In case of an accident, not only the small child in the front would probably die. If Janet would take account of the high risk of death to all of us in her action, she would not be able to offer to take us to the coast in this car. For all of us action is possible and it is fun, as long as we actively forget the unpleasant possibilities involved. It is possible to forget the unpleasant through concentration on what we want.

By the time we come back to Xela, Janet has drunk five beers. I ask her what her limit would be for drinking when driving car. She replies that she is not sure if there is one. She goes on, if it were for the police, Ok. Then she would not drink, of course. But in Guatemala this would not be the case. The police would not care. They would do the blood tests from time to time; they would have the equipment. But just by the by, for fun. There would be no consequences. The police themselves would be drinking beer for example while being on duty for security reasons at the *Fuentes Georginas*<sup>70</sup>. So what? The police would also be driving their men around on the back of pick-ups from A to B. How could they say anything convincing against the non-existence of seat belts or them not-being-used? If Janet had bound the possibility of causing an accident into her actions, where reaction-time can decide about life and death, it might have become an urge perceived from within herself not to drink while driving. However, she drunk. The risk got actively forgotten. The possibility of unpleasure was obviously there, but it did not affect her action. The unpleasant remained unbound. We wanted to have fun, and we had fun. So what?

I ask Janet if she had insurance for the car or for herself in case of accidents. She replies: 'this is not how things are going in Guatemala. No one has an insurance against accidents, not even rich people. If something happens, it happens - and you pay yourself!' Half a year ago, she continues, Janet and Edwin had had bad luck with their electricity supply. They were in their home, watching TV in the evening. Suddenly all the lights became much brighter and then went off. There was a sudden, loud noise. All the electrical appliances were sparking and then stopped working - the refrigerator, the TV and the stereo. It was clear that this collapse was due to an irregularity in the electricity

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70 A local steam bath.

supply. Presumably, the electricity company would have to pay for the damage, but this was not so. Edwin just laughed when I told him what I thought. ‘This is just not how things are going here in Guatemala,’ he replied. ‘No one will pay. We have to find our own ways to repair the damage – through friends or acquaintances who have learned to repair TV’s or stereos. Or through buying new apparatuses, such as a refrigerator. Organisations deny their responsibility.’ Instead of constant worries about the possibility of losing all electric equipment in one blow, Janet and Edwin’s attitude was, ‘when it happens it happens.’ They trusted their ability to cope with the unpleasant when it actually arose. Until then, they actively forgot the risk and instead concentrated on what they wanted.

### 4.3 CONCLUSION AND LINE OF FLIGHT

*This chapter has focused on areas of existence where the unpleasant is immanent part of everyday life. There are no shock absorbers. On an actual level, defence against the unpleasant is not possible. By adopting a perspective of Deleuze’s Nietzsche, it was possible to explicitly affirm a life without shock absorbers. If there are no structural defences available, the self will encounter the unpleasant within the realm of lived time, the Nietzschean world of the will to power. An encounter with the unpleasant on the plane of lived time allows one to generate active and singular responses to a perceived unpleasant, driven by the force of life. People in Guatemala, however, seem not to live without such shock-absorbers because they are convinced, as is Deleuze with Nietzsche, that this is the better mode of living the present, but because there are no means to set these up. In the following example of Don Arsenio’s employment experience, there seems to be a strong line of flight towards a life with shock absorbers. With Deleuze’s Nietzsche, such a desire for security and structural hold would be expression of a becoming-reactive<sup>71</sup>. Deleuze fears that then, there is no more orientation by life. Rather, reactive forces take over and the aim is ‘to secure mechanical means and final ends’.<sup>72</sup>*

#### **Don Arsenio on Industrial Work-Time**

‘In a factory you can stop at 6 p.m, and you can start at 2 p.m, and you will be paid for this time. You can rely on the income; it is regular. And then you go home and you can forget your work until the next day. By contrast, now that I am self-employed, I have to finish my work. And if this is not possible during the day, then I have to do it at

71 See Deleuze 1962, p. 40.

72 Ibid.

night. Often, there is no work. I don't know in advance. If someone asks for a jacket, then there is work. If no one is asking, there is no work and no money. For about two years, I was working in a factory here in Xela that was producing jackets. I was doing bags the whole day, just cutting the material for that. Not just for one jacket, for many. There were the cuttings for the jacket, the arms, the buttons and the collar. And not all the same, but one jacket cutting in size 38, then another in 40 and in 42, so that no fabric would be wasted. The vans with the roles of fabric came along and then we were cutting, all with machines. Then one went to another machine, connected it to the fabric and just pressed a button and yet it was sewing in all colours. It looked like a cake, not like a jacket.' I summarise, 'that sounds economical.' 'Yes.' 'Was the atmosphere good, among the workers?' I ask. 'Yes,' *Don Arsenio* goes on to recall. 'There were about 40 people working, everyone at his machine. We were all working together. The only thing was that there were a lot of games.' 'Games?' I ask. 'Yes, at the sewing machines there were little container for the oil that kept the machine going. But when there was no oil, these containers remained empty. People filled them with water and put them on the seat of your chair. And when you sat down, your whole butt would be wet. That happened a lot.' The money in the factory wasn't much, it was Q2.50 a day, but this money was secure.' (*Don Arsenio*)

## CHAPTER 5

'GRACIAS A DIOS'<sup>1</sup>

THE EVENT AND GUATEMALAN BUSES<sup>2</sup>

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION: MAKING SENSE OF THE OTHER AND THE DOUBLE READING OF TIME

Making sense is orientation by the 'event'. The event is the 'forced movement'<sup>3</sup> of affective differentiation introduced in the previous chapter by way of Deleuze's reading of Freud through Nietzsche. Where the previous chapter was most of all about a self-affirmation of the own will for life in the co-existence with the unpleasant, this chapter will look at the event as a making sense of the 'other'. The other is what attracts the attention of a self's will for life in the present. In this sense, the previous chapter and this chapter are two halves of the same theme. The previous chapter showed one side of the event. This chapter shows the second half of becoming-active. In the previous chapter, what here shall be called the 'other' was introduced as 'object'. The point was that becoming-active starts with the contraction of a virtual, not an actual object. The recognition of an actual object rests on a generalisation from a contracted virtual object. Deleuze is against recognition of the actual other, because he emphasizes the freezing of the manifold virtual movements that actualisation implies. Deleuze keeps the dynamic that emerges in-between the will for life of a self and its virtual other as far away from the actual other as possible – going so far as to claim that the event is 'expression of a world without Others'<sup>4</sup>.

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1 Engl.: 'Thanks to God'. *Doña Toria* and *Doña Maria* used this phrase constantly. It affirms chance, and at the same time it expresses the hope that one's destiny will go in a favourable direction. See above chapter 2, section on 'temporalities of Saints'.

2 See photo 13 in appendix .

3 Deleuze 1969, p. 239.

4 See Michel Tournier-reading in the appendix to Deleuze 1969.

In line with the argument from the previous chapter, this chapter will argue that the Deleuzian event is indeed an expression of a world without actual others. However, virtual others are essential to it. This introduction will open up the theme of the other in the event by way of three possibilities. First, there is the actual other (that has emerged from a contracted virtual other). Second, there is the virtual other. Third, there is a chance that there is no other at all. The position of Deleuze on the other will be contrasted with the position of inter-relational psychoanalyst Jessica Benjamin<sup>5</sup>. Benjamin's argument emphasizes what one might call the significance of the recognition of an *actual* other – especially as regards the encounter with the *unpleasant*. For Jessica Benjamin, recognition of the actual other would be crucial. Where Deleuze's attempt to get away from the actual other is reminiscent of Nietzschean anti-humanism in that the human is understood as operating on the plane of the actual and the world of the will to power is understood as operating on the plane of the virtual, prior to the actual, Jessica Benjamin unfolds what one might read as an account of the event that is explicitly inter-subjective. For her it is not only important to recognise that there is an actual other implied in the contraction of a virtual other, but also that this actual other might be another human being.

Jessica Benjamin expresses her position through the psychoanalytic core-concept of triangulation. The following text will show in what way her account is compatible with the Deleuzian event, and in what ways the two positions depart from one another. In both the J. Benjaminean and the Deleuzian event, the exposure to newness is crucial. The first chapter of this book showed how Bergson distinguished between habit as a mode of relating to the world that reproduces the given and recollection as a mode of relating to the world that produces something new.<sup>6</sup> In reminiscence one could say that habit enables the encounter with a known other, while the event enables the encounter with an unknown other.

In the *Logic of Sense*<sup>7</sup>, Deleuze defines the event with the Stoics. The Stoic theory of the event is a theory about language. The Stoics wanted to understand the relation between language and the material given that a proposition (a statement) can express. The key for them in this relation was sense. Sense is an immaterial surface constituting the border between the material surface of the given and the proposition that expresses the given. Sense still belongs to the realm of time. Yet it is already linked to language. Sense is the outcome of the affective

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5 Jessica Benjamin 1988: *The Bonds of Love. Psychoanalysis, Feminism and the Problem of Power*.

6 See Bergson 1896, pp. 77-88.

7 Deleuze 1969.

differentiation of the event. Though the Stoic event is not conceived as a theory about self and other, the present chapter will show how this is implied in it. In the immaterial surface of sense, the self that utters a proposition has inscribed itself into the given to which it relates. According to Deleuze's reading of the Stoics, the temporal surface of sense emerges when a double reading of time takes place: a movement must be grasped both as present (Chronos) and as past and future (Aion).<sup>8</sup> Chronos, this text wants to argue, is the time of the actual other. It is given independently of the self. Aion, by contrast, is the time of the event. Aion is the effect of an organisation of time that rests on the contraction of a virtual other. If the event, and thus Aion, does not build up, there is what Bergson called 'duration', an undifferentiated whole where everything remains on the level of singular images. Duration is an expression of the absence of any other whatsoever. Then the actual others of the material world do not function as others in the world-view of the perceiving self.

"Thus time must be grasped twice, in two complementary, though mutually exclusive fashions. First, it must be grasped entirely as the living present in bodies which act and are acted upon. Second, it must be grasped entirely as an entity infinitely divisible into past and future, and into the incorporeal effects which result from bodies, their actions and their passions. Only the present exists in time and gathers together or absorbs the past and future. But only the past and future inhere in time and divide each present infinitely. These are not three successive dimensions, but two simultaneous readings of time."<sup>9</sup>

### 5.1.1 The Event and the Notion of the 'Other'

Deleuze emphasizes that the event starts from pre-individual singularities and not from entities like self and other.<sup>10</sup> Entities like self and other refer to symbolic representations. In Deleuze, a symbolic representation appears as actual other in a negative sense. Orientation by symbolic representation towards the other abstracts and thereby generalises from the play of singularities in a concrete encounter.<sup>11</sup> Encounters then get pre-channelled by expectations, so that what really takes place in the realm of affect gets overlaid by expectations con-

8 Ibid, pp. 61-65 & 162-68.

9 Ibid, p. 5.

10 See *ibid*, pp. 111-117. This is a general position that goes through the entire work of Deleuze. See for example the Tournier-reading in the appendix to Deleuze 1969 (pp. 301-21), and Deleuze 2001: *Pure Immanence. Essays on A Life*, chapter 1.

11 See the Bergsonian definition of habit, chapter 1 of this book and Bergson (1896, chapter 2).



cerning what should take place. Symbolic representations in this sense prevent any real encounter. Deleuze's most explicit anti-example of the pitfalls of relating affective differentiation to symbolic representations of actual others is given in the book *Anti-Oedipus*<sup>12</sup> that Deleuze wrote in collaboration with Guattari. The Oedipus complex is the Freudian model of differentiation.<sup>13</sup> In the Oedipus complex, affective differentiation is regulated through symbolic representations of the most important actual others of the child-self. The differentiation of the affective capacity of the little child is the outcome of the triangular relation in the kernel family. The child, this theory says, escapes a primal merging in a dyad with the mother (Oedipus' wish to marry the mother) through turning towards the father. (Oedipus' wish to kill the father in order to replace him). The father's role is to say 'No' to merging both with the mother and with himself. This differentiation opens the way for the individuation of the child. Deleuze and Guattari depict the Freudian theory of individuation in its link with the 'daddy-mummy-me-triad'<sup>14</sup> as the founding cliché of psychoanalysis. The unique play of singularities remains invisible due to their general explanation by symbolisations within the Oedipal triad.

The event, though, which may be the kernel of the entire Deleuzian adventure in philosophy,<sup>15</sup> rests on a triangular dynamic that is surprisingly similar to the Freudian model. Every production of sense rests on a self's initial merging with an other and a subsequent distancing from this other. It is just that this other is virtual. The relation of the event to the virtual other is elaborated in the work of Jessica Benjamin. The temporal space that Deleuze calls 'event' is called the 'energetic third' in Jessica Benjamin.<sup>16</sup> Deleuze and Jessica Benjamin have in common that they find in the pre-symbolic realm of affect the possibility of transgressing actual boundaries between self and other. Jessica Benjamin assumes, on the basis of contemporary child research<sup>17</sup>, that there is from the beginning of life an affective relation between a self and its other. This is in contrast to the Freudian notion of differentiation. Freud insisted that there is no other prior to the ac-

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12 Deleuze/Guattari 1972.

13 For a general introduction see Mertens/Waldvogel (ed, 2000, pp. 514-22). For the Freudian original to which Deleuze and Guattari refer in their critique see Sigmund Freud 1923b: *Das Ich und das Es*. GW XIII.

14 See Deleuze/Guattari 1972, p. 28.

15 This qualification has already been made in the previous chapter. Here, it refers to the same dynamic as in the previous chapter, just under a different name and in a different context.

16 Jessica Benjamin 2004: 'Beyond Doer and Done To. An Intersubjective View of Thirdness'.

17 Daniel Stern 1986: *The interpersonal World of the Infant*. Guattari also grounded his work on processual subjectivity and the refrain in the work of Daniel Stern. See introduction to chapter 3 of this book.

tual other. According to Freud, prior to the capacity for symbolisation, the child merges with the mother on the level of affective experience. The mother appears not as an other, but as one with the child. In the language of Deleuze, the felt other would be a virtual series. In the Deleuzian event, ‘singularities’<sup>18</sup> organise themselves into series. In Deleuze, series always appear as a triad.<sup>19</sup> The series of sense can emerge due to the tension between two former series. To recall Jessica Benjamin, these two former series can be termed the virtual other and the virtual self. In-between the virtual other and the virtual self, the differentiation of sense can set off by a tension between resonance and distancing that is reminiscent of the Freudian dynamic. It is just that the Freudian triangular dynamic is driven by a tension between the affection of a self and the representation of an other within the mind of an individual person, while the triangular dynamic of the event takes place thanks to a tension between the affection of a self and a virtual other out there, in the world.

At this point, Deleuze and Jessica Benjamin’s interests take them in different directions. Jessica Benjamin is interested in transgressing boundaries between actual self and actual other in order to share experience with an other person. A crucial part of her work is the elaboration of a positive notion of an actual other: a symbolic representation emerges out of experiences with the felt other. The experience of this representation induces in the self the awareness that the other, in relation to which an event emerges, has an existence also outside the will of the self, despite the sharing of affect. By maintaining the tension between the affective relation to the felt virtual other and the cognitive relation to the actual other, what one might call the ‘Benjaminian event’ becomes a relation with the actual world.<sup>20</sup> Deleuze, by contrast, is interested in transgressing boundaries between actual self and actual other in order to free the emergence of the new. He emphasizes that the event is pre-individual, because he wants to keep the channels in which singularities organise themselves open. The Deleuzian event is a model of differentiation that is maximally flexible. It is free from any specific actual relation. Time is liberated from space. The virtual other is liberated from the actual other. The self in the Deleuzian event is a ‘citizen of the world’.<sup>21</sup> It relates to the present only through virtual others. The contraction of these is explicitly unpredictable.

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18 Singular entities within the realm of lived time. These might be singular images or singular forces of intensity, depending on the context in which the concept is employed. See Deleuze 1969, pp. 100-08.

19 See Deleuze 1969, pp. 36-41. See also Bergson’s definition of matter (Bergson 1896, p. 20).

20 See J. Benjamin 1988, chapter 1 and J. Benjamin 2004.

21 See Deleuze 1969, p.148.

### 5.1.2 Chronos: The Time of the Actual Other

The event in Deleuze's reading of the Stoics begins on the level of bodies.<sup>22</sup> Bodies move in the time of Chronos. Chronos measures the present.<sup>23</sup> In Deleuze, the temporality of Chronos remains marginal to the over-all argument. It is there, but it seems to be there simply so that we may depart from it. Chronos kicks off the event and that is all. It is not what Deleuze is interested in. From the perspective of Deleuze, this is understandable. Measuring is a spatialising of the other. Spatialising is keeping the other present through representation. Representation in Deleuze is freezing and determining the free play of singularities within time. When taking into account the work of Jessica Benjamin, by way of contrast, Chronos becomes crucial. Then, representation becomes the realm that affect cannot reach and Chronos becomes the time of the actual other.<sup>24</sup> Taking into consideration the work of Jessica Benjamin, the time of the actual becomes the time of the other as other. It is the time of that which moves and acts according to its own inner logic, independent of the will of the self. Chronos, in this sense, limits the power of the self. If the self accepts this limitation, it can inter-act through the event with the actual world. The actual world is the world of others. If the self forecloses the limitation that Chronos imposes on its power, it remains stuck in the virtual. The virtual is a world without others as independent of the self's will. The virtual is a world without others as others.

In Jessica Benjamin, what responds to the representation of the other as actual other emerges gradually through a long-term process of experience.<sup>25</sup> First, there is affective attuning. Both self and other temporally dissolve as distinct entities in an energetic in-between space of mutual experience. There emerges trust. Gradually, the good experience with the other gets bound in a representation of the other as the source of this good experience. At some point, the experience of difference between self and other comes to the forefront. It challenges the experience of unity. The self realises that the other follows his own projects, leads his own life and thus is only at certain times available for responding to the will of the self. If the binding to the other as something good and important can be held despite the felt frustration, then over time the inner representation of the other transforms itself. The other becomes part of the actual world. Now, the encounter with the other receives a new, more mature dimension. While affective attuning transmits an experience of in-between-ness, holding the will of

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22 See *ibid.*, pp. 4-11.

23 *Ibid.*, p. 162. See also Bergson 1896, p. 32.

24 See on the usage of an object: Winnicott 1971: *Playing and Reality*, chapter 6 and J. Benjamin 1988, pp. 36-42.

25 See J. Benjamin 1988, chapter 1 and J. Benjamin 2004.

the other in tension with the will of the self allows for mutual differentiation in this space of in-between-ness, rather than domination of one will over the other.

