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Intervals of Resistance: Being True to the Earth in the Light of the Anthropocene

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Deleuze and Guattari have made many creative interventions in the arenas of the social and political, and scholars have often theorized the importance of their work for providing a new framework from which to launch questions of the political.¹ Yet the political significance of their work lies not just in their historical political engagements or in their assessment of any particular politics, but in the way that their philosophy as a whole imparts new life to questions about the political as such. Deleuze and Guattari's rhizomatic ontology resists the metaphysical priority of essence so entrenched in past political formations, while accounting for the multiple networks and forces that underlie these illusory projections of wholeness. My claim is that Deleuze's realignment of ontology upon a spatio-temporal axis points us towards a new political future, the possibility for which is predicated upon a certain cultivation of awareness, which is to say, a new pedagogical project to re-think our relationship to the earth through the lens of the present.

Deleuze and Guattari call this coupling of a specific ontological vision with the concrete social formations geophilosophy. The preface of philosophy with 'geo' indicating that this analysis is first and foremost a deterritorialization of philosophy itself, away from its traditional anthropocentric center (Flaxman, 2012, p. 88). Likewise, the shift to becoming over being indicates a new model of the communality, which is

constituted through the perpetual assessment of temporal and material situatedness of the human within the immanent whole.ⁱⁱ In order to maintain the prerogative of temporal singularity, rather than ahistorical universality belonging to the totalizing systems of the past, one would need to extend Deleuze and Guattari's geophilosophical analysis of the modern "cosmic" age as post-industrialist, information-driven, and rife with virtualized economic capacities to our present situation. This time, geologically speaking, has been progressively hailed as the Anthropocene and, economically speaking, represents a certain acceleration of production/destruction and perpetual expansion of control, the radicalized, hyperbolized state of 'late' capitalism, which Deleuze anticipates.

In this article, I develop an account of the Anthropocene, which addresses the ways that human beings have become alienated from the earth and mired in pessimistic resignation with regard to the possibility of making significant transformations in our politico-economic situation. I suggest that this malaise is the correlate of a general suspension of imagination, in other words, an inability to imagine a radically different future, and is linked to the issue of pedagogy in light of the Anthropocene. Next, I will argue that the task for thinking and learning, i.e. the pedagogical imperative, is to initiate an ontological shift in awareness. I argue that such a shift in ontological awareness is a necessary pedagogical tool in our attempts to navigate the epoch of the Anthropocene. This would involve attuning our selves, both conceptually and materially, to the level of the imperceptible forces, intensities, and affects that populate the earth – the cosmic level of being – which is to say, radical immanence. Finally, I suggest a two-pronged account of what this attunement would require (1) developing an awareness of the level of force and intensity by which the cosmic arises and operates – what I am going to call a

sensitivity to affect and immanence. One of the paradoxes that such a project encounters is that such a sensitivity to our thorough embeddedness in immanent conditions demands that we attend to that which remains below our normal thresholds of attention. This sensitivity to immanence would then operate at the level of affect, rather than cognitive perception. In order to address this, I will draw upon Deleuze's robust conception of the autonomous nature of affect and considers it in light of the work of those involved in affect studies who have theorized the communal and contagious power of affect. We have to consider how we can cultivate modes of attentiveness and openness to this affective dimension. Therefore, the second requirement (2) is the invention of practices and ways of being that allow for or precipitate this development, which I am going to explore through the creative potential of art to infuse philosophy with intervals and slowness that help us to cultivate modes of attentiveness and openness to this affective dimension.