Deleuze, by contrast, does not have time for long-term processes. The Deleuzian event celebrates superficiality. The encounter between self and other takes only the time of an instant.<sup>26</sup> This is the minimal amount of Chronos, the time that it takes to produce an affection. Orientation remains on the level of pre-verbal surface tension. The notion of the body, however, entails the conceptual otherness of the actual other. Through the concept of the body in the Deleuzian event, the otherness of the other is set up as a principle of thinking. In the Deleuzian event, the notion of the body frames perception according to values implied in the concept. The concept of the body adds to the orientation by pre-verbal surface tension a representation of the other as actual other. The body is introduced as actual through its materiality. Its materiality suggests that it exists outside the will of a self. Moreover, the body in Deleuze's reading of the Stoics is unpredictable and unreliable. Bodies always appear in states of affairs.

"First, there are bodies with their tensions, physical qualities, actions and passions, and the corresponding 'states of affairs.' These states of affairs, actions and passions, are determined by the mixtures of bodies. [...] The only time of bodies and states of affairs is the present."<sup>27</sup>

The notion 'state of affairs' suggests a snapshot of something diverse that is constantly rearranging itself according to chance. The moment of unity that affection produces comes together with an actual state of affairs that goes its own way. As representation of the other as actual other, the notion of the body and the temporality of Chronos receive a surprising importance, given their marginal position in the text. It is an ethical dimension that this positive notion of the actual other adds to the event. There is an ideal of letting loose from expectancy and generalisation. The market-chapter showed how the self has to dissolve its notion of actual self-hood in order to enter the realm of lived time. In the same way, the self has to let loose from any notion of the actual other in order to enter the realm of lived time where encounters can take place. However, where in Jessica Benjamin letting loose implicates that the other as actual other is emotionally important for me, despite leading her own life; and I am emotionally important for the other, despite leading my own life, Deleuze intimates another message: the other as actual other is unpredictable; let yourself be affected, have fun, but in the end don't rely on anyone but yourself.

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26 See Deleuze 1969, p. 147.

27 Ibid, pp. 4-5.

### 5.1.3 Aion: The Time of the Event

The event is not about actual others, but about virtual effects of actual others. The Stoics, according to Deleuze, characterized events as ‘incorporeal effects’ of bodies and their actions. Aion is the temporality of the event. It consists in incorporeal effects of actual others:

“[...], all bodies are causes in relation to each other, and causes for each other – but causes of what? They are causes of certain things of an entirely different nature. These *effects* are not bodies, but, properly speaking, ‘incorporeal’ entities. [...] They are not things or facts, but events. We cannot say that they exist, but rather that they subsist or inhere (having this minimum of being which is appropriate to that which is not a thing, a non-existing entity) [...] They are not living presents, but infinitives: the unlimited Aion, the becoming which divides itself infinitely in past and future and always eludes the present.”<sup>28</sup>

Aion, in distinction from Chronos, is reminiscent of the virtual in distinction from the actual. Aion as the temporality of the virtual in the event is, however, much more Nietzschean than Bergsonian. Deleuze argues that Bergson confined himself to the virtual as the pure past. Memory opens up a realm where time just is, in co-existence with the present that passes.<sup>29</sup> The Deleuzian event, by contrast, is about the virtual as an emergent movement. Reminiscent of Deleuze’s reading of the Nietzschean doctrine of the eternal return, Aion is a virtual movement that emerges in an encounter of the pure past with the actual present. Both the passing present and the pure past are just pre-conditions for Aion as a virtual emergent movement.

Aion gets activated through signs. Signs make out of memory a force that points towards the future, rather than towards the past. The interpretation of signs, Deleuze argues, is not so much about recollection of the past as it is about an apprenticeship of the present by way of the past.<sup>30</sup> Signs translate an actual other into the virtual. Through the contraction of signs, the actual other enters the realm of the virtual. Through the contraction of signs from the actual, the virtual opens up the actual towards something else. Through signs, Aion opens up the actual given to a virtual communication with the world.

The pure form of Aion is ‘univocal Being’.<sup>31</sup> Univocal Being is the condition of the virtual. In line with what has been said so far, in

28 Ibid, pp.4-5.

29 See Deleuze 1966. As well in his book on Marcel Proust, Deleuze (1964, pp. 58-9) argues that Bergson confined himself with the virtual as the pure past.

30 See Deleuze 1964, chapter 3.

31 See Deleuze 1969, pp. 172-180 on univocal Being.

the Deleuzian event, univocal Being is a condition of the emerging movement of Aion, rather than a condition of the pure past in general. In contrast to what one might assume from the name of the concept, univocal Being is as much about difference as it is about sameness. On the one hand, Aion provides the conditions for opening up the given to a communication with the world: in Aion, the distinctions that give form to actual others fall away. The contracted sign provides one point that is univocal among everything that Aion takes up. This point establishes resonance among all the events that take part in a given event. On the other hand, it is difference that is univocal. Everything that responds to the sign that set off the temporality of Aion maintains its singularity while communicating through the point that established resonance. The affirmation of the distance between the different moments that take part in opening up a given event is as important a condition for communication as the moment of resonance. The most diverse events can communicate with each other under conditions of univocal Being, because there is one moment that provides unity *and* because there is an affirmation of the difference of each of the communicating entities in relation to each other. Univocal Being is a balance between difference and sameness.

“The univocity of Being does not mean that there is one and the same Being; on the contrary, beings are multiple and different, they are always produced by a disjunctive synthesis, and they themselves are disjointed and divergent, *membra disjuncta*. The univocity of Being signifies that Being is Voice that is said, and that is said in one and the same “sense” of everything about which it is said. That of which it is said is not at all the same, but Being is the same for everything about which it is said. It occurs, therefore, as a unique event for everything that happens to the most diverse things, *Eventum tantum* for all events, the ultimate form for all of the forms which remain disjointed in it, but which bring about the resonance and the ramification of their disjunction.”<sup>32</sup>

Deleuze’s reading of univocal Being as the mode of Aion manages to keep the event apart from notions of self and other. The abstract notion ‘univocal Being’ lets the balance between difference and sameness appear as an ontological given. The bringing together of the Deleuzian event with Benjaminian triangulation, however, makes it possible to search for a concept of the self in the balance between the difference and sameness of univocal Being. In the context of an ethics of the event, Deleuze implicitly introduces, with the Stoics, a notion of the self. The Stoic ethic consists in ‘willing the event’. Willing the

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32 Deleuze 1969, p. 179.

event is an attempt to formulate the attitude through which a self can set off events.<sup>33</sup>

"The (Stoic) sage waits for the event, that is to say, *understands* the pure event in its eternal truth, independently of its spatio-temporal actualisation, as something eternally yet-to-come and always already passed according to the line of the Aion. But, at the same time, the sage also *wills the embodiment* and the actualisation of the pure incorporeal event in a state of affairs and in his or her own body and flesh."<sup>34</sup>

Willing the event consists in three sequential steps: understanding, willing and representing the event. The idea is very Nietzschean and basically reiterates, with the help of a different terminology, the ideas introduced and set to work in the previous chapter. First, the actual self is left behind through passively understanding the affective dynamic within a given state of affairs. At this stage, whatever there is shall be affirmed, no matter whether it is pleasant or unpleasant. (This affirmation produces the *understanding* of the event.) Second, the self lets itself be attracted through its will by something within the given. (This is the *willing* of the event.) Third, the self feels sense emerging. Sense *expresses* the event. The self can represent this expression. The Stoics limited the representation of the event to language and thus to thinking and speaking. The previous chapter has shown, however, that an event can be represented by any kind of action.

Deleuze emphasizes the fact that the Stoic ethics of the event does not consist in actualising the given, but in counter-actualising it. The actual other has been altered unpredictably through its exposure to virtual communication in the univocity of Being. In this sense, the univocity of Being appears in Deleuze as 'universal freedom'. Through the univocity of Being, Aion liberates the present from its material givenness. When taking into account the work of Jessica Benjamin, however, the focus gets laid on the fact that everything that the will understands, selects and represents remains within the realm of the affective perception of a self. In Aion, the communication with the actual other remains within the realm of the own virtuality. To qualify Aion as the affective impression of a self is to see the 'universal freedom'<sup>35</sup> that Deleuze ascribes to the realm of univocal Being in much more relative terms. When taking into consideration the work of Jessica Benjamin, therefore, the balance between sameness and difference that characterizes Aion becomes explicitly a balance between a self and its other.

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33 See *ibid.*, pp. 142–154, 109–26.

34 *Ibid.*, pp. 146.

35 *Ibid.*, p. 178.

### 5.1.4 The Event as Virtual Balance between Self and Other

Within Aion, there emerges sense. If Aion is the time of the entire event, sense is the surface of the event. It is part of Aion.<sup>36</sup> In Deleuze's reading of the Stoics, the movement through which sense emerges is at one point characterized as a 'point-line-surface'-dynamic.<sup>37</sup> This notion allows us to understand Aion as an organisation of time that rests on the virtual balance between a self and an other. It is a descriptive notion. It describes how the emergence of sense feels. The compound term will serve here to describe the emergence of sense as it is explained in the *Logic of Sense* more generally. First of all, the notion 'point' refers to the setting off of the event. If the event is understood as an organisation of time that rests on a virtual balance between self and other, then the points that set off the event can be said to link a self and an other. The link sets the stage for the event. The notion 'line', then, expresses the process of the unfolding of the event in 'series' over time. If the event is conceived as an organisation of time that rests on a virtual balance between self and other, then the unfolding of the lines brings volume into that which takes place in-between self and other. The surface is immaterial. It is a feeling of orientation. In relation to the virtual balance between self and other, the notion 'surface' expresses the idea that something has built-up in-between self and other.

In Deleuze, points are singularities. In the virtual, everything is singularity. In their pure state, singularities are in complete disorganisation. In the event, singularities organise themselves. For a given event, certain singularities act as points that set off the event. The event starts from a virtual point taken up from the material surface of the given state of affairs. This point becomes the 'cause' of the event. It has been taken up because it triggered resonance with another point. This other point acts as 'quasi-cause' of the event. In sympathy with the Benjaminese notion of triangulation, one could say that the contraction of a point produces an other out of something within the given. Other-ing starts off from an actual other, but takes place on the level of the virtual. At this stage, other-ing works through sameness: the quasi-cause is a point within the time of a self. The link between cause and quasi-cause is established by an affection. The affection takes up something from within the actual other that responds to the will of a self as the virtual dimension of an actual self. The link of self and other through affection sets the stage for the event. This happens passively. It is unconscious and therefore unpredictable.

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36 See *ibid.*, pp. 164 – 168.

37 See *ibid.*, p. 241.



"This is to say that incorporeal sense, as the result of the actions and the passions of the body, may preserve its difference from the corporeal cause only to the degree that it is linked, at the surface, to a quasi-cause which is itself incorporeal. The Stoics saw clearly that the event is subject to a double causality, referring on one hand to mixtures of bodies which are its cause and, on the other, to other events, which are its quasi-cause."<sup>38</sup>

In Deleuze, the point that caused the event attracts further singularities. These organise themselves in such a way that the point unfolds into a series.<sup>39</sup> The series actualises within the virtual the affective potential from within the point taken up from the material surface of the actual other. Taking into account the Benjaminian notion of triangulation, therefore, this series could be called the series of the other. The point that acts as quasi-cause for the event attracts singularities as well. These also unfold within the virtual into a series.<sup>40</sup> One could call this series the series of the self. The series that emerges from the quasi-cause displaces in each of its singularities the series that emerges over the cause of the event. From the perspective of a Deleuzian understanding of singularities as pre-individual, this seems to be no problem. Series are by definition singular. There will never be two points that attract exactly the same singularities. However, in sympathy with the work of Jessica Benjamin, where the event becomes an organisation of time that rests on the virtual balance between self and other, the displacement of the series of the other into a series of the self depends on the differentiation of the self from the other and at the same time on the maintenance of a certain resonance between the two. If differentiation has been successful, the merging that the affect produced opens up into a field of tension in-between the series of the other, the series of the self and all other relevant context-conditions that are in play in any given event.

The field of tension of sameness and differentiation in-between self and other establishes virtual communication. The amount and intensity of virtual communication that takes place gives volume to the event. In Deleuze, this communication is a momentary adventure. Deleuze highlights the importance of the quasi-cause as the entity by means of which all the different series communicate. Though the singularities that organise themselves into series come from all past and all future, in relation to the quasi-cause all series are simultaneous.<sup>41</sup> The immanent communication between present, past and future displaces the given other that has been contracted. Deleuze is interested

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38 *Ibid.*, p. 94.

39 See *ibid.*, pp. 102-104.

40 *Ibid.*

41 See *ibid.*, pp.37-8.

in the productivity of the quasi-cause. The quasi-cause itself remains hidden, yet the entire event in all its series is an expression of it. Taking into account the work of Jessica Benjamin, by contrast, from a perspective on the event as an organisation of time that rests on the virtual balance between an actual self and an actual other, the quasi-cause is only an expression of the self's momentary virtual response to the other. Communication remains utterly unbalanced. One contracted sign taken up from the other receives a response from the entire virtuality of a self. Jessica Benjamin, in contrast to Deleuze, would be interested in the process of differentiation as a long-term process, because she is interested in a balance of communication in-between an actual self and an actual other.

The tension between all the series taking part in the event, releases the surface-series of sense. Sense is a feeling that something has emerged in the event. The fascination with the immaterial surface of sense in Deleuze rests on its newness in relation to the material surface of the given. Throughout the whole book, the *Logic of Sense* unfolds the event as taking place in-between two surfaces. First, there is the material surface from which the event takes off. Second, there is an immaterial surface that emerges through the event, that expresses the event and that displaces the first, material surface. In the later terminology of *A Thousand Plateaus*, one would say that the immaterial surface of sense 'de-territorializes' the given. From a Jessica Benjaminian perspective on the event as something that takes place in-between a self and an other, however, the event receives a much more existential dimension. The immaterial surface of sense that the event generates is something new in relation to the material surface of the given because in it, the self has inscribed itself into the given. In the surface of sense, the given gets perceived in its tension with the will for life of the self. The will for life of the self both selects the points from the other with which contact will be taken up, and holds the actual given at the distance that is a pre-condition for communication to take place.

It will have become clear by now that the event in Deleuze is not an expression of the absence of any other whatsoever. The building-up of a virtual series of the other is essential to it. If no series of the other build up, no event can organise itself and no surface can emerge. Time remains on the level of singular impulses. If time fails to organise itself,

"[...] the entire body is no longer anything but depth – it carries along and snaps up everything into this gaping depth which represents a fundamental involution. Everything is body and corporeal. Everything is a mixture of bod-

ies, and inside the body, interlocking and penetration. [...] everything is physical: [...]"<sup>42</sup>

"[...], the entire world loses its meaning. (A proposition) maintains perhaps a certain power of denotation, but this is experienced as empty. It maintains a certain power of manifestation, but this is experienced as indifferent. And it maintains a certain signification, experienced as 'false'. [...], the word loses its sense, that is, its power to draw together or to express an incorporeal effect distinct from the actions and passions of the body, and an ideational event distinct from its present realisation. Every event is realised, be it in a hallucinatory form. Every word is physical, and immediately affects the body."<sup>43</sup>

Deleuze, without using the terms self or other, describes how the absence of any other whatsoever feels. According to Deleuze, the surface of sense feels light. The failure of sense to emerge, by contrast, feels like a never-ending depth. The surface of sense feels like an immaterial balance between engagement with and distancing from the other. The failure of sense to emerge, by contrast, feels like the absence of both other and self. The surface of sense rests on a balance among all the contextual circumstances that impact a given encounter. The balance is 'good' if things keep flowing and sense emerges as the surface of this flow. The failure of sense to emerge, by contrast, rests on the absence of the immaterial surface of sense and of any immaterial dynamic that would transgress the realm of the given. Everything both in relation to the other and in relation to the self feels as if it remains on the level of the physical given. At the same time, the experience of the physical is fragmented into a vortex of singular images.

Following a J. Benjaminean perspective, the event as a virtual balance between self and other makes one understand how the absence of any other whatsoever emerges. In her work, the failure of the surface to build up is discussed as the intention of a self to be without others. A self might unconsciously choose to live without virtual others due to unpleasant experiences in the encounter with actual others. The vortex that results from the failure to affirm any important others whatsoever might be the limit of the citizen of the world.

The event consists in a double reading of time. For Deleuze this means that Chronos is the time of the actual given that sets off the event, and Aion is the temporality of the event where everything that he is interested in happens. Taking into account the work of Jessica Benjamin, by contrast, the challenge would be to maintain a virtual balance between Chronos as the time of the actual other and Aion as

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42 Ibid, p. 87.

43 Ibid.

the time of the event that takes place in-between self and other, but that gets perceived exclusively from the perspective of a self. In making sense of the material of the present chapter, however, the Deleuzian version of the event proved to be particularly useful.

“Whereas Chronos expressed the action of bodies and the creation of corporeal qualities, Aion is the locus of incorporeal events, and of attributes which are distinct from qualities. Whereas Chronos was inseparable from the bodies which filled it out entirely as causes and matter, Aion is populated by effects which haunt it without ever filling it up. Whereas Chronos was limited and infinite, Aion is unlimited, the way that future and past are unlimited, and finite like the instant. Whereas Chronos was inseparable from circularity and its accidents – such as blockages or precipitations, explosions, disconnections and indurations – Aion stretches out in a straight line, limitless in either direction. Always already passed and eternally yet to come, Aion is the eternal truth of time: *pure empty form of time*, which has freed itself of its present corporeal content and has thereby unwound its own circle, stretching itself out in a straight line.”<sup>44</sup>

## 5.2 EMPIRICAL EXPLORATIONS

The empirical material for this chapter is taken from a three-month-diary of bus-trips up and down Guatemala. The idea behind this was to capture the event as something that happens constantly in-between self and other in everyday life. The alternative would have been to explore the event as a quality of the other in itself. In that case, Guatemalan buses could have been better explored through the many sensationalist accounts of accidents, robberies and assaults given by television and newspapers. However, whether or not an event unfolds depends at least as much on the time available in a given setting as on the sign-intensity of the actual given. The temporal setting in the following material has been particularly favourable for the release of open time. Reminiscent of the film genre of the road movie, there is always some kind of destination that gives a loose frame to the setting. Being on the road in the following material is something in itself. It is a way of sharing Guatemalan everyday life from the perspective of the Deleuzian citizen of the world who is always on her way towards somewhere else. The density and unpredictability that often characterize the atmosphere within the buses suggests a pre-verbal orientation by equilibrium or dis-equilibrium of tension rather than an effort to communicate with the other as actual other. Vitalism has been ex-

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44 Ibid, p. 165.

plored in this chapter as an orientation by exteriority on the plane of lived temporalities.

Bus-trips are described as events in the sense, first of all, that everything in the descriptions is principally singular and in constant movement. Where sense emerges, the singularities of open time organise themselves temporarily into larger units. On the other hand, the following text explores the event in its temporal dimension through the concepts of Chronos and Aion. Chronos entails representations of the actual given. Aion refers to the counter-actualisation of the given through the event. The given is taken not as given, but in its tension with the will for life of a travelling self. In this sense, lightness is an essential part of the Deleuzian event. Often in the following descriptions, the will for life expresses itself as will for joy and inner tranquility. There emerges a sense of jazzy ease, joy, playfulness and lightness despite the often challenging physical circumstances.

#### 24.11. Antigua<sup>45</sup> – Xela

*In the following example, states of affairs such as the way in which luggage is stored, the way in which tickets are bought, the interior of the bus, the presence of an assistant as an essential part of the bus personnel or the bus route, do not make sense. Orientation takes place through a double reading of time. First, there is Chronos. Bodies are described in their visible, concrete, material movements. Second, Chronos opens up to Aion. The movements of storing luggage set free affects (see in the following example the sweaty climbing, the waving and the singsong of the middle-aged man). The movements of the bus set free affects (see in the following example the expression 'riding on the back of a super-dimensional elephant'). The overload of passengers within the bus sets free affects (see the expression 'one-leg-ahead-heap-side-bent-bottom-turn-head-on-push-technique'). Changing buses sets free affects (see the description of the whirly movements of catching arms, and the sweet stains from ice-cream, nuts and candy). From time to time, there flashes up a hint of sense.*

It takes a while before I find the right bus stop. Then there is a moment of pure amazement. With incredible agility a middle-aged man is climbing over the roof of the bus, or in-between roof and ground. He is loading a vast amount of cases, baskets and nets full of fruits. My rucksack seems to be one of the more simple exercises. Waving his hands, he directs the bus out of the narrow gap of the parking-bay. He is informing his immediate environment about the destination of the bus (Chimaltenango<sup>46</sup>) with a Chimaaal Chimaaal Chimaaal singsong.

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45 See map in appendix.

46 See map in appendix.

In front of the bus there are three men handling bundles of bank-notes. I try to buy a ticket from them, but they send me cheerfully onto the bus. Within the bus, there are three faces looking towards me from every bench. The aisle in the middle seems narrow, a jumble of arms, bags and bundles. In the last row – slowly I clear myself a path through – there is a spare seat. We are rocking up and down over the potholes of the car park as if on the back of a super-dimensional elephant. Once on the main road, going is much quicker. From time to time a man in the front utters sounds that I cannot understand. Probably they announce the next stop. Wow! How shall one orientate oneself, how shall one know when and where to leave the bus? At the side of the street there are neither road signs nor place name signs. I have to wait and see.

The gentleman in the front is called ‘*adjudante*’. He is the driver’s assistant. He is occupied with the recruitment and loading of passengers as well as with juggling luggage, collecting the fare and arranging the seating on the bus. He shouts ‘*Hay sitio*’ (There is a seat). He urges some passengers to squeeze closer together in order to make space for new passengers. Meanwhile the aisle is much fuller than when I got on the bus. I have no idea how the assistant manages to get through. He has a one-leg-ahead-heap-side-bend-bottom-turn-head-on-push-technique. Sometimes he worms his way through with arms wide and in front of him, before dragging his other extremities in tow. Nor can I understand how he remembers who joined the bus where and what has to be paid when. I have to pay Q2,50. This does not change even when I go one stop too far. I get alarmed by the half-empty bus. When I ask a passenger on the neighbouring seat where to change the bus for Xela, he just points backwards. I quickly leave and the bus goes slowly on its way. Luckily the assistant is climbing over the roof once again. When I call, he lets down the rucksack hand over hand from the already moving bus. The main road is found quickly, the right bus isn’t. According to my calculation, it should pass by in about 45 minutes time. I am waiting. Meanwhile I keep escaping the tentacles (literally) of the *adjudantes*. The *adjudantes* are leaning out of the front door of the moving buses. They keep hold with one hand. With the other they wave for passengers – Xela Xela Xela – every ten minutes another one tries to gather me in. Soon I know every single ice-cream-, nut- and candy floss-seller and I am stained from tip to toe. When the next ‘*Galgos*’<sup>47</sup> passes by, I give up. It’s not the ‘*Alamo*’-line, but somehow I will manage to orientate myself when leaving the bus. Travelling by ‘*Galgos*’ is familiar. Air conditioning system, one’s own seat, the luggage in-between the wheels in the boot and stop-less flying-by landscape.

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47 Equivalent to the National Express in the UK.

### 26.11. Xela – Cantél

*Sense is a fragile, immaterial surface. It originates in chance state of affairs on the level of Chronos. Chronos sets free chance affects on the level of Aion. Sense is the surface of Aion. In the following description, an apparently normal street-corner is treated like a bus stop because of the trust in the informal knowledge of local people who say it makes sense to do so. Buses pass by all the time. They provide information concerning their destination. However, the buses pass by so quickly and the information written on their front is so hand-made that it is the chance persuasiveness of a random assistant that leads to the emergence of a surface of sense that makes people finally enter. Then, a chance turn on the level of Chronos destroys the fragile surface of sense that has just been produced. The bus moves into the middle of nowhere. Post-facto, the trust invested in the bus assistant proves to have been sense-less. His information was wrong. Then new sense emerges. It starts from the movement of sudden running. Initially, this movement is just physical (its time is Chronos). Then a bus that is waiting a good bit ahead connects to the material state of affairs. The running now sets free an affect of hope in finally reaching the desired destination (the time of what has been set free is Aion). A new immaterial surface of sense appears.*

June<sup>48</sup>, Manuel, Mario<sup>49</sup> and I want to visit a glassblowing factory near Xela. The bus-stop is at the corner of Av12 calle 6, zona 3. That this is in fact the bus stop, one has to know in advance, for there is nothing that would point towards it. There is no bench, no rubbish container, and least of all a time table. Moreover, one has to know when the buses depart. At least Mario and Manuel are informed. Once again it is a complete mystery to me where to get the necessary information from. Many buses pass by, guys are hanging out of the driver doors, shouting something at us. Nevertheless I don't understand what is going on. Manuel explains to me that they are announcing the destination for the people who cannot read. Even if one can read, it does not help much. The buses are quick and the letters on the windscreen are difficult to decipher. Often they are painted by hand in bright colours and decorated lovingly with little stars and pictures. We wait. I try to counter the waving hands with a friendly smile and a 'no gracias' (no thanks). With the noise from the motors, this is not understandable anyway. Sometimes Mario exchanges a few words with one of the men who are hanging out of the bus doors. Then we go on waiting. Some buses are yellow and named only with numbers. Probably these only run within the city. A bundle-carrying woman in colourful

48 A student at the Spanish school.

49 A teacher at the Spanish school.

local indigenous clothes is sitting down beside us. The top of her head only reaches my shoulder. Her hair is bound beautifully with diverse ribbons into a kind of plait round her head. Soon she gets on a bus. We keep waiting. Mario mentions that normally every five minutes a bus should pass-by in our direction.

The persuasiveness of a further assistant finally inspires us to board a bus. As it moves I sway from one side to the other. The bus goes sharply around a curve. I worm myself through to a spare seat in the middle, Jun sits down one row in front of me. The brown plastic seats have seen better days, but the front is covered with little Christmas light strings. To the right hand and the left hand at the side of the street there are houses in the state of extension. Then there is a round-about with loads of dusty stalls. Soon there are only street, trees, streams and landscape in the midst of which we collect ourselves. Manuel is waving. We hurry to the front, jump down the quite high step onto the grass. How do frail people cope with this? The bus turns left. It starts winding itself up an incredibly steep and curvy track across the fields. We are waiting. It is drizzling. Mario explains that the assistant didn't give us exact information. Orientation seems to be a challenge for everyone. We are standing in the middle of nature, with no house, no shop, no sign – just some rubbish and a few cars passing by. Suddenly Manuel and Mario start running. Pretty far away, there is another bus. Jun and I catch up and get on. Hardly any people. This time the seats are green plastic. I do not know whether Manuel and Mario have paid. Before long we are off the bus once again.

### **Return journey**

Beside the glassblower there is a bus stop. On the right and the left there are thick wooden beams and above this a roof – perfect, because it's drizzling. Every few minutes a car passes by, sometimes a lorry or a bus. Suddenly Mario raises his arm and we hurry towards the standing bus to get on. I am sitting next to Jun. We are talking. Time is flying by. Soon Manuel waves and we are getting off the bus. It is the same corner where we got on. The return journey, including waiting time, appeared to be much shorter.

### **27.11. Xela – Zunil**

*Within the dynamic of an event, a body is something that acts on its environment. It releases affects. In the following description, the raising of an arm makes a bus stop. A bus passing by induces a feeling of having missed the right one. The woman leaving her seat gives one access to the view out of the window. A group of indigenous women entering the bus makes the interior of the bus shine yellow and vibrate from chatting and laughter. Bodies always appear within states of af-*



*fairs. Their affects compete with each other. People waiting at the side of the street act less on the driver than do the people inside the already over-crowded bus. The bus does not stop. The cheeping from the cardboard boxes acts. Is this really a luggage area? Well, never mind – the tiredness of one’s own body acts more. The bag gets stuffed next to the cheeping.*

This time June and I give it a try on our own. We want to visit a steam bath near Xela. We already know the right corner. We’ve also learned that one just has to raise an arm and the bus will stop. Only the feeling of having missed the right one with every bus passing by needs some more getting used to. Jun seems to have the better eyes. She waves and yes, on the front of the stopping bus is written ‘Zunil’. We enter. Everyone finds a seat, quite far towards the back of the bus. We let ourselves be rocked up and down through the landscape. The woman next to me gets off. This means that I get a seat near the window. Soon we are on the country road. Sometimes the bus stops and people get on or off. We are passing through a bigger village. I ask the woman in front of me its name. I don’t have to worry as we are riding to the end of the line. At the next stop, about 20 indigenous women get on the bus. They are all wearing the same colourful clothes. The bright, yellow weavings make the interior of the bus shine. A few of the women are carrying a bundle or a basket on their head. The noise of the bus is accompanied only from chatting and laughter. The woman next to me smiles at me in a friendly way and I shove over obligingly, so that her friend also finds some space on the bench. Soon they are all leaving. What a pity. I would have liked to study the colourful adornments a bit more. Meanwhile the bus is nearly empty. When the assistant asks us to disembark, everyone else is leaving as well. Apparently we are there.

### **Return Journey**

Freshly bathed, we are back on the country road. It is almost dawn and we are waiting together with about 15 other people for a bus. Before long one pulls up. Only three women and an elderly man with a stick look as if they are going to embark. Getting on I assure myself once more with a ‘Xela?’ that we are going in the right direction. Then I am busy with somehow organising arms, legs, bags and sweater. Many faces are turned towards me. Some passengers are already standing. I am by far the tallest. I remain standing in the front of the bus, balancing as it follows the curves in the road with one hand at the luggage net and the other one at the driver’s seat. The driver also seems to think that the bus is full for he passes by quite a few people who are waiting at the side of the street. Seemingly the people are on their way back from work. They look tired. The bus often stops, but despite

some passengers leaving, the bus doesn't seem to get any emptier. Quite a few people leave the bus through the back door instead of manoeuvring themselves around those standing in the aisle. After a while I can sit down. There is cheeping above me. In the luggage net there are two cardboard boxes stapled one above the other. I stuff my bag next to them. Meanwhile in perfect position, I can doze in the nearly dark bus.

### 01.12. Xela – Momostenango

*In the following example there is an ideal surface of Aion. The surface consists in a feeling of inner balance. This ideal surface is induced or destroyed through the state of affairs of material movements on the level of Chronos. The state of affairs consists in a curvy street and the jostling in the aisle. At first, standing is a way to maintain the ideal surface of inner balance in-between jostling and density. Then, relaxing and letting oneself be pushed to and fro while sitting take over as strategy. Inner balance is an open form of integrity. The affective integrity of the surface transcends the closed integrity of a body. On the level of Chronos, there is constant change. Although the surface is the effect of Chronos, there can emerge an equilibrium within all this change.*

With Mara<sup>50</sup> and Manuel I visit the market in Momostenango. We go to the 'Rotonda'<sup>51</sup> and take a bus for 'Cuatro Caminos'. This is a crossing about half an hour from Xela where four streets come together. 'Cuatro Caminos' is a central point for street vendors. One *comedor* next to the other, a few hotels in-between. Apart from the housed restaurants there are many sun-shed-covered mobile barbecues on which various kinds of food are prepared. It is quite dusty and the buses come with high frequency. Manuel finds out from which corner our bus departs and then we have to wait. I am chatting with Mara, and so we are losing any sense of time. A good deal of patience and the acceptance that quite a few things will turn out differently from how one thought are essential for the usage of public transport here.

Then we have to run, this time up to 30 metres. Everyone is running, but I don't know what we are running for. Is it about reserving a seat or about not stopping the bus for too long? Somehow funny, the slowness of the bus (low speed and frequent stops) in comparison to the hectic activity of the people who are entering the bus. We stand. After a while, Mara and Manuel sit down. I prefer standing. I found quite a good technique to keep my balance despite the curvy street. In the standing position it is more difficult to look out of the window, but

50 A student at the Spanish school.

51 A round-about and major bus interchange in Xela.

the jostling in the aisle is easier to ignore. This is why I am not very happy when the gentleman next to me points towards a seat in front of him. Two elderly, rather weighty gentlemen are already seated, leaving a narrow strip of bench free towards the aisle. I try to sit down. This turns out to be quite a challenge, due to the reluctance of the two to move over. I try to survive the next few kilometres leaning on the end of the seat, rather than sitting on it. The aisle seems to be bricked with elbows, feet, arms, knees, legs and shoulders, I can hardly believe that the assistant manages to find his way through. The street is so rough. The jostling is unbelievable. After a while I find out that the trick is to relax and to let oneself be more or less roughly pushed to and fro, no matter whether one ends up half in the aisle or on the seat of one's neighbour. It is also helpful to support oneself on sharp curves by leaning an elbow on the opposite back-rest. Despite the high density of people there is always a chance to admire the beautiful landscape through the window. Also, the space in front of one's torso is private, so that there is no danger of agoraphobia.

### **Return Journey**

*In the following diary entry, on the level of the surface of the event, affection has emancipated itself from specific bodies. It can, however, be brought back to these. First example: in the diary entry, on the level of the surface of the event, there is smiling. On the level of bodies, this goes back to the smiling pictures of the Virgin Mary as well as to the expectation, cheerfulness and relaxation released by lametta, Christmas balls and Christmas tree. Second example: in the diary entry, on the level of the surface of the event, time is creeping. On the level of bodies, this not only goes back to the gentleman's clock, but also to the discomfort that his macho outfit induces. The impression that time is creeping is also linked to the light smell of alcohol that is emanating from the gentleman, as well as to his intimidating actions, such as the kind of questions he asks, his closing of the window or the posing of his arm. Third example: in the diary entry, on the level of the surface of the event, there is density. On the level of bodies, this goes back to the bus driver's ignorance of people at the side of the street, the physical interference with other people's luggage or jackets, and the assistant hanging out of the open door of the bus during the journey. Smiling, creeping time and density are surfaces of events.*

The bus is standing in the midday sun. It is empty, since there are about 15 minutes left until the one o'clock departure. We get on the bus and sit down in the front row. Mara and Manuel sit down on the left, I on the right side of the front door. The windscreen is richly adorned with Christmas decoration. Lametta, colourful balls and in the middle there is a small, snow-covered plastic tree. On the left side,

above the speedometer, two pictures of the Virgin Mary smile down. Above the door there are a few stickers of comic figures. Neither the driver nor the assistant is around. In front of the bus there are a few boys offering ice-cream and fruits. From time to time some weighty indigenous women get on the bus. They sit down towards the rear. A gentleman with a bright green baseball jacket, *sombrero*<sup>52</sup> and a faint smell of alcohol is climbing up the steps to the front door. He is looking around. He is about 45 years of age and wearing huge sun-glasses. After sitting down next to me, he asks whether I am travelling on my own. I deny this, pointing towards Manuel and Mara. He asks me whether he should sit down somewhere else. I demur once again. There are still lots of spare seats and there is a desire on my part for him to sit elsewhere, but I want to remain friendly. When he closes the window and drapes his arm around my shoulder on the back of the seat, however, it starts to become uncomfortable. I protest and stare angrily into his eyes, such that the window remains open and the arm down. He is wearing a thick watch that can be seen only when he pulls up his sleeve in order to have a look at it. During the next 15 minutes this happens at least ten times. So I can see how time is creeping along. At 1.15 we are still there, but meanwhile the bus has become full. Everyone is sitting, with three people on a bench that has been made for two. From the noise on the roof it seems that quite a lot of things have been loaded. Music on and off we go.

During the first half hour we leave behind many waving, irritated people at the side of the street. The man next to me starts haggling for a reduced fare. I am glad that I have to pay only 1 *Quetzal* and can leave the bus after a short while. People who are carrying luggage are not very considerate in the way they treat their co-passengers as they leave the bus. In the jostling, a bundle often finds itself resting on someone else's shoulder or a jacket brushes against someone's face. If one is not sunk sleeping into the seat (as are many passengers), it is a good idea to assist disembarking passengers retrieve their luggage from the net above the seats, or else to defend the space in front of one's torso with one's hands. I am meanwhile quite comfortable, due to two slim ladies next to me who do not smell of alcohol. In San Francisco, many people get on the bus. During departure, the assistant is hanging far out the door, holding on with both hands. There is no space for him within the bus. Even on the lowest step inside the bus there are two men standing. A strong draught of air further comes through the open door, but no one falls out. Soon the two men have pushed themselves more towards the inside of the bus and the assistant starts to collect the money. The closer we come to the centre of

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52 English: Sunhat.

Xela, the emptier the bus gets. Manuel talks briefly with the driver and the bus stops at the end of twelfth *Avenida* – is this a bus stop?