The Geological Time of the Anthropocene

Presently, it seems that we are mired in disillusionment and apathy concerning the future: it seems that our belief in the political process is broken and our very humanity is becoming redundant in the face of the globalized, corporatized market and that we have no new ideas or vision and any possibility of thinking that things can be otherwise. We are thus besieged by a kind of fatalistic realism. When there are forces that relentlessly oppose changing the system from which they are fed, even while barreling toward impending catastrophe, *how can anything change?* With regard to issues of corporatization, environmental exhaustion, and political disempowerment, the refrains of our age arise: 'it's too late, there is nothing that can be done – irreversible!' To my mind, this malaise is the correlate of a general suspension of imagination, an inability to

imagine a radically different future, and the solution is linked to the issue of pedagogy, of how to think, in light of the Anthropocene. The question, ‘what can be thought – *differently?*’ may embolden us to think ‘what must be done – *differently.*’ These questions should weigh upon us as the most profound, the most urgent, and yet the most unforeseeable. It is perhaps in this space of ambiguity, between the horrifying specter of foreclosure and our refusal to accept it, that we can begin to imagine differently.

As a means of foreshadowing of my response to these questions, I refer to Benjamin’s inauspicious quote from 1929: ‘They alone shall possess the earth who live from the powers of the cosmos’ (Benjamin, 2008, p.58). Benjamin is speaking of a particular ecstatic and communal experience of the cosmos that has been lost to modernity. He argues that ignoring this rapturous, affectively-charged contact has been the error of modern man, and, while our influence has expanded to planetary scales, it is with the spirit of technological mastery rather than awe-inspired respect. This attitude of possessive domination occludes any genuine experience of the cosmos, such that our relationship with the earth needs to be re-invented. I believe such a shift in ontological awareness is exactly what is needed for a pedagogy of the future, for our attempts to navigate the epoch of the Anthropocene, and by invoking Deleuze’s ontology, as that which can help us better understand capitalist processes of deterritorialization characteristic of the Anthropocene and to resist its inertia, I distinguish my position from what might seem to be well-trodden ground by thinkers such as Heidegger or Benjamin.ⁱⁱⁱ

First, it is important to clarify what we take to be the indices of the Anthropocene. Generally, the Anthropocene indicates a new epoch in which humans are no longer just biological, but geological agents – in other words, that we, as human beings, have

changed geology, not just our history, or our culture. There is ample evidence for our geological agency: the making of a new mineral epoch - through the artificial separating out of metals (500 million tons of aluminum for instance); changing the geological strata - through addition of 6 billion tons of plastics; 500 billion tons of concrete; a trillion bricks a year; not to mention atmospheric alteration, as we've doubled the amount of nitrogen at the earth's surface (Vitousek, et al., 1997; Zalasiewicz and Schwagerl, 2015). For many, acknowledging this has precipitated the realization that the age of the human risks destroying the earth. From this point of view, philosophy must think about the end, a new version of the age-old philosophical imperative, to learn how to die. However, as some have been pointed out (Zalasiewicz and Schwagerl, 2015; Saldanha, 2015, p. 211), the Anthropocene is not necessarily or merely anthropocentric, and to commit this erroneous assumption is to ignore our interrelatedness with the biosphere, rather than to 'take seriously the earth and the human as two branches of the same abstract machine' (Dukes, 2016, p. 516). Even recognizing that there is something *like* a new epoch can allow us to think, imagine and act differently. So, from a more optimistic perspective, it means thinking the conditions of the anthropocene, which is to say, *beyond* the conditions of the human, in order to think of a different future and new ways of inhabiting this planet.

Here is where we must think very precisely, about the kind of pedagogy that this entails. The Anthropocene invites the recognition that since our 'activities [have] transform[ed] the earth... [we] must therefore take responsibility for the future of the planet' (Stengers 2012, 9). But, we must also ask ourselves, is this merely one side of the same Promethean coin? Can we solve our problems by operating from a paradigm of

human agency that has created them? It really depends on what we mean by ‘take responsibility’ – green capitalism, bio-genetic technologies, more ‘growth and development, or should we think of responsibility as the necessity of resisting solutions that operate within the same framework. Stengers, for instance, advocates the latter approach, arguing that, rather than eco-conservation inserted into the system (of course, here we mean advanced Capitalism), we must entirely ‘reinvent modes of production and of co-operation that escape from the evidences of economic growth and competition’ (Stengers, 2015, p. 24), becoming conscientious objectors to the slavish worship of growth that pits humans against environment, and humans against humans, in an ever-increasing exploitative spiral. I suggest that this same choice exists philosophically, and that we must enact a paradigm shift rather than merely critique the same conceptual plane. Given that the economic and the philosophic are ineluctably bound to each other, we must also ask what are the conditions that Capitalism entails to which philosophy must respond?