### Music

*In the following diary entry, the music by 'Los Tigres del Norte' raises the affective surface (Aion) within the bus to a maximal intensity. The state of affairs of material movements within the bus creates an impression of a life without make-up – unplugged. Things are as they are: difficult in all kinds of ways, but nevertheless joyful and intense. The state of affairs of material movements within the music produces a strikingly similar affect. The music by 'Los Tigres' picks up issues from the life of 'normal people' (in this context understood to be people with little money and little formal education) and expresses them in a way that will speak to them. It's all about affect. Direct and intense. The base gives a simple, accelerated, straight-forward, vivid two-beat-working rhythm. The accordion dances over this in a straight-forward, vivid melody-line. Together they produce the impression of a positive take on everyday life. The sound is full of energy. The lyrics are in stark contrast to this. At issue are all the local possibilities of social hardship that one can think of – adultery, US-emigration, alcoholism and child-death. The male voices integrate the lyrics that express suffering into the overall sound that expresses joy. The voices are unsentimental and straight-forward like the voice of a news-reader on TV. They let the social hardship be heard (on a level of Chronos), but not felt (on the level of Aion). The music gives an account of social hardship in such a way that the overall affect is: 'Life is hard', but at the same time the song seems to say, 'hey, don't worry. Life goes on.'*

From the loudspeakers comes '*Los Tigres del Norte*'. The five-man-band was at the height of its fame in the eighties. However, this is still what one can hear from the music stalls in markets. This is also what I heard at the coast on the *patio* of Francisca from the transistor-radios of men picking coffee on the neighbouring coffee field. A local radio station called '*Radio Rancheras*' has '*Los Tigres*' on tap. Especially every Saturday evening, when there are two hours of music by the band.

Let's take a look at this one for example: the song starts with a long, full and loud accordion-harmony. The tension then releases itself into a vivid quaver-swerve. Like a horn to attract attention. Three times, different heights, small variations. The accordion-theme feels like a flash of life. The bass-movement transmits adventure-spirit. It develops surprising degrees of independence and the sound of each note is a bit cut off. The melody-movement fits into this. At the song's peak, the male voices come close to screaming. At one point a battery

pushes the energetic dynamic further up. The lyrics stand in contrast to such vividness. They address adultery. A boy and a girl are in love. The boy tells the girl to ask her father for permission to marry him. The father refuses. He confesses to his daughter that her fiancé is his son, the off-spring of an adulterous affair. The girl cries ceaselessly. Her mother solves the problem. When she is told what has happened, she encourages her daughter to marry her fiancé. The girl is not the brother of her fiancé. She is the result of her mother's adulterous affair. Here the story ends. Social hardship is integrated into the positive atmosphere created by the instrumental movements not only through the straightforward male voices, but also through humour. Adultery goes both ways and social hardship is pushed beyond what one would have expected. The exaggeration makes the reception of the miseries that '*Los Tigres*' sing about easy and enjoyable.

What is the next song about? Emigration to Mexico – a familiar theme for the people here. '*Irse mojado*' (to go wet) through the Rio Bravo that separates Mexico from the United States. Again, humorous exaggeration dilutes the seriousness of the issue. The protagonist crosses borders not once, but three times 'wet'. Someone from El Salvador went hidden over the border to Guatemala, then hidden over the border to Mexico and then hidden over the border from Mexico to the United States. He sneaked on foot through the respective countries. Easy, joyful, intense affection also comes from the movements of the instruments. A fresh accordion-melody makes the song stick immediately in the ear. Simple, bright, loud, sturdy. Somehow the sound fits to the colour and shape of the buses. The base is thrown into this, like flashes. Then the base accommodates to the characteristic base line. Pushing, steady rhythm, life goes on, hm-ta-hm-ta-hm-ta.

Fantastic, these indifferent, straight-forward, fresh, loud voices! The voices intensify the accordion. On the level of sound there is brightness. In stark contrast to this is the subject of the following song. The song is about alcohol. Someone is sitting at a table in the corner of a bar. He tries to drown his melancholy in liquor. The words go: 'Bring me the bottle so that I won't start to cry! [...] Here, at the table in the corner I will remember that never in my life I have cried [...] What I never would have dreamed of, happened: I fell in love. [...] Now, in glasses of liquor, I seek refuge [...]' For sure, this story of misery does not necessarily act on the listener as misery. It might add to the brightness produced on the instrumental level by the encounter with '*algo nuestro*' (something from us).

The next song? Child death<sup>53</sup>! The child of a man falls ill. Nothing helps. The man gives in. The sad but common theme is expressed with heartfelt affection. The song starts with a local saying: 'People say when a child dies, the grandmother brings it back to God. [There] it will become an angel and be in the Heavens for ever at the side of the creator.' The song ends with humour by picking up this saying. The man starts arguing with God, negotiating with him like with a colleague. 'Suffering is a horrible illness in order to transform oneself into an angel. Lord, You have so many angels already. On the contrary, I have only one son.' The man responds to the death of his child on the level of affect, not on the level of rationality. On the level of affect there is no hierarchy. God and man are on the same plane. Ah – what a wonderful music!

### 05.12. Xela – Zunil

*In the following examples, state of affairs are made particularly interactive in order to release events. The skinny man does not simply beg for money through telling a touching story. Going from the front to the back of the bus, he offers colourful pictures with moral messages to every passenger. This is independent of whether or not a passenger shows any interest in buying. As he moves once more from the front to the back of the bus, he collects the pictures back. Through physical contact over time, the chance of releasing an event is increased. The state of affairs increases the effect of the touching story. On the return journey, by contrast, the touching story is accompanied by the rattling of charity boxes. The noise of the rattling overpowers the sound of the spoken words. The state of affairs decreases the effect of the touching story.*

The bus is rather empty and most of the time I talk to William<sup>54</sup>. Due to the high volume of the music and the noise of the motor this is a difficult undertaking. At a curve, a skinny young man enters the bus. His torso is covered over and again with tattoos. Wearing an armless, threadbare T-shirt and worn, old jeans, he appears rather shattered. Shouting, in order to overcome the noise, he starts giving a pitch. I register the sounds quite well, but cannot understand the content. There are some words about war, wounds and imprisonment. Colourful pictures are handed out. I understand that they can be bought for a *Quetzal*. I do this. With the help of a dictionary I find out afterwards that mine says: 'You women, obey your husbands like the believer

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53 45 children of 1000 life births die in Guatemala each year under the age of five. See <http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/guatemala.htm>. (visited 20 November 2005).

54 A teacher at the Spanish school.

does God. You men, love your wives and don't get angry with them.' After collecting the unsold cards, he leaves the bus.

### Return Journey

Also on the return journey, someone is asking for money. The bus is much fuller, but it does not make so much noise. The women rattle a charity box during their pitch so that I can hardly understand a word. It seems to be about street children and schools. Many Guatemalans give a few *Centavos*.

I wonder about the patience of the driver. Often he waits a good while when passengers come running to the bus from far away. Often one can see them hurry over the fields. At one point there is an entire troop of indigenous women with children. All are running as quickly as they can, some with baskets on their head and children holding their hand. It takes a few minutes until all of them have entered the bus. Somehow people smell differently. It is not bad, just different. It is not alcohol or sweat, nor dirt, perfume, oil, wood fire, washing powder – I don't know.

### 09.12. Xela –Tajumulco<sup>55</sup>

*In the following text, the unwell-being of Mara counter-actualises Chronos. Counter-actualisation takes place within Aion. Aion not only actualises an affect from a given state of affairs, but counter-actualises it by bringing it into resonance with past affections. The urge to defecate counter-actualises the open field into a toilet. The urge to vomit counter-actualises the touring bus into a waiting bus. Aion can induce counter-actualisation even where there seems to be no space for inter-action on the level of Chronos. The crowded bus stops in the middle of nowhere because there is one singular urge to vomit. Being counter-actualised by Aion seems to be local convention. On the return journey, again, a bus is waiting due to a signalled interest to join in by people who are still far away.*

Mara and I want to climb the volcano *Tajumulco*. David, the son of a local guide, and his friend Edgar have been paid to accompany us. I am at 'La Terminal', the main bus stop in Xela. Wow, what shouting and running; what vast numbers of buses and people! How shall one find the right bus? Mara disappears to look for a toilet (an open field behind a row of houses at the edge of the market) and David decides that the bus to San Pedro is too full anyway. We wait for a while with the rucksacks. Mara comes back and David has found a bus (or did the assistant find us?). We push the luggage up onto the roof and the two

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55 A volcano in the region around the town San Marcos. See map in appendix. Guatemala has 33 active volcanoes.



boys get on the bus through the back door. When it is my turn, I realise how high the step is, thigh-high. Also the ladder that leads to the roof does not reach much further down. I drag myself up. The two boys are sitting in the last row, towards the front there are two more spare seats. When the assistant comes to collect money, he ignores me. 'I pay for my two cousins,' David is joking with the assistant, pointing towards Mara and me, the two *gringas*. Suddenly the two boys are waving at me, the bus comes to a halt and we are leaving. Mara has asked the bus driver to stop and left the bus through the front door. She has diarrhoea and goes straight to the nearby sweetcorn field. The bus is waiting in order to take us further. No one is hurrying us, but we decide to stay. So the rucksacks are handed down and we find ourselves standing at the side of the country road.

Mara is in a very bad state. She disappears again into the sweetcorn field. An indigenous family is working there, even the small children are carrying corn cobs. Apart from them there is no one. One or two buses are passing by. Because of Mara's decision to try to continue the trip, David waves at the next bus which stops immediately to pick us up. David pays again. First standing, later sitting, we reach San Marcos. David explains that the next bus in the direction of *Tajumulco* will depart at 10.30 a.m, so there is considerable time left. Nevertheless we get straight on and the boys disappear – buying drinks and snacks. A girl with a basket full of *gaseosas* (soft-drinks) has got on the bus and is strolling down the aisle. She is balancing the load skilfully on her head. Two more soft-drink sellers come after her, despite the fact that probably all the thirsty passengers have bought from the first girl. The soft-drink sellers are followed by ice-cream sellers, a woman with fruits and two boys with sweets. When the bus departs, once again every bench is filled with three passengers.

### **Return Journey 10.12.**

The boys are in a hurry. Descending the volcano, we can already see a bus in the distance, getting closer. However, we still have some way to go and are not capable of running down the hill in the same way as our two young guides. Edgar is running ahead to make the bus wait for us. We others go as quickly as possible. The bus is in fact waiting. One rucksack after the other is loaded onto the roof. I feel embarrassed because of the people waiting for us on board the bus. Once I have settled on a spare seat, I can feel my tiredness. I hardly register the people around me and let the sparsely settled landscape pass by. This time, we change buses in San Marcos. There is noise, hectic motion and most of all the bad smell from the running engines of the waiting buses. I do not understand why we do not take the bus for Xela, but David says (wrongly) that soon another one will depart. I buy some biscuits and water at the near-by kiosk. This turns out to be

unnecessary. Once again diverse kinds of drinks and snacks are on offer on board the bus. Again, I admire the sellers' sense of balance and the skilfulness of their elegant stride along the aisle. The sellers do not leave the bus through the back door. They have to work their way around each other with their loads on their heads. The ride from San Marcos back to Xela appears endlessly long. This time the return journey was longer than the journey out.

### 15.12. Xela – Cantél

*Affection is the basis for the Deleuzian ethics of the event. It consists in the three subsequent movements of understanding, willing and representing an event. In the following example, an unprecedented break and the heaviness of the luggage come to be understood as the unavoidable given (Chronos). The way people relate to the given on the level of affect (Aion) exhibits a will to maintain inner balance. No one complains when the bus stops for 20 minutes without apparent reason. The heavy load is passed down from the roof as slowly as is necessary to maintain the well-being of the assistant. Patience characterizes the actions that represent the events that have taken place.*

The Spanish school has organised a visit at a weaving collective in a village near Xela. We go to the 'Rotonda', nine people in all. The bus is nearly empty. One rucksack after the other is passed up onto the roof. Nearly everyone has a bench for him- or herself. The tour is meant to take 20 minutes, but then there is this petrol-station. We stop there without tanking up or for any other obvious reason. We stop and stop and none of the few passenger seems to be angry about that. Then the bus turns left into an extremely steep and curvy road. We are creeping ahead. Suddenly I can imagine very vividly such a bus falling down into a *barranco* (slope). When loading things off, the assistant again shows all the patience in the world. Slowly, one rucksack after the other appears at the brim of the roof and is handed down to us.

### 20.12. Panajachel<sup>56</sup> – Chichi<sup>57</sup>

*In the following example, Aion produces a surface of tension that integrates series set off by musical movements and series set off by other physical movements on the level of Chronos. The different series both affirm their distance from each other and enter into resonance with one another. What does the music do in this balance? The music underlines the dawning of the day at the start of the journey. The music drowns out the cheeping of the chicken-load. The music smoothes*

56 See map in appendix.

57 Short for Chichicastenango. See map in appendix.

*down the fight between two bus assistants, observed through the bus window. The music attracts all kinds of images of selflessness within the bus.*

Around seven o'clock in the morning I slowly shuffle down the main road. There are two buses and I get on the one with the heading 'Guate'. There are only three other passengers, all at the front. The bus fills up quickly. Music on and off we go. What is it this time? Marco Antonio Solis, the ex-singer and leader of 'Los Bukis'. Heart-melting romance by a solo male voice. This is music for the teenager in love – and for anyone else who has remained young inside, or who is so much in love that they are capable of forgetting everything else. There is no politics, no social criticism. This is pure sentiment that expresses in all detail what one 'really' feels for the other.

Outside, dawn is breaking. Inside piano and clarinet are building up. Then the soft male voice: 'Forgive me.' Going as far as it can go. Giving everything. Waking up with Marco Antonio Solis, this has style. Affirmation of life, of love and of pleasure. Heart-breaking heart-breaker. I get my legs up by jamming them against the back of the bench in front of me. Does the lady who is sitting there feel my legs in her back? At least she does not turn around. Her black hair is hanging over the back-rest. Like this we may as well be on the road for the next six hours, I would be fine with that. A bag full of *nachos*, these little corn crisps with cheese and chili flavour. Why does the driver keep the volume low? Maybe because it is still early in the morning? That would be more consideration than one expects from local bus-drivers. Maybe this is all that the loudspeakers have to offer.

The bus stops and an elderly man with a case full of young chickens gets on the bus. The cheeping is placed in the luggage net and off we go again. Now the driver turns the volume up. That drowns out the cheeping. Poor animals. How do chickens perceive music? Can they enjoy it? Or is it just noise? When Marco Antonio Solis makes some emotion-increasing pauses in a song, the cheeping comes through for a moment. It does not sound as if the animals were too happy about their present condition.

In Sololá, the next bigger village, about half of the people are getting off the bus. Some of those who get on are wearing *traje* (costume). Many are clothed in Western style. People appear to be going to work. What are we waiting for? Marco Antonio Solis keeps playing at maximum volume. Now his voice is accompanied by two rather angry male voices. An assistant from another bus has come to the open door of ours. He seems to have a quarrel with the assistant of our bus. Do the two know each other? Is there something old going on between them? They sound as if they are fighting. Wow. What is this? The two leave the bus. Something more serious seems to start. Are they going

to have a fist-fight? Marco Antonio Solis now appears more like softening washing-detergent, washing everything white and soft. It is like film music – you see these two guys outside, through the dirty window that has been opened a little bit, and you hear the electronic keyboard, clarinet and violins building up over and over to another crescendo, caressing Marco Antonio Solis's lyrics with their sound. Driver, please don't stop the Marco Antonio Solis cassette. Now we depart.

Marco Antonio Solis actually never sings about happy love, only about suffering, why? Well, do what you want, but do it at maximal volume. That is more fun. The lyric goes: 'There is no formula to forget you. You are my music and my best song. I know there is no other heart that feels the same for you. Please come back to me.' Ok. The self-less smile from the sticker with the face of the Virgin Mary above the driver mirror somehow gets mixed up with the lyrics. So do the green from the home-made letters sticking to the windscreen from the inside, taking away the upper half of the view, that say: '*Dios bendiga este bus!*' (God watch over this bus) and the plastic flowers tied around the mirror, never losing their bright redness, hopefully.

At the next stop I leave the bus through the back door. A guy takes my rucksack over his shoulder and directs me with a questioning 'Chichi? Chichi?' over the Interamericana. Before I really understand what is going on, I am sitting in the half-empty bus to the *Quiché*, the north-western region of the country. The space in the bus gets denser and denser. We often stop. Many people in traditional clothes, most of them in groups of three or four, get on the bus. A few rows ahead a tourist is angrily discussing the bus fare. I do not understand the sum and do not know how much there is to pay. For my part, I have to pay five *Quetzales*, and I am surprised how soon we arrive.

## 22.12. Chichi – Antigua

*Orientation by the event treats people like bodies. As bodies, people in the following text are, first, matter that expresses an affect and thereby acts on its environment. In this way, the silence of the bus-driver serves for orientation, the smiling of the assistant or the attraction that is emanating from the advertisement by the sellers. Second, people appear as matter that occupies space. In the full bus what counts when choosing a seat is the size of one's neighbour, as well as the occupation of space through smell or other aggressive intensities. Third, people in the following example also appear as matter that brings in money. The bus moves with lightning speed, despite the danger involved in this, in order to catch more passengers waiting at the side of the street.*

The bus drivers in Chichi seem not to be so obsessed with passengers. At least no one is shouting destinations and the driver in the bus with

the heading 'Guate' even hesitates at first to take us on board. In the end we can go as far as '*Los Encuentros*'<sup>58</sup>. The assistant loads my rucksack onto the already moving bus. Then he hurries to the front and slowly starts collecting the money. We sit in the very back. The darkened window encourages one to observe what is going on inside the bus first of all. The assistant is wearing a beige T-shirt and looks as if he had been fixing the motor shortly before departure. His shirt is full of grease. By contrast, his smile is very bright – and soon ours are as well, as this is the first time that we do not have to pay the tourist fare on this route rather than the usual fare of 3 *Quetzales*. The radio is playing softly. Most of the passengers in the half-empty bus are dozing. It is nearly three o'clock. For most of the people, it seems, most of the week-end has been spent on the annual village festivity. The bus seems to be for local commuting, for it often stops and there is a frequent change of passengers.

Hardly anyone is heavily encumbered. So the bus driver can overtake quite a few lorries and *camionetas* (second-class buses). One of the buses that gets overtaken is the bus to Guate. Therefore in '*Los Encuentros*' I can hardly follow with my eyes as quick as my rucksack is packed onto the roof of the following bus. The assistant of bus two is in a hurry. I try to find a seat, which turns out to be quite a challenge. All seats are taken twice, no one seems to be ready to shove over just a little bit. What does the elegant lady with the black, shoulder long hair and the lipstick think? Where does she come from, where is she going to? At the moment, what counts more for me is that she seems to be sober and reasonably slim. And that she does not smell bad. A man shoves himself into the free space next to her that I had in mind. The manifold creases on his face testify to a long life. Under other circumstances it would be interesting to talk to him. At the moment, however, I perceive him in terms of matter, in terms of the space that he occupies and that I meant to occupy myself.

A man of about 30 years of age is trying to sell ice-cream to me. The big yellow ice-balls in the waffles are coming towards my face, together with a wide and friendly smile and the warmth of his eyes. A bit behind him a child, perhaps eight years old, is offering oranges for sale. His body energises the atmosphere within the bus. Energy emerges from the delicate act of balancing the peeled oranges on a wide tray on his head in the crowded bus. Energy emerges from the shining of white teeth out of his open mouth. It emerges from the eager, young and lively eyes. Energy emerges also from the child-voice offering the fruits for sale, and from the bright orange of the fruits on his head.

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58 English: '*Encontrar*' means 'to encounter', to meet. '*Los Encuentros*' is a major bus interchange in the southern highlands of Guatemala.

I choose a bench with two rather skinny boys and just sit down next to them. This is how you do it here, although technically, the benches are constructed for two people only. There is little happiness about this from any of those involved, least of all by me. I am sitting for the next two hours with only half of my backside on the seat, the rest remaining in the aisle. The up-side: I have full view through the windscreen and a good opportunity to study the traffic and the driving-technique of the bus driver. The driver is in close co-operation with the assistant, who, often hanging halfway out of the driver door, gives the green light for scary overtaking manoeuvres. In a short space of time we have passed three further *camionetas*, four lorries and even a shuttle bus that departed before us in *Chichi*. People waiting at the side of the street are loaded on board. The bus fills up quickly. The overtaking frequency goes down the more people are loaded in. The speeding of the bus seems to have had success. Hardly any of those waiting is left behind for the next buses.

The boys next to me are sleeping. Due to the sliding of our bodies with the many curves in the road, I have become an equal bench-user. It starts to become rather comfortable, so I close my eyes as well. Again, I notice how noisy the motor is. The sound of the radio is hardly audible. It is of little help that the assistant plays around with its tuning buttons at every opportunity.

#### **06.01. Rio Dulce – El Estor<sup>59</sup>**

*The event is the effect of movement on the level of Chronos. In the following example, relaxation is described as event. It is the effect of passivity on the level of Chronos. Passivity here means in-activity. The weather seems to be passive; the drizzling appears like an in-active mode of rain. The assistants seem to be passive; they do not do much, only standing and chatting. The slow driving-mode appears passive. The passengers appear passive; most of them are travelling without luggage, often only a short way, sleepy. The sound-scape appears passive; there is no music and hardly any conversation. The vision-scape appears passive; the dominant impression are white T-shirts and the feeling that there is hardly anything to look at.*

It is drizzling and there is a humid breeze. Maybe this is why the luggage is loaded inside the bus. The assistant does not offer any artistic exercises on, in or around the bus. Slowness characterizes the manner of driving, the manner of stopping, the manner of passengers getting on and off the bus and the manner of collecting the bus fare. The two assistants chat most of the time while they stand in the aisle in the middle of the bus. Most of the passengers are travelling without lug-

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59 See map in appendix.

gage. Some of them carry a machete or a small bundle. Sometimes the bus stops next to a field with cattle. People get on and travel just to the next settlement. The bus is half empty. There is no music and hardly any conversation. Here, indigenous people are not wearing *traje*<sup>60</sup>. I wonder about the many white T-shirts. (Probably the whiteness is due to a lot of chlorine.) Despite the rain and the closed window, the air in the bus is fresh. The rocking up and down over the hills makes me sleepy. There is little to look at apart from the incredibly green landscape.

### 07.01. El Paraíso – El Estor

*Aion is the time of the self. Aion allows us to read the given in terms of the self's will for joy and the self's objective. In the following example, there is the will to maintain a positive, relaxed attitude towards the given. And there is the will to get from El Paraíso to El Estor. On the level of Chronos, there is chaos: the bus is broken and gets repaired on the street at the time of departure. The replacement bus looks nearly as scruffy (the envelopment of the US-declaration in the following example produces a flair of pre-history). The bus virtually falls apart upon touching it (as the anchorage in the following example) or looking more closely at it (as the foam material in the following example). On the level of Aion, by contrast, there is not chaos. The broken bus provides time for a coffee; there is hope, gratefulness, balance and pleasure.*

I can see the bus from far away. It is standing at the side of the street and all its passengers are standing next to it. There is still time to have a coffee, whatever has to be repaired. 'Whatever' turns out to be something stubborn. However, since it is still early afternoon, I am hopeful. Some of the passengers are leaving to make the last bit of the journey by foot. I prefer to spend the 15 remaining kilometres on the bus. The *camioneta* that finally works itself up the hill seems to have been built before the American Declaration of Independence (Guatemalan second-class buses are old, used-up school-buses from the US). Shock absorbers, sound absorbers, driver door or luggage area? No extras – this is just about transport. Above the mirror there is the friendly advice, 'Before leaving please check for sleeping children under your seat'. One metre above there are various cables hanging out of the wall.

No spare seat. I try to stand in the middle. Due to both potholes and driving style this is quite a challenge. One woman clings when leaving the bus to the only vertical support pole. This promptly comes out of the anchorage, turns against the assistant and takes away the

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60 The traditional indigenous clothes, consisting of *hupil* and *corte*.

ceiling construction its provisional support. For a short while there are also other cables hanging loose, then the assistant puts everything back in its place. A boy offers me a spare seat. I accept it gratefully. My sense of balance is not really able to cope with this journey standing up. Sitting down, the rocking up and down is much more enjoyable. Soon after the boy gets off the bus. An old man with a bag full of green tomatoes gets on. I look at the foam material coming out of the seat, the gleaming golden teeth of the assistant and the landscape through the backdoor of the bus. The big red bolt of the back door seems to be the most functioning part of the entire vehicle. Leaning back, I finally have a pleasant journey.

### **08.01. El Estor – St Cristóbal Verapaz**

*In the following example, the temporal experience of duration is described as event. Time seems to escape any spatialisation. On the level of Chronos, the impression of duration is the effect of the seemingly endless eight hour length of the trip, the merging of living-and working space in the bus (note in the following example the sleeping, the eating and the working), the apparent goal-less-ness of the route (note in the following example the frequent circling of the village, the stopping for people who are standing only 20 metres apart and the invitation by the assistant to travel further to a more interesting destination) and the dozing of passengers.*

My trip is meant to start at six o'clock in the morning. At ten to six I am going around the market place in search for a bus. To be early means to secure a seat. This seems to be sensible, given the seven hour length of the trip. The bus with the sign 'El Estor – Cobán' is hardly visible in the dark due to its red colour. When I come closer, the electric light inside the bus switches on. A boy is getting dressed in shirt and trousers, while a man at the door wipes his eyes. Both assistant and driver have obviously slept on the bus. Without breakfast for the two we depart. We circle the village about three times, then the market place five times, and finally we pass the main street several times – all in search of further passengers. I might as well have slept for another hour, there would have been a spare seat in the half-empty bus at any time. Certainly none of the other passengers are going to Cobán. The bus seems to function more like a local shuttle. At the first school, four women are already leaving the bus. Are they teachers?

There is a frequent change of passengers. Many are travelling for only one or two *Quetzales*. The bus stops for everyone, even if the people who are standing at the side of the street are only 20 metres apart from each other. In front of a bridge, a group of men gets on the bus. Cowboy hats, machete, rubber boots and everyone is carrying at least one big sack (sweetcorn?) of incredible volume that is loaded



with combined power onto the roof. What a noise! In Panzón it is market-day. Everyone is leaving. The bus has to do a detour over an unfinished bridge, since the main road is full of market-stalls. A family is transporting a vast number of plastic chairs. The assistant uses the time to sell bottles of smelling salt that can be sprayed onto the floor of the half-empty bus. At the next settlement, children offer banana chips, newspaper, Coca-Cola and something baked. Whatever it is, 'something' turns out to taste really good.

For some time, the bus has carried only myself, a mother with three children and ten men, most of them dozing. The atmosphere is like the return journey from a school trip. Everyone seems tired, happy and no one seems to be ready for a conversation, until the bus driver finds a radio station. The loudspeakers are positioned in the luggage nets. So far it seemed not to matter whether hissing, noise or only crackling came out of them. Now, however, it's techno, at incredibly high volume. I ask myself how the bus driver, who is sitting directly under the loudspeakers, is able to stand that. He seems to be of a sturdy nature more generally. Apart from a tin of Coke that the assistant gave him in the morning, he has not eaten or drunk anything and we have been on the road for six hours already. From time to time he takes a small child on his knees while driving. It is probably that of the woman (wife?) who is sitting next to him. When the road reaches the paved street, we stop for a short lunch. We are nearly there. After the rocking up and down, the paved street is a pleasure.

The bus to San Christóbal is more familiar. It is crowded with people and luggage. The assistant offers to take me further to Uspantán. He cannot understand what one can want in San Christóbal. A man gets on the bus with his son. The little one is waving his two bags of sweets. The man is offering coloured pencils with a booming voice. It is a special offer for the start of the school year – only five *Quetzales*. The two do brisk business. A lady in the front buys something. Only the boy makes the effort to worm himself through to the back of the bus in search of potential customers. In *San Cristóbal* half of the passengers get off. Because of the Cobán *Chipichipichipi* (drizzle), most of them had left their luggage in the front of the bus. After the eight hour trip I am happy to reach my destination.

### **09.01. San Christóbal – Uspantán**

*Chronos is the time of the actual other. It is the time of the actual given. The actual given is the way it is, independent of the will of the self. The self has to live with its physical effects. The setting back manoeuvre in the following text provides an example of the physical effects of Chronos. The oncoming traffic functions as the concrete, physical given. The street is curvy and the driver cannot see whether there is oncoming traffic. The road is often bordered by nothing more*

*than a steep slope. Additionally, the road is badly paved at best. Potholes and landslides mean that the bus is always in danger of simply overturning. The street is too narrow for two vehicles. The only thing to do is setting back in the reverse gear. Speed increases the physical danger of overturning. That danger seems to make the experience a macho-game for the driver. The assistant hanging out of the back door is a very physical solution to the challenge of finding one's way through the temporalities of the actual given.*

I am waiting at the marketplace. I have been assured by various people that the bus is meant to pass by at 10, 10.30, 11 a.m. When the bus finally comes, it really does pass me by. The bus stop seems to be about 100 metres ahead. Once there, however, it stops in quite a militant fashion for about 20 minutes. I get a seat next to a young woman. It is rather far towards the back of the bus and quite comfortable, even after another passenger joins us. The travellers are a heterogeneous group. There are all age-groups and all types from styled *ladina* to dusty *machete*- and cowboy-hat-carrier. The street is very narrow, curvy and hilly. Various slopes have to be circled, diverse potholes and landslides have to be passed. We are met with oncoming traffic and we have to engage in sharply improvised reversing. The assistant is hanging out of the back of the bus and shouting out the directions.

For lunch we stop at a kiosk with a shop. Some of the men are urinating at the side of the street. Nearly everyone has got off the bus. Many are taking the opportunity to stretch their legs for a while. The shop does splendid business with *gaseosas* and crisps. The girls who are offering *tortilla* are less successful. While I am waiting for my rucksack I admire the assistants juggling with remarkably heavy loads. Most of their work is to pass sacks down from the bus roof. How did they get all that luggage up there?

### **11.01. Uspantán – Huehuetenango: First Part**

*The time of the surface of the event is Aion. The surface is the fleeting impression of a moment. In the following example, this surface consists in a feeling of intimacy. The darkness of the night makes the interior of the bus seem like an intimate entity. Anyone who comes into the light of the headlamps becomes part of this entity. The impression of intimacy increases through further movements on the level of Chronos. For example, people move in such a way as to suggest that they know each other. Then there is the silence within the bus (as if no words were necessary), the routine movements of assistant and driver, and the hooting horn that gives the entity a unifying sound. The surface is fragile. A simple coughing might already destroy the impression of intimacy.*

Departure 5 a.m. Sleepy, I stand with other people at the market place. It is completely dark, until a heavily floodlit bus comes around the corner. I sit close to the driver. Driving in darkness seems to be no problem for him. The next five metres are always illuminated as if by daylight. With a top speed of 20km/h, the gentleman has a good purview. It is quite dusty here in the front. Strong, thick clouds of dust enter through the window next to the driver, especially when the bus touches the grasses and bushes by the side of the road. Over and over again people emerge from the darkness into the light of the headlamps. The bus is full.

The driver seems to know most of the passengers. People are slapping each other on the back, there is a squabble and some of the passengers remain standing in the front of the bus. Many get off after only a few kilometres, in areas as rural as those where they boarded from. An assistant is sitting on a turned over paint-bucket. He is responsible for opening and closing the door. Usually he stares into the dark, ignoring what is going on around him. Seemingly automatically he moves the crank for opening the door always at just the right moment to jump out of the bus and help new passengers get on. The driver often pulls at a cord that is hanging from the ceiling, thereby blowing a horn so that the arrival of the bus can be heard from afar. Most of the passengers are probably travelling to the *Quiché*. Bags, suitcases and rucksacks are packed securely in the luggage net and onto the roof. It is very quiet. Many people are sleeping. I am admiring the sunset. The radio is humming at low volume.

## Music

*In the following example, the music counter-actualises the interior of the bus. Only those aspects of the bus-interior get actualised that relate to the content of the music. The music is about the pleasure and pain linked to desire for the other in Mexican cowboy-culture. The bus interior gets actualised through my cowboy hat wearing fellow passengers and a girl humming the melody. Sensations like cat-smell or physical pain do not get actualised. In the end of the following example, however, the desire to vomit competes with the music in counter-actualising the bus interior. Now the window becomes as important as the music. The concentration on the music can no longer fully achieve the non-actualisation of the curves.*

Hmmm. *Vincente Fernández*. Sitting in a Guatemalan bus and a cassette of *Vincente Fernández* – this is it. *Rancheras clásico...Vincente* presents himself through his music as the ranch-owner, well situated, with a big heart, manifold adulterer – the charisma of someone who considers himself and who feels himself considered by others as a ‘real man’. He seems to be offering a share of his long and dear life-

experience. At issue are family, horse riding, lasso, cowboy hat, alcohol, and, over and over again, women. He presents himself as suffering from women he is engaged with, dreaming of or left by. This is about the vulnerability of someone who knows he is not vulnerable, because society supports his way of life and his position. This is about someone who knows that in the end, every ‘sin’ will be forgiven if you make people feel good. And if not, one can always go away. There is a strong sense of independence, just obeying one’s own will. More than anyone else, people in the Guatemalan countryside in non-indigenous areas listen to this. A Mexican dream. The music to endless well-known Mexican films.

Cries – then trumpets and violins in intimate interaction with the voice. ‘Look at me, kiss me, eat me with your kisses.’ Tradition, love and excess. God comes up frequently. As the one who shall bless an affair, not as the main subject of the song. God is the traditional background before which a particular love affair takes place. Like in this song: ‘*Señora*, how are you? God knows that I love you. But I don’t have enough money to make you happy.’ Hm. Again. *Vincente Fernández* is perfect for the build-up of tension. It all comes together. ‘You lied to me. You, the love of my life. Now I go through life like a vagabond, without your love.’ Sometimes the melody turns into spoken phrases, apparently when emotion gets so intense that it breaks up any melodic structure from within. What does the next song say? ‘I know that you always had doubts about the sincerity of my love.’ Now he starts whispering into one’s ear, ‘You have to help me to regain the trust that I lost with so much cheating.’ Forgiveness, the old theme. The next one: ‘I went so far away to find out whether I can live without your love. I sought the arms of many women, but nothing helped – I had to come back to you.’

‘*Por tu maldito amor*’<sup>61</sup> – *Vincente Fernández* makes one forget the smell of the cat that the old man on my right side has in his arms, kept on a leash. Nor does it matter anymore that only one half of my bottom has a purchase on the seat – why bother? Yes, my thighs hurt. But, hey, ‘*auñce te amo*’, this is *Vincente*! This is emotion in drops and at maximal volume slipping out of the cheap loudspeakers. I try to relax and let my torso fall back, hoping it will gather through gravity the space that my diplomacy was not capable of taking from my two cowboy hat wearing middle-aged male neighbours. Just relax and enjoy yourself. Mmh, this voice is so *macho*, in the best sense of the word. Like on a high mountain, just floating above everything with the pitch, and at the same time on bended knees because of heartfelt engagement. A few guitar chords and everything is immediately clear. This song is such a hit here. The little girl standing between my legs

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61 English: ‘Because of your cursed love.’

starts humming. Does she know the words? Uuh, this curve – when was breakfast? I feel the flavour of the tortilla with *chirmol* again on the back of my tongue. Concentrate on the music. Concentrate on the violin. Yeah, that is better. Give yourself to the music. I want the window to open up. Why does the second of my cowboy-hat bench colleagues sleep? Ok, I have to get up and open it myself. Hm, the music. In Sacapulas<sup>62</sup> hardly anyone apart from me leaves the bus.

## Second Part

*Chronos is the time of the actual. The actual acts on others. In the virtual, movements have an effect only for the passive self. One perceives a sensation or links a certain memory with a perceived object. In the actual, by contrast, movements act on a reality outside oneself. In the following diary entry, the window gets closed and it is less hot inside. The bus passes over a bad road and reading for the passengers inside becomes difficult. The luggage is passed down from the roof towards the street-side rather than to the pavement-side and the receivers are endangered by the following traffic.*

In the bus from Aguacatán<sup>63</sup> to Huehue it is *hot*. My T-shirt is sticking to the plastic seat from the midday-sun and my left side feels like it is burning. Then the boy in front of me closes the window. Despite the low density of passengers I feel close to suffocating. Soon, however, I realise that through the nearly closed window the high temperatures are much easier to stand than before. Here one can distinguish who is an experienced passenger. Through the closed window, less dust is breezing in and the dirty windowpane shields us from most of the sun. Also the draught flows much more pleasantly through the narrow gap that is left open.

Most of the passengers are reading. I cannot understand how they can decipher the letters, with the road in such a bad condition. '*Prensa Libre*'<sup>64</sup> is read much more frequently than '*La Hora*'<sup>65</sup>. Many passengers seem to be pupils and students. They are chatting with each other and changing places. Some are flicking through yellow-marked pages. After a few kilometres some indigenous women, loaded with shopping from the market, are getting off. After that the bus hardly stops, until we reach the suburbs of Huehuetenango. There, the tempo increases, the passengers proceed towards the door with greater haste. The traffic behind is hooting. The assistants are hurrying. One of the assistants is climbing over the roof while the other one co-ordinates

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62 See map in appendix.

63 See map in appendix.

64 The main Guatemalan newspaper. English: '*prensa libre*' means 'free press'.

65 A major Guatemalan newspaper. English: '*la hora*' means 'the hour'.

the stopping and descending. The luggage of some passengers is unloaded from the left side of the bus, so that the receivers have to confront the oncoming traffic. My rucksack is the last one. It is passed down from the already moving bus onto the pavement, luckily at the right side.

### 12.01. Huehue<sup>66</sup> – Chiantla<sup>67</sup>

In the north of the town there is a bus stop for buses towards Todos Santos<sup>68</sup>, Barillas<sup>69</sup> and Saloma. Sellers are standing around, chatting. Chips, fruits and drinks are on sale. There is no shouting and commodities are not proffered from raffia trays or plastic pots. The atmosphere is rather sleepy. It is Sunday. Some passengers, including us, are picky selecting a bus. There is only a short distance to travel and the frequency of buses passing by is high. We let two or three of the inter-regional buses pass by. Then Jenny, my local companion, gets bored and we jump onto a bus to Chiantla. Everyone finds a seat. This bus is more like an inner-city bus. There is no radio, no luggage net, no jostling as yet, no climbing over the roof of the bus – and little eagerness to do business on the side of the assistant. Since I don't know the name of the village we want to go to, I ask the assistant to ask Jenny, who is sitting three rows ahead, to pay for two. He does not ask her and my trip is gratis. Many passengers seem to have done some shopping in Huehue on the market. The luggage consists mostly of plastic bags. One woman is carrying a chicken under her arm. The bus is emptying out. So far, not a single passenger has gone on the bus. Soon we arrive.

### 16.01. Huehue – Xela

*The event builds up in series. Series take off from Chronos. In the following example, on the level of Chronos, bodies are penetrating with other bodies, coexisting and withdrawing. Some kind of contracted point kicks off serialisation. The movement of serialisation unfolds as far as it can, and then expires. Or the movement is prevented from unfolding its inner dynamic by an other contraction interfering and taking over the scene. Embarking the bus cuts off a first series. The two young indigenous seat-keepers kick of a new series. The assistant takes over when he leads the unsuccessful seat-keeper to a spare seat. For a while, the assistant dominates the scene, then the protest of the passenger who wants his change immediately takes over. This movement is cut off, but turns up again later, when the assistant sits down*

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66 Short for Huehuetenango.

67 See map in appendix.

68 See map in appendix.

69 See map in appendix.

*next to him and starts invading his space by turning the pages of his newspaper.*

As soon as I turn from the main street left towards the bus station, I am approached from all sides. 'Mexico, Mexico', 'La Mesilla', 'Guate, Guate', '¿a donde vas?' (Where are you going to?) It does not matter that the buses are still 30 metres away. I work my way through the thronged vendors of fruits, chickens and clothes. The buses are positioned in four rows behind each other. In the middle there is a narrow path. With millimetre-precision-work a bus with the heading 'Huehuc – Xela' is directed through. I hand over my rucksack to a boy who (hopefully) is part of the bus team and will give it back to me when we are in Xela. I enter the packed bus.

In the back part of the bus a few passengers are still sitting on their own. Among them there are two indigenous boys. They seem in no way prepared to make space for the waiting woman with child in front of me. She is sitting down nevertheless. No problem, given a bit skilfulness. I find a place two rows ahead, next to a dozing man. At the next stop one of the two guys runs towards the door. The two seem to have tried to hold free seats for their families, who are now boarding the bus, loaded with bags and bundles. While the one who ran to the front helps his father and siblings to load the luggage, a boy with a Walkman pushes himself past the woman and child and towards the window. Speechless and a bit lost, the seat-keeper who got shoved down from the bench stands in the aisle, until the assistant leads him towards a spare portion of bench in the last row.

The hair of the assistant is shiny with styling crème. In more than this one way he looks as if he were a bit detached from everyday life affairs: he is wearing gleaming clean jeans, ironed shirt, mobile phone in pocket and pen behind the ear – he is probably responsible only for collecting money and not for the luggage. He starts his work at the back of the bus. Loudly, he shouts '*pasaje, pasaje por favor*' (bus fare, bus fare, please). Everyone searches in pockets and brassieres for money. Then there is weighty discussion. One of the male passengers wants his change now rather than later. He is waving angrily a paper noting the amount that he is entitled to. The assistant ignores him.

The assistant must be busy concentrating: certain groups of passengers have been scattered to different parts of the bus, and there is some confusion as to whom is paying for whom. An indigenous boy points to his relatives in the front. The father seems not to have enough cash at hand and so his other son starts to search through his own trouser pockets. All of them are wearing red and white-striped trousers, a black belt and white shirts with narrow, blue stripes. This is the costume of men from the mountain village of Todos Santos. The

collar is of a different material. Finely woven, wonderfully colourful and probably quite warm stripes of fabric augment the shirt.

Up here it is very cool. Thick clouds are hanging over the trees. The people getting on the bus are wearing woollen caps, gloves and thick jackets. The gentleman next to me opens the window. I wonder that it is not too cold for him, but he just throws his empty orange-juice bottle out of the moving bus and closes the window again.

All the passengers have received a piece of paper noting the amount of money that has been paid. After an hour and a half the assistant who stowed my rucksack, and who is looking much more dusty than his colleague, goes through the aisle and collects all the papers. We hardly stop. The collector comes from the front and gives out the change. Nevertheless the gentleman who was complaining earlier is making a grim face. This grows more intense when the assistant shoves himself next to the gentleman on the bench, borrows a '*Prensa Libre*' from a passenger and starts reading a newspaper. The paper intrudes not only into the aisle, but also some way into my neighbour's space and mine. From time to time the pages brush against my face as he turns them. On my other side the orange-juice-bottle-disposer is sleeping gently. He is sunk deeply into the seat. His head leans against my shoulder.

Suddenly everyone jumps up and stares out of the left- and rear-side windows. I realise that about 90 percent of the passengers are male. I cannot see anything, but we seem to have passed the scene of an accident. The bus slows to a walking pace and I can get a view of a lorry standing across the road. The men sit down again. The back door opens and the assistant enters, breathless. It seems he was running behind the bus. He goes to the front without comment.

The names of the villages are not announced during the journey. Only when we come to the suburbs of Xela does the assistant shout them out in a loud voice. He asks the passengers to proceed to the door minutes before the stop.

## Music

Next to me sits someone who looks like a student in his early twenties. He is holding a small transistor radio to his ear. The sound drifting over to me is familiar. '*Canción Nuevo*'<sup>70</sup> – songs of resistance against '*la violencia*'<sup>71</sup> that were prohibited in Guatemala during the sixties to nineties. Funny, how much that has to do with letting oneself be touched; with willing the event; with the urge to go into contact with the actual present; affirming the given chaos in order to become ac-

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70 English: 'New song'.

71 English: 'The violence'. This is a common term for the massacres in the early eighties, and for the civil war more generally.



tive. This song for example is by *Silvio Rodríguez*. The lyric goes: 'Life is not worth anything if I keep sitting here after I have seen in my dreams how they call me for help from various parts of the country. Life is not worth anything if I hear a mortal cry for help and this is not able to touch my heart because my heart is switched off.' I look at the guy from the side. How did he pass the time of *la violencia*? Did he fight? How did the civil war become part of his present? How did he let himself be touched by the war? He looks serious, but friendly. Outside the changing point '*Cuatro Caminos*' is passing-by.

The next song is also about the capacity to let oneself be touched. Mercedes Sosa's booming but tender voice: 'Thanks to life that has given me so much. It gave me two eyes that, when I open them, perfectly distinguish between black and white. In the multitude they make me distinguish the man that I love.' This sounds like a love song, but in the end it is about politics. The ability to let oneself be touched by what is going on. The fine guitar accompaniment sounds like a stranger on these rough buses. One would not hear this kind of music on these buses normally. It is too intellectual, the meaning too hidden. Too abstract. The song appears altogether like a stranger, something from past times. It speaks of a time when these sounds expressed so much tension that people could be killed for producing them.

The next song is also about the danger of not letting oneself be touched anymore. It is again *Silvio Rodríguez*. This one expresses the danger of no longer being able to be moved by the violence and the social injustice around one anymore through a dream about snakes that are able to kill the ability of people to love and the ability to let themselves be touched by what is going on. The threat in this song comes from capitalism. Again, this is not said straightforwardly on the level of words. 'I dream of long and transparent snakes. Snakes from the ocean. [...] In their stomachs they carry what can eliminate love.' The guy takes the transistor radio down from his ear and switches the sound off. He puts the radio into his bag, stands up and starts manoeuvring himself through towards the front door. What a pity! I would have liked to talk to him about his music. The Tex-Mex from the bus loudspeakers is taking over the sound-scape again.

Nearly everyone has left the bus before we get to the centre of the town. At 'La Terminal' I briefly consider whether to wait and observe the huge baskets being unloaded from the roof of the bus. I decide against this.

### **22.01. Xela – San Francisco del Alto**

*Orientation by the event means being able to let any actual movement on the level of Chronos come and go as it wants. Any connection on the level of Chronos is at best preliminary. There is always the chance*

*that Aion will open up Chronos towards something else. Because the bus in front is quicker, the two women change to the other one. There is no loyalty; only the possibility of having to pay their fare again might check them. Probably they have not paid yet.*

The bus is coming from 'La Terminal' and I am the second passenger. We remain standing for a while, proceed at snail's pace through Xela. Only at the 'Rotonda' does the assistant manage to recruit some passengers. The bus looks more or less Ok, but it makes some funny noises during the trip. Despite being on a country road we are not gaining much pace. At the next stop I can see the reason for the few passengers. Two buses in front of us are also going to San Francisco. It's market day there. When we stop for a moment, two women hurry towards the door and run towards the bus in front of us. The assistant of the front bus loads them in through the back door. Anyone else? He waves invitingly towards our bus. He is shouting 'San Francisco, San Francisco,' but the other passengers will not be wooed away. When the bus in front stops in the next village in order to take on more people, our driver manages to overtake the other bus, despite the narrow street. The next waving people at the side of the street are ours. At the steep turn-off to San Francisco, a lorry in front of us is having some problems. It is making its way up the hill in no more than walking pace. Three buses and a car overtake in sequence despite the curvy street. Having reached the top, the passengers disperse into the jostling of the market.

### **Return journey**

Every few minutes a bus leaves for Xela. I enjoy the view a moment longer before getting on a half-empty one. I find a window seat above the back wheels. Sitting is more comfortable with my legs up. The bus fills up quickly, with commodities as well as with people. A chicken in the luggage area looks pitiful. It caught itself with the wings in the net. A boy has a little dog on his knees. A man sits down next to me and asks whether he can borrow my newspaper. He is wearing a fine straw hat and is reading incredibly slowly. He is moving his lips while reading. He turns the pages only once before the next village. Meanwhile the assistant is working hard. At the exit to San Francisco a group of indigenous people with heavy luggage join us. Two women are transporting huge baskets of chickens. A man is carrying about three baskets, each a metre high and wide, with strings and rope. In the shade of the bus I can observe the assistant arduously loading the heavy baskets one after the other on his neck and shoulder up the roof. When the third one is in place, he knocks loudly onto the roof and the

driver starts the bus. Unloading in 'Cuatro Caminos' is much easier. The baskets are kicked down, one landing in a puddle.

At the next stop there is a chaotic crushing and jostling on the over-packed bus. Then there emerges an ear-splitting squeaking. A woman is carrying a piglet and it seems that the poor animal is not really enjoying the trip. The assistant directs the last third of the passengers through the back door. Then he makes the younger of those waiting outside enter the bus through the back door. They fill up the bus from the rear while other passengers are still leaving the bus through the front door. I am glad about my seat at the window. Then there are passengers entering the bus from the front as well. Most of the passengers are pupils, as one can see from their rucksacks and school uniforms. The girls are wearing pleated skirts and knee socks as they probably do everywhere.

The gentleman next to me wants to leave the bus. He is preparing for this well ahead in time. He folds the newspaper carefully. He gives it back to me gratefully. Then he stands up, signals to the assistant that he wants to get off the bus and chooses the shorter way to the back-door. He loads a travelling bag from the luggage net onto his back. Since he is carrying a plastic bag in the other hand, he has to move free hand through the jostling. He does this skilfully and with great care. Over and over again he says 'lo siento' (I am sorry), 'con permiso' (excuse me) while waiting patiently for the people in front of him move a bit to the side. For me it is much easier: when we reach zone three, the bus is again half empty. Meanwhile, I know exactly where I want to leave the bus.

### 5.3 CONCLUSION AND LINE OF FLIGHT

*The empirical descriptions in this chapter have expressed the conviction that orientation within Guatemalan buses takes place to a remarkably and characteristically large degree in the affective realm of the virtual. The readings of the diary entries in this chapter have expressed the Deleuzian theory of the event in that there is a tacit affect-oriented navigation through ever-changing virtual surfaces. The theoretical introduction to the chapter, however, argued through the juxtaposition of the Deleuzian event with the triangulation of Jessica Benjamin for the insufficiency of such a mode of movement: in the Deleuzian event, the other does not emerge as actual other, as a temporality that, despite affective interaction, exists also outside the virtual world of the virtual and the actual. For example, actual talking to the other as other can become a line of flight from the self-centrism of the virtual. In the following final example, the symbolic realm of language becomes a means that allows encountering the other as other.*

**09.12. San Pedro-Tajumulco**

Sergio is on holiday. He tells me that this is the time when he usually has a break from travelling by bus. He is studying in Xela. Every afternoon around three o'clock and every evening around ten o'clock he is travelling the 45 minute journey with his friends. Since they live outside town, they are taking courses in the afternoon only. He thinks that travelling by bus in darkness is not dangerous. The driver would know his way. He likes travelling by bus with his friends. One is chatting and making nonsense so that time passes by quickly. Generally he is doing a lot with his friends. Every weekend they are off for trips to the seaside, to Xela, sometimes they even have a car. With the family (his parents and his three siblings) he has done a three week round trip through the Petén<sup>72</sup> by car. He liked it in the Petén. At the moment he is not really sure where he is going. His father is working somewhere far out in the countryside. He forgot an important floppy disc, which Sergio is meant to bring him. The bus trip costs Sergio 10 *Quetzales*, so it must be far away. Sergio is annoyed about this trip. If one is travelling on one's own and does not have conversation one starts thinking and that is usually unpleasant.

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72 The Petén is the region in the northern lowlands of Guatemala. It is the main rain forest area of the country.



## CHAPTER 6

### RESEARCH FINDINGS: LIVED TEMPORALITIES AND THE RECOGNITION OF THE ACTUAL OTHER

The research project presented in this book has used Deleuze's reading of duration for an empirical and theoretical exploration of lived temporalities. According to Deleuze, duration is a virtual multiplicity. A virtual multiplicity, as the introductory chapter explained, is characterised through its mode of co-existence in opposition to an actual multiplicity. In a virtual multiplicity, the chapter explained, the many co-exist in an open form and everything is open for unpredictable impact by context-conditions. There is constant change and there is constant movement. The chapter argued that Deleuze favoured the chance-driven virtual co-existence of the many over the ordered co-existence of the many in the actual multiplicity, as the virtual multiplicity implies a production of newness. When the virtual multiplicity gets divided, the chapter showed, everything changes in kind. Every division produces a qualitative change of the whole, and the virtual multiplicity constantly divides itself in movements of actualisation. In the actual, by contrast, division just produces a different quantity of the same and things remain as they have been. However, the chapter showed that there is always both; there is the virtual where time is a feeling of constant change and there is the actual where there are discrete, stable representations.

This chapter will first assess the contribution of each of the four empirical chapters to an exploration of lived temporalities, understood as virtual multiplicity. Then, a limit of the definition of lived time as virtual multiplicity will be addressed: it does not include actual others. The Guatemalan home in this book provided a setting where the virtual was naturally balanced by actual others. To study vitalism in the, relatively, premodern settings that I selected in Guatemala in order to understand the postmodern immanence within contemporary global capitalism, implies to substitute the actual conditions of the Guatemalan home with mental concepts. Taking into consideration the work of Jessica Benjamin, in an abstraction of the findings of this book, a per-

spective shall be given for how the actual can be lived in the mode of a virtual multiplicity in the inter-relationality between actual people. Such a perspective emerged in the course of this book through studying the postmodern reading of duration that Deleuze extracted from Bergson in an empirical setting that provided dominantly premodern conditions of the kind that Bergson seems to suggest to retrieve, and then through reading these empirical findings against the backdrop of global capitalist culture (which would be again a postmodern scenario).

## 6.1 LIVED TEMPORALITIES: TIME AS VIRTUAL MULTIPLICITY

In the chapter on the traditional home, duration has been explored as a realm of the given. The chapter derived a notion of 'passive time' as virtual multiplicity from Bergson for whom active time passes, but past time exists in all its weight. For Bergson, the chapter argued, active time is compressed into discrete units of action and thus the signs of which time consists remain silent. The more passive time is, by contrast, the more signs unfold their unpredictable power of virtual communication. Thus, if a present moment gets directly taken up by action, it remains the same as it has been before. If a present moment gets repeated by passive time, by contrast, it becomes something different. The chapter then argued in sympathy with Deleuze that the repetition of a present moment in passive time makes out of an active present a living present. The living present is a present that is alive. It is open for constant change and the production of newness. In the living present, passive time unfolds in the mode of a virtual multiplicity, open-ended and creative.

In the chapter on the Guatemalan market, duration has turned actual. It is no longer a plane of the given that is below the actual, but the mode of the actual itself. Using the terminology of Deleuze and Guattari in the chapter, the actual that has turned virtual has been described as a plane of immanence. For the self, the chapter suggested, an actual that has turned virtual appears like chaos. Everything is unpredictable, on one level, without distinctions and in constant chance movement. The chapter explored passivity as a mode of how the self can become part of the virtual multiplicity of duration: In territorialisation, the self lets itself be passively attracted by affective impulses from the given actual environment. Through the passive selection of images, the self distances itself from the formlessness and unpredictability of the actual given as it builds up its own territories. Because the passive self selects only those images from the actual given that

suit its present refrain (its present interest), and because the self selects only as much as it feels good to connect to at any given moment, territorialisation is emancipation.

In the chapter on the unpleasant, duration has been explored as a plane of the given on which it is possible to encounter the unpleasant in an active, rather than in a reactive way. In the realm of the actual – where there are representations and where time is an actual multiplicity consisting of discrete entities, the chapter argued in sympathy with Deleuze, the self would fence off from the unpleasant. The only way to cope with the unpleasant is to increase the actual distance from the unpleasant. In the realm of lived time, where time is a *virtual* multiplicity, by contrast, the unpleasant consists of active life forces. The self, through its will to power, is also an active life force. The will to power affirms the unpleasant as an active force in the tension to its own felt activity, and there emerges a field of tension in which everything that was unconsciously affirmed as taking part in a given feeling of displeasure adds further nuances to the overall outcome. In the field of tension in-between the will, the unpleasant and other relevant context-conditions, active life forces react with each other. The reaction creates a movement of internal differentiation – the creative production of newness characteristic of lived time as virtual multiplicity.

In the chapter on Guatemalan buses, duration is the realm where the event takes place. While becoming-active in relation to the unpleasant focuses on the self, the event in the reading employed in the bus-chapter focuses on the other. In order to read the event as a dynamic that takes place in-between self and other, the chapter has brought together the Deleuzian event with the work of Jessica Benjamin. Then, the event becomes a dynamic in which a virtual point gets taken up from an actual other if a virtual point from within an actual self has set itself into resonance to it. Both points extend themselves into virtual series through attracting further signs from within the realm of lived time. In-between the virtual series of self and other, through a co-existence of resonance and differentiation, there emerges a field of tension from where the surface-series of sense can take off. The bringing together of Deleuze and Jessica Benjamin highlights a weakness in the Deleuzian event. In Deleuze, the point-line-surface dynamic of the event takes place exclusively in the virtual, in the realm of lived time. The actual prohibits such a dynamic, because the actual in Deleuze works only – through representation – as quantitative multiplicity. The opposition between a virtual that is organised as qualitative multiplicity and an actual that is organised as quantitative multiplicity means in Deleuze that any impact by the actual on the event is rejected as capturing the free unfolding of dynamics within the virtual. The actual is there, but it has no positive function. It is



only the opposite of duration, where everything takes place that interests Deleuze.

## 6.2 THE RECOGNITION OF THE ACTUAL OTHER

### 6.2.1 The Desire for Omnipotence and the Desire for Mutual Recognition

In the remainder of this chapter, I will extend the Deleuzian concept of the virtual multiplicity through the work of Jessica Benjamin in a way that integrates the recognition of the actual. This step will, I believe, open up the positive potential that this book has found – inspired by Deleuze – in lived time towards an ethical perspective for *actual* human and non-human co-existence in this global capitalist world.

In Deleuze, as the previous chapter has shown, the event escapes the logic of the actual (representation) by relating to the actual other as virtual other only. This is the liberating moment of the Deleuzian event: it starts in the actual, but the actual is made to act in the logic of the virtual (affection). The actual in the event does not capture through representation, rather it affects through sensation.<sup>1</sup> In J. Benjamin's reading of Winnicott, one could say, the actual is as well a world of active forces that unfold as qualitative multiplicity. The actual is encountered through affection. As in Deleuze, in Jessica Benjamin the challenge is to escape the capture of what one might call pre-given, ready-made representations through a leap into the realm of affect. Jessica Benjamin's work shows, however, why relating to the other as virtual other is not enough: the virtual other is just an extension of the self.<sup>2</sup> J. Benjamin points out that the self in what she calls the 'bonds of love' relates to the other through identification.

The fourth and fifth chapters of this book have shown that in affection, the self contracts something from the other that responds to its own desires or fears. At the beginning of every affect, the self, by contracting a virtual other relates to itself in the other. Thus, in the Deleuzian event, there is – as in Benjaminian identification – an ini-

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1 See J. Benjamin 1988, pp. 4-5 & 219-201. See also J. Benjamin 2004: 'Beyond Doer and Done To: An Intersubjective View of Thirdness', pp. 9-11.

2 The chapter on the unpleasant has introduced the Deleuzian concept of the little ego (see above, introduction to chapter 4). When Deleuze writes that the virtual object that gets contracted from the actual other is an ego (Deleuze 1968a, p. 97), he expresses something similar as when Jessica Benjamin writes that the self relates to the other (J. Benjamin 1988, p. 37).

tial moment of oneness between something from the self and something from the other. The moment of oneness gets broken up into series that are by definition different from each other. The previous chapter has described this process as follows: a virtual point is drawn from the actual world and extends itself into a virtual series by attracting further signs. A different series establishes itself in resonance to the first series. In Deleuze, the series are different from each other, because within the virtual, everything is singular. There will never be two signs that attract exactly the same further signs into any series. The balance of tension between resonance and difference that is the basis for the creative production of newness in a virtual multiplicity, is in Deleuze specific to the virtual and opposed to the actual. When taking into account the work of Jessica Benjamin, by contrast, the affirmation of difference in the self-organisation of time in the event would be related to the affirmation of the other as actual other. Jessica Benjamin's work seems to suggest that as long as the self relates to the other as virtual reality only, it does not relate to the other as different from itself. The actual in Benjamin is not only that what captures through representation but also that which lies beyond the lived time of the self.<sup>3</sup>

In Bergson, as the first chapter of this book has introduced, encountering the other through lived time was linked to physically staying with the other over the entire period of the unfolding of the process. In the Deleuzian translation of Bergsonian dynamics into the fleetingness and instantaneity of an actual that has turned virtual, the first chapter went on to argue, the encounter with the other is limited to the instantaneity of setting an intensive impulse. The process of differentiation that generates sense in the event, unfolds itself without being forced to stay with the other, either physically or mentally. In Jessica Benjamin, however, to stay with the virtual other only for the short time that an affect takes to start off, and then to let the intensive impulse unfold itself independently from the actual other, is depicted as 'projective identification'.<sup>4</sup> A projective identification perceives the actual other in terms of the initial identification with the other and splits off the rest. In sympathy with the work of Jessica Benjamin, the crucial question concerning the Deleuzian event would be whether the series of the other is the series of a virtual other or the series of an actual other. The series of a virtual other that emerges through projective identification would be generated from signs from within the virtual time of the self. The series of the actual other, by contrast, would be generated from signs that pose a limit to the virtual time of the self.

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3 See J. Benjamin 1988, chapter 1, p. 38.

4 See J. Benjamin 2004, pp. 4, 19. Benjamin here refers to Melanie Klein for whom identification with the other is projective identification'.

The challenge in J. Benjamin is to encounter the other through the virtual as actual other, rather than as a projection of the own will.

Perceiving the other as actual other is called 'recognition' in Jessica Benjamin.<sup>5</sup> In Deleuze, recognition is one with representation and therefore it is rejected.<sup>6</sup> Both belong to the realm of the actual. In Jessica Benjamin, the challenge to the recognition of the other as actual other is the self's unconscious desire for setting the own will as absolute<sup>7</sup> (J. Benjamin: 'the desire for omnipotence'). The desire for omnipotence does not necessarily exist in the adult human being. However, it is likely to occur, due to conflicting experiences in encounters with actual others in the past, most notably in those early stages of childhood, when the human being confronts for the first time the limitation of its own virtual by the actual other. Whereas in Deleuze, the free unfolding of the logic of the unconscious presents itself only from its creative side, Jessica Benjamin enables one to question the unlimited unfolding of the virtual: she points out that the disregard of actual limits prevents the possibility of inter-relationality with actual others.<sup>8</sup> The experience of inter-relationality can gradually substitute the experience of omnipotence through the gradual recognition of the 'No' of the will of the other to an absorption into the virtuality of the self<sup>9</sup> (J. Benjamin: 'the destruction of the other'). The recognition of the other as actual other is the outcome of a process of letting oneself be affected by the other, not only in those aspects where it is similar to the will of the self, but also where it stays in contrast to the will of the self. The gradual affirmation of the experience that the other, besides its engagement with the self, has also an existence independent from the will of the self, opens the way for what J. Benjamin calls 'object usage'. Translated into Deleuzian terms, object-usage would be a virtual encounter with an actual other. In Jessica Benjamin, inter-relationality with actual others is not a limitation, but something that comes with its own particular pleasures. Object-usage is possible where the self affirms the experience of inter-relationality with actual others as more desirable than the omnipotence of the own virtual.

"When the subject fails to make the transition from 'relating' to 'using,' it means that he has not been able to place the object outside himself, to distinguish it from his mental experience of omnipotent control. He can only 'use' the object when he perceives it "as an external phenomenon, not as a projective entity," when he recognizes it "*as an entity in its own right.*"<sup>10</sup>

5 See J. Benjamin 1988, p. 12. See also *ibid*, pp. 22-23.

6 See Deleuze 1968a, chapter 3.

7 See J. Benjamin 1988, pp. 27-36.

8 See *ibid*, pp. 51-4 & 62-68.

9 See *ibid*, pp. 36-42.

10 *Ibid*, p. 37.

The concept ‘object usage’ in the work of Jessica Benjamin goes back to the work of object-relation theorist Donald W. Winnicott.<sup>11</sup> Jessica Benjamin goes beyond Winnicott in distinguishing between the other as object and the other as subject.<sup>12</sup> The will of the other subject is not only a force that lies outside one’s own will. Rather, the will of another subject is also a force that can be affected by one’s actions. The term ‘subject’ in Benjamin refers to the self of the actual other. Action acts on others through its virtual effects in ways that are unpredictable to the self. Which affective impulse will be contracted by the other, depends on dynamics within virtual worlds that lie outside the perceptive capacities of the self. If, as in Deleuze, the event would take place purely in the logic of the virtual, it would have no direct impact on actual others. The omnipotence of the own virtual would remain unrestricted. In sympathy with the work of Jessica Benjamin, by contrast, taking into account the virtual effects that one’s actualisations produce in actual others, becomes a further point to demonstrate how the logic of the actual other enters the logic of the virtual. Why should it matter how the actual other is affected by the self’s action? In Deleuze, an unconscious element establishes virtual communication between the points and the series in an event.<sup>13</sup> This unconscious element remains independent from the desire for recognition, because in Deleuze the event is pre-individual. If, however, the event is read as a virtual dynamic that takes place in-between an actual self and an actual other, the desire for recognition is part of the unconscious element that establishes communication. Then, in every encounter between self and other, a desire for mutual recognition is part of the will of the self. Jessica Benjamin emphasises that only through feeling one’s actions recognised by another self, can one recognise oneself as active and therefore alive.<sup>14</sup> Inter-relationality in sympathy with Jessica Benjamin begins where the desire for mutual recognition sets a counterpoint to the desire for omnipotence, and thus the recognition of the actual other is allowed to limit the omnipotence of the own virtual.

“[...] the process of recognition, [...], always includes this paradoxical mixture of otherness and togetherness: You belong to me, yet you are not (any longer) part of me. The joy I take in your existence must include *both* my connection to you *and* your independent existence – I recognize that you are real.”<sup>15</sup>

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11 See Winnicott 1971, chapter 6.

12 See *ibid.*, pp. 42-50.

13 See introduction to chapter 5.

14 See J. Benjamin 1988, p. 15.

15 See *ibid.*

The existence of a desire for omnipotence means that the Deleuzian plane of immanence as an actual that has turned virtual is not only a state of the given, but also a disposition of the human mind. There is a human unconscious desire for leaving everything in a state of immanence and for orientating oneself only according to the logic of the own virtual, the logic of spontaneous affection. In a global capitalist culture in which the actual has turned virtual, the desire for omnipotence is an unconscious *desire* for immanence inherent to the human being. The desire for immanence reflects an actual environment that has turned into a plane of immanence itself. While in the premodern setting of the Guatemalan home the actual conditions of daily subsistence posed a limit to the desire for immanence, in a global capitalist culture, such actual limits have disappeared. Nevertheless, as a state of the mind, the desire for immanence receives its natural balance through another desire – the desire for mutual recognition, which is equally specific to the human being.<sup>16</sup>

### **6.2.2 The Desire for Mutual Recognition and the Desire for a Holding Space**

How can the desire for mutual recognition be actualised? How can it be lived? Space, the logic of the actual in Deleuze, enters in the work of Jessica Benjamin the logic of the virtual as ‘desire for a holding space’<sup>17</sup>. To feel hold means to feel trust into both the presence of others (resonance) and into the non-obtrusiveness of others (positive distance). The concept of holding in the work of Jessica Benjamin goes back to the concept of the ‘holding environment’ in Winnicott.<sup>18</sup> Winnicott highlighted with the concept of the holding environment that it depends not only on genetic dispositions whether a child develops a creative, productive and joyful relation to the world. Rather, actual social conditions are crucial as well. The holding environment provides the balance between trust in the actual other and freedom from the actual other that is necessary, according to Winnicott, for being with oneself.

“Winnicott frequently described the relationship between self and other in spatial metaphors: the space that holds us and the space in which we create. Inter-subjective space, if we translate into Winnicott’s terms, begins with the holding environment between mother and baby and expands into the transitional area, the child’s area of play, creativity, and fantasy. The transitional space is suffused with the mother’s protection and one’s own

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16 See *ibid*, p. 224.

17 See *ibid*, pp. 123-32.

18 See Winnicott 1971, chapters 1, 4, 5.

freedom to imagine, discover, and create. [...] this transitional space [...] permits the important experience of being and playing alone in the unobtrusiveness but reassuring presence of the other. In the relaxation of this space it is possible to know one's impulses (drives) as coming from within, to know them as one's own desire."<sup>19</sup>

In Bergson and Deleuze, the leap into the virtual is the way for the self to leave the logic of the actual behind. Jessica Benjamin's reading of Winnicott suggests that being with oneself is a pre-condition for the leap into the realm of feeling that in Deleuze is the virtual.<sup>20</sup> However, being with oneself in Benjamin's reading of Winnicott is explicitly not an expression of a world without actual others, as is the virtual in Deleuze. Rather, the leap into the virtual is expression of feeling that there exists a holding space in inter-relationality with actual others. Jessica Benjamin emphasises that desire has two moments.<sup>21</sup> First, there is the desire for feeling oneself held by a holding space (security) and then second there is a fascination with the world (affection). And only if the desire for feeling held is satisfied can the curiosity for contact with the world develop.

In the research setting of the traditional Guatemalan home in the second and fourth chapter of this book, the desire for feeling held was naturally satisfied by the daily tasks of subsistence. Therefore, the orientation by the realm of lived temporalities could be read with Deleuze as affection by the world only. When the orientation by lived temporalities becomes a perspective for a joyful and meaningful existence within global capitalism in which the actual has turned virtual and everything is principally in a general state of immanence, by contrast, there will be only a holding space if the self explicitly affirms the desire for feeling held as a pre-condition for attraction by the world. While in the premodern scenario of traditional subsistence presented in this book, the holding-space was given through the dependence on actual others, with Jessica Benjamin it becomes a question of daring to affirm the desire for mutual recognition as a desire for a holding space against the existence of a desire for omnipotence. Even if global capitalism is defined with Lash as an actual where any kind of spatial distinction is likely to have been dissolved sooner or later into a general state of absolute immanence, on the level of lived time, the human desire for mutual recognition can still displace the immanent given through a desire for a holding space with actual others.

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19 J. Benjamin 1988, pp. 126-7.

20 See *ibid.*, p. 42.

21 *Ibid.*

### 6.2.3 The Desire for a Holding Space and Becoming-Active

In Winnicott, the self depends on the holding environment provided by the other.<sup>22</sup> On the same theoretical ground that Guattari used to formulate his account of territorialisation,<sup>23</sup> Jessica Benjamin, by contrast, emphasises that even very small children also hold themselves, through letting themselves be attracted by some aspects of a given environment and not by others.<sup>24</sup> Although a self can only choose what to connect to from what the actual environment provides, the emphasis on the difference between a given environment and a holding space emphasises the self's agency. The question of feeling held then becomes a question of holding oneself.<sup>25</sup> In sympathy with the work of Jessica Benjamin, the desire for holding oneself becomes part of the will for life. Deleuzian vitalism has been introduced in the fourth chapter of this book as 'becoming-active'. In Deleuze, becoming-active refers to the relation of a singular self to its given environment. The self becomes active in that its will for power lets itself be affected by selected intensities from a given environment. At stake is the individuation of a self in relation to its environment. In Deleuze, the condition for the will to power to unfold is affection by the world. In the tension to the work of Jessica Benjamin, the Deleuzian becoming-active affirms only the second aspect of desire. In Jessica Benjamin, by contrast, becoming-active<sup>26</sup> also entails the affirmation of a desire for a holding space, the first aspect of desire. The holding space is affirmed as a pre-condition for one's own joyful encounter with the world. Then, the will for life expresses itself not just as a will for the own individuation, but also as a will for relations of mutual recognition with other human beings. Where the second aspect of desire, affection, relates to the way the virtual part of the self, or the Id, relates to the world, the first aspect of desire relates to the way the actual part of the self, or the Ego, relates to the world. Becoming-active in Jessica Benjamin thus entails both a virtual and an actual dimension.

In relation to the material presented in this book, for example, the fourth chapter has shown that becoming-active in Deleuze depends on the self's freedom to feel 'No' towards the other. Through the perception of the given as an active force in co-existence with the perception of the own unpleasure towards this given as active force, a field of tension emerges that sets free an active movement of differentiation, the creative production of newness that in Deleuze is characteristic of

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22 See Winnicott 1971, for example p.11.

23 The notion of the emergent self by child-researcher Daniel Stern, see above, chapter 3.

24 See J. Benjamin 1988, pp. 25-27.

25 See *ibid*, pp. 123-32.

26 See *ibid*, chapter 4.

time as virtual multiplicity. The field of tension that sets free an active movement of differentiation emerges through the differentiation of the will of a self from a given environment. By contrast, in sympathy with the work of Jessica Benjamin, the emphasis on the dynamic of becoming-active would be an implicit ‘Yes’ towards the other:<sup>27</sup> the field of tension that sets free the movement of differentiation emerges through holding in the mind the tension between the affirmed activity of the will of the other and the affirmed activity of the will of the self as different from this. The way to cope with conflict, with a perceived feeling of unpleasure towards the given, is related to the degree that a self achieves to affirm the two aspects of desire. While the Deleuzian reading of the Nietzschean active forgetting that has been introduced in chapter four of this book is a way to encounter the actual unpleasant (the perceived ‘No’ towards the other) according to the virtual logic of sensation only, the ability *to hold* the activity of the other despite its being in conflict with the own will *combines* the sensational logic of the virtual *and* the representational logic of the actual. In the inter-relational approach to ‘becoming-active’, any momentary ‘No’ towards the other on the virtual level of affect, goes together with a deeper and more fundamental continuous feeling of ‘Yes’ towards the ‘other’ on the actual level of holding.<sup>28</sup> Such a way to cope with conflict is possible if the actual desire for feeling held can be recognised even in moments of frustration and unpleasure towards the other. The desire for feeling held can make one internally stay with the other despite a perceived unpleasure. Then, the unpleasant can generate an active movement of differentiation.

The Deleuzian event, as it has been introduced in chapter five of this book, is expression of the attempt to do without holding. Liberation from the actual is, in Deleuze’s account, the encounter with the other in the realm of affect without letting the surface of sense that the event generates be restricted by the representation of the other. The Benjaminean holding-space, by contrast, can affirm the desire for holding, because the holding of the other is not perceived as a danger to the own singular activity.<sup>29</sup> Everyone interacting can, if necessary, set their ‘No’ as absolute against the ‘Yes’, and thereby break-up any inter-relational space. Mutual recognition rests on the awareness that both self and others are principally always able to go away. More fundamental than being together, is the active singularity of each of those interacting. Active singularity is the basis of inter-relationality, and in this sense the holding space is a mediating sphere between actual self and actual other that allows both self and other to actively and singu-

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27 See J. Benjamin 2004, p. 7.

28 See J. Benjamin 1988, pp. 36-42.

29 See *ibid*, pp. 169-76.



larly affirm what they give or take into and from this field, rather than just reacting to what the other does to one.<sup>30</sup> I give through my action something into the space in-between. You can take it up from there if you want, but you don't have to. In the same way, I can take up what you have given into the space between us, or I can leave it there. What we both experienced together has taken place in that common space in-between us. From there, I can let myself be affected by it afterwards, and you can do so according to your own singular ways and according to your own singular time.

Jessica Benjamin is concerned with showing the possibility for becoming-active in long-term stable relations, reminiscent of the conditions prevailing in the traditional home that has been the setting for the research in chapter two and four of this book. In a translation of the dynamics of becoming-active into a context of global capitalism's plane of immanence, where subjects and objects are characterised first of all by constant mobility, by contrast, to affirm the desire for a holding space could give one the trust that one will be able to build-up a sufficiently comfortable holding space within any given environment whatsoever. This would be reminiscent of the account of the event given in chapter five of this book, where the feeling of inner balance gets built-up among ever new actual others. However, where the event in chapter five is about inter-relationality with actual others in momentary surface encounters, the holding space in J. Benjamin gives one the feeling of being held in the inter-relationality with actual others in a much more existential way.

#### **6.2.4 'Becoming-Active' and the Circumvention of Becoming-Reactive**

In Deleuze's account of the event, the desire for mutual recognition with an actual other and the desire for virtual holding spaces in inter-relationality with the actual world remain absent. This is understandable when taking into account that in Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche, becoming-reactive stands for passive expectations towards security, care and structure provided by the other. This, in sympathy with the work of Jessica Benjamin, ignores the other due to a fear of submission under the perceived omnipotence of the force of the other.<sup>31</sup> In an inter-relational perspective, in sympathy with the work of Jessica Benjamin, however, the Deleuzian Nietzschean becoming-active, where the actual other is ignored altogether and the actual is kept in a virtual state of immanence, would be a form of becoming-reactive itself. Both the submission under the will of actual others and the ignorance of the

30 See J. Benjamin 2004, pp. 3-5, 11.

31 See *ibid*, chapter 4.

will of actual others, in sympathy with the work of Jessica Benjamin, would be expressions of an unconscious desire for omnipotence. Jessica Benjamin's work allows for an inter-relational definition of becoming-reactive. Any encounter in which there are only the self and the other will end in domination or submission, and become reactive. The work of Jessica Benjamin offers a perspective for the circumvention of becoming-reactive. She emphasises that the leap into passive time has to be a 'surrender' to an actual theme that mediates between self and other and not a 'submission' to the other.<sup>32</sup>

The organising principle in the Deleuzian theory of the event is an unconscious element. This element establishes virtual communication between the series, which in chapter five of this book have been called the series of self and other. The unconscious element is the kernel for both resonance and differentiation between the series. It is what brings the series together, but in each series this shared element of resonance unfolds itself in a different way. The unconscious element establishes a link between the actual self and the actual other, but because the dynamic takes place solely within the virtual, it remains within the subjective world of a singular self. An actual self perceives a moment of resonance in-between self and other, but although the actual other will feel there is some kind of resonance, it is uncertain how the actual other unfolds this element or whether it lets itself be affected by this element at all. The dynamic of the Deleuzian event remains within the virtuality of the subjective experience of a singular self. The work of Jessica Benjamin enables us to highlight besides the unconscious element also the existence of an actual element that establishes communication in an encounter.<sup>33</sup> Similar to the unconscious element, the actual element contains the moment of resonance that brings self and other together, but at the same time it contains differentiation, since both self and other will relate from their respective backgrounds to this element. Both self and other let the actual element unfold within their own, subjective virtual worlds. Whereas in Deleuze, the forces of life within the virtual world of the will to power can co-exist as active due to ontological givenness, in the work of Jessica Benjamin the will of self and other can relate to each other as active forces within the virtual, if there is an actual element that can be shared by both and to which both actual self and actual other can actively relate in their respective ways. In contrast to the virtual element that establishes communication, the actual element can be consciously impacted. If the actual theme that emerges in an open-ended encounter

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32 J. Benjamin 2004, p. 3.

33 See *ibid.*, p. 2. J. Benjamin speaks of a 'third'. The 'third' is something beyond both self and other. This definition makes the third compatible with what in the context of the discussion of the Deleuzian event in the introduction to the fifth chapter of this book would be the actual other.

leaves only space for the self *or* the other, then from an inter-relational perspective the encounter has been reactive. Although the self in Benjamin thus receives a certain agency in determining the actual theme, in the end, this theme emerges through passive resonance. It is the actual outcome of the virtual play of forces in-between a self and an other. The actual theme, however, also allows for focused encounters between actual self and actual other. Then, the actual theme is pre-given and as such structures the encounter as something to which both self and other relate with their different virtualities, but which also exists outside the virtual worlds of both.

“Once we have deeply accepted our own contribution – and its inevitability – the fact of two-way participation becomes a vivid experience, something we can understand and use to feel less helpless and more effective. In this sense, we surrender to the principle of reciprocal influence in interaction, which makes possible both responsible action and freely given recognition. This action is what allows the outside, different other to come into view. (Winnicott 1971) It opens the space of thirdness, enabling us to negotiate differences and to connect.”<sup>34</sup>

### **6.2.5 The Circumvention of Becoming-Reactive and Responsibility**

If the self affirms the desire for mutual recognition and feels its ability to actively impact the virtual space in-between self and other, responsibility becomes possible. In Deleuze, responsibility gets rejected.<sup>35</sup> In the context of his argument, responsibility belongs to the logic of the actual. The actual works in a mode of representation, and thus in a mode of quantitative multiplicity. It captures the free unfolding of the event. Moreover, in a global capitalist culture that, according to Lash, is characterised by the disappearance of the actual into the virtual, the basis for responsibility then disappears as well. In the approach of Jessica Benjamin, by contrast, responsibility has to do with both the virtual and the actual. In Jessica Benjamin, a reactive action is one that feels like being driven by a perceived virtual impulse only. An active action, by contrast, is one in which the impulse from the virtual is taken up with the conscious affirmation, ‘Yes, this is what I want to do now. This is my response to the perceived impulse.’ In an active action, the self is able to hold itself. Therefore it can encounter the perceived impulse as other. In an active action, virtual and actual combine. Responsibility according to J. Benjamin refers to the feeling to be able to claim authorship for the potential effect of what one sets

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid, p. 5.

<sup>35</sup> See Deleuze 1969, p. 60.

into the virtual space in-between actual self and actual other. Responsibility in J. Benjamin is an achievement that will not always be reached. There are moments when one feels a victim of virtual impulses. Then, however, any action taken will be a reactive action. Responsibility in an inter-relational perspective implies a care for structures that people who are beyond any significant relation to one's virtuality have built up themselves. It is about holding the encounter with any given other in a balance where oneself and others are still able to hold themselves.

"[...] the sense of authorship is dependent upon having an inside (holding oneself); without it, desire becomes depersonalized, mere drive. One is "driven," not responsive to the other or to oneself. The ability to hold oneself gives to every act its authority, its purposefulness in regard to the other, its authenticity for the self."<sup>36</sup>

Responsibility, in sympathy with the work of Jessica Benjamin, becomes an ethical demand.<sup>37</sup> Deleuze had shown in his reading of Nietzsche how a consciously set ethical principle could impact the unconscious dynamics in the event at the moment of selecting intensities from their unbound state in the virtual into a bound state in action. The ethical principle linked the virtual and the actual, the unconscious and the conscious. The ethical principle in Deleuze's Nietzsche was to 'live the present in a way that there is so much joy that it would be okay if this very moment would repeat itself eternally'.<sup>38</sup> In a Benjaminian inter-relational perspective, this ethical principle would have to also entail care for the holding space in-between self and actual human and non-human others. Whereas in Bergson the encounter with the other as actual other seemed to be a natural fact, and in Deleuze the encounter with the actual other is explicitly rejected, in Jessica Benjamin the encounter with the actual other becomes an achievement that the self, due to past experiences and resulting unconscious desires for omnipotence, often has good reason to avoid. In sympathy with Jessica Benjamin, however, the affirmed desire for an existentially relevant encounter with the actual other can become a starting point for making the limit of the human for adapting to the time of global

36 Jessica Benjamin 1988, p. 128.

37 See J. Benjamin 2004, pp. 14-22, esp. p. 15. Jessica Benjamin writes about the 'moral' dimension of inter-relationality. However, she introduces the term in opposition to abstract values and emphasizes that the basis of any inter-relationality has to be the affective encounter with the 'other'. I would prefer, as well due to its reminiscence with the Nietzschean ethical dimension of the eternal return, prefer the term 'ethical' for what Benjamin describes under the term 'moral'.

38 See introduction to chapter 4 of this book.

capitalism productive. Through affirming its desire for holding spaces, for trust and recognition in inter-relationality with actual others, the human can inscribe itself with its particular temporalities and desires into the new given and thereby displace it.

### 6.3 CONCLUSION

An awareness of the dynamics that occur in the realm of time as qualitative multiplicity, the realm of lived time, becomes crucial when social structures dissolve into a state of immanence. When everything is open and in constant movement, the structuring of one's time becomes a singular and personal achievement. The recognition of passivity as a way to leap into the realm of lived time and of orientation by one's own will as a means to orientate oneself in the realm of lived time, and the recognition of the will of the other as actual other that allows one to maintain a balance between the virtual and the actual, can become techniques to encounter the immanence of the given. Then, the creativity and productivity of encounters in the realm of lived time can make living without pre-given external structures possible and enjoyable. The less structures there are, the more an acquaintance with the realm of lived time becomes crucial.

This book shall help people to learn to live with immanence, both at the margins and in the centres of global capitalism.

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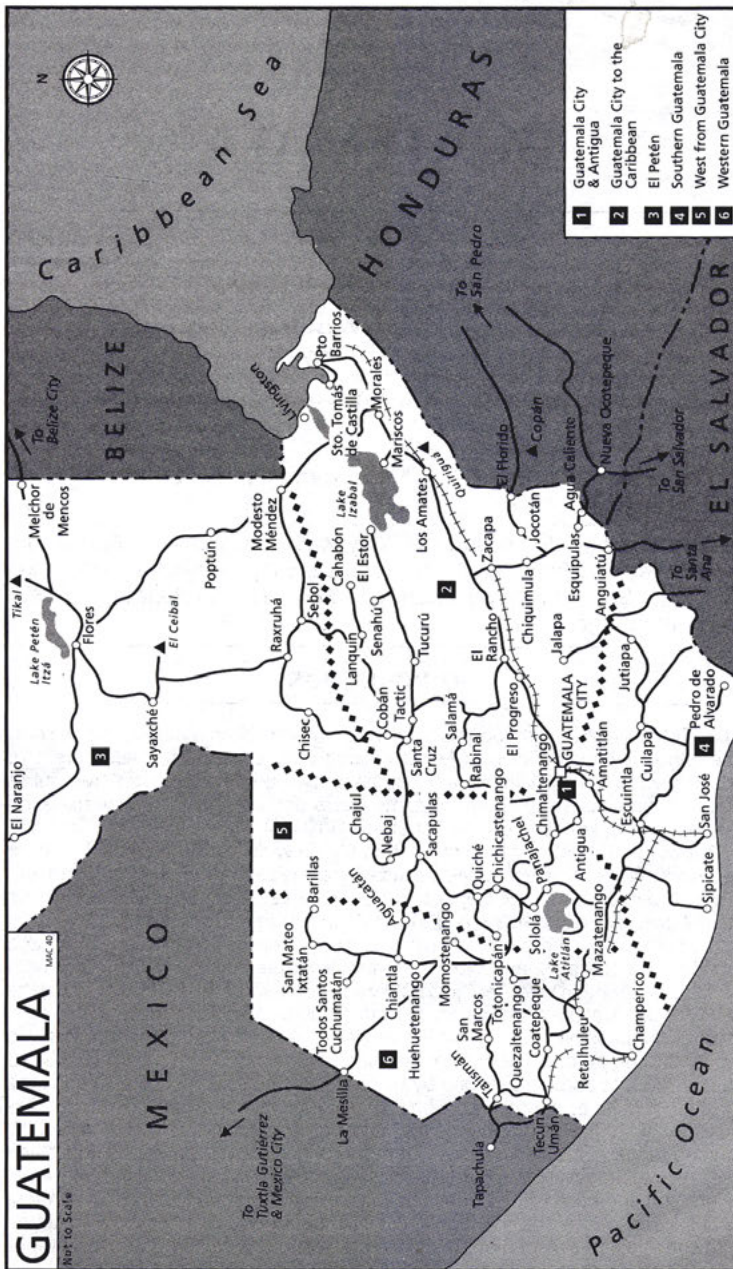
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## APPENDIX



## APPENDIX I. MAP OF GUATEMALA



Map of Guatemala. Source: Mexican and Central American Handbook 1996.

## APPENDIX II. QUESTIONNAIRE

### **Lived Temporalities in Guatemala An Investigation into Everyday Life through People's Experience of Time**

Good morning! I am a student of Sociology in England (Europe) at the University of London. For my research project I am investigating time within everyday life here in Guatemala. I would like to shortly introduce what I mean by 'time'. On one hand, temporal experience is subjective. On the other hand, through time, nature and the state as well as the market structure the life of the human being and thereby enact power over it. Further, social changes express themselves through time, because technology and money impact the relation of a person for example to nature, to other people and to religion. For all these reasons, time is present in whatever type of perception and action. It is a fundamental part of daily life. People from whatever part of the world, here in Guatemala as well as over there in Europe where I come from, have experiences with time. One can talk about these experiences and thereby share them. What you will share with me in this interview will be anonymous. I will use it only for the course of the present research project.

#### **To begin with**

##### **Please, describe the place where you live.**

(What kind of people do live there, of what age are they, what are they doing during the day, what does the house look like, how many rooms are there, what are the different rooms used for?)

#### **I. Living Together**

(In what way does the subjective perception of time express itself as individual, in what way as collective orientation?)

##### **1. How do you know what time it is?**

(In what way does orientation take place through watches, calendars, nature, routines or social services? In what way does orientation take place in relation to the day, the week, the year or one's own life?)

##### **2. What do you do to have a 'good time' - to enjoy yourself?**

(How do you spend such a time when you are alone/when you are with your partner/family; how is technology and how is nature involved in this? For example, how do you pass time after work, Sunday, vacation, birthday, Christmas or the celebration of a good harvest?)

### **3. What do you do to get through a ‘bad time’ - a time of sorrow, uncertainty and sadness?**

(Think, for example, of a disappointment, or a farewell or death of someone dear to you)

### **4. What does it mean in your culture to be ‘behind the time’ - to be late? How has that meaning been changing?**

## **II. Subsistence**

(In what way is the experience of the temporalities of nature immanent and in what way is it abstract?)

### **1. In what form does sweetcorn impact the time of yourself and of your family?**

(Please describe routines, describe problems and describe changes that have occurred over time due to innovations such as the introduction of technologies, of plastic or of communal services into daily life.)

### **2. In what form does water impact the time of yourself and of your family?**

(Please describe routines, describe problems and describe changes that have occurred over time due to innovations such as the introduction of technologies, of plastic or of communal services into daily life.)

### **3. In what form does waste (through recycling) impact the time of yourself and of your family?**

(Please describe routines, describe problems and describe changes that have occurred over time due to innovations such as the introduction of technologies, of plastic or of communal services into daily life.)

## **III. Finance**

(In what way is there planning and anticipation of eventualities; and in what way, by contrast, does everyday life take place from one day to the other, into an open future?)

### **1. What continuities and what insecurities does the flow of money have on which you and your family live?**

(Please describe the way your work provides you with a more or less regular income, as well as your access to other sources of income such as an additional house, an additional piece of land or an animal.)

### **2. Where does money come from in case of illness or accident?**

(insurances, family, neighbours...)

**3. Where will money come from when you will be that old that you cannot work anymore?**

(insurances, family, neighbours...)

**IV. Cosmovision**

(Is the Mayan Cosmovision is compatible with the ontology of duration of Bergson? How relevant is the Mayan vision of the world against the background of contemporary developments?)

**1. What does the Mayan Cosmovision mean for your everyday life?**

(To what extent do you perceive your time as part of a continuous flow of multiple temporalities, every temporality unfolding in its own rhythm and movement? To what extend, by contrast, do you perceive your time as fragmented and chaotic?)

**1. How does Christian religion impact your Cosmovision?**

(Transcendence versus immanence)

**2. How does poverty impact your Cosmovision?**

(Continuity and harmony versus fragmentation and isolation)

**3. How does technology impact your Cosmovision?**

(Instantaneity versus long-term processes. Science and political events versus religious Cosmovisions and rhythms of nature)

**To conclude with**

Is there anything around the theme of lived temporalities that seems important to you and about which we have not been talking yet?

**Thank you.**

APPENDIX III. PHOTO EXAMPLES<sup>1</sup>

1: *Passive Time – Making Patches*



2: *Passive Time – Making Tamales*



3: *Passive Time – Baking Tortilla*

1 Sources: All photos have been taken by myself.



*4: Passive Time  
Doblador on the Table*



*5: The Unpleasant –  
Killing Chickens*



*6: The Unpleasant – Painting Eggshells*





7: Territorialisation & Immanence – Selling Lace



8: Territorialisation & Immanence – Selling Flowers



9: Territorialisation & Immanence – Necks



*10: Territorialisation & Immanence – The Preacher*



*11: Territorialisation & Immanence – Selling Chili*



*12: Territorialisation & Immanence – Las Pacas*





13: *The Event – Guatemalan Bus*

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