We find just such realizations in Deleuze and Guattari’s *A Thousand Plateaus*, where they develop the concept of the cosmic to address the illusory wholeness and substantiality that has undergirded our concept of the earth, as that which speaks to our modern era of capitalist deterritorialization, and in *What is Philosophy?*, in which they develop geo-philosophy as a mode of thinking that engages an inhuman temporality in order to liberate our philosophical and political imaginations. In both cases, what is called for is the de-centering of our selves in order *to be true to the earth*. This is the potential that we want to explore.

Geophilosophy and Being True to the Earth

The following passage from *A Thousand Plateaus* will serve as the launching point for navigating the ambiguities of this strange situation in which human and earth have so intertwined themselves:

Finally, it is clear that the relation to the earth and the people has changed, and is no longer of the romantic type. The earth is now at its most deterritorialized: not only a point in a galaxy, but one galaxy among others. The people is now at its most molecularized: a molecular population, a people of oscillators as so many forces of interaction... ***The question then became whether molecular or atomic ‘populations’ of all natures (mass media, monitoring procedures, computers, space weapons) would continue to bombard the existing people in order to train it or control it or annihilate it – or if other molecular populations were possible, could slip into the first and give rise to a people yet to come ...*** (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, pp. 345-46, my emphasis)

Here it is clear that any uptake of geo-philosophy has to account for the intersection of a new ontological vision with the concrete social formations indicative of the modern ‘cosmic age’ – post-industrialist, information-driven, virtualized economic capacities. As this quote illustrates, we are already caught up in these processes, and rather than understanding them, we have become captured by them. Presently, it seems that we have become unequal to the forces that our activities unleashed, and we are swept along at a blistering pace for which we have yet to develop a language, or conceptual framework. Though we can say that we have become geological agents rather than merely biological ones, our productions have overtaken our bodies and our minds. It is these virtual intensive passages of information, the fluidity of modes of production that dominate our world, that have, in effect, changed our relation to the earth and world. But has there been an equal shift in the conception of the human and its place within this scheme - in our

ability to, as Deleuze would say, become worthy of the events that happen to us?

Another key passage, this time from *What is Philosophy?*, presents us with a rejoinder to this earlier provocation: ‘We lack creation. We lack resistance to the present. The creation of concepts in itself calls for a future form, for a new earth and people that do not yet exist. [...] Art and philosophy converge at this point’ (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p. 108). Deleuze’s claim that we ‘lack an earth’ can be referred to the deficiencies in our Promethean ‘sense’ of the earth as the domain of the human, to be seized and measured – our present (Wiame, 2015, p. 2). Yet, by naming this lack, Deleuze and Guattari call us beyond lamenting the loss of the earth – or people –demanding a new kind of relation therewith, where to resist means to project imaginative futures – to invent rather than remain in nostalgic paralysis. It is our supposition that to be ‘true to the earth’ is to think, or rather, to aesthetically and creatively engage an inhuman earth – the perspective of the cosmic rather than the human, the level of forces and intensities, which precede substantial forms, even that of the human subject.

This is the shard of hope that I want to trace at the end of the first passage, asking: *if* other molecular populations were possible, could slip into the first and give rise to a people yet to come – what *would (or could)* that be like? This time of production where forces are at their most deterritorialized gives us access to an underlying ontological truth that has hitherto been covered over by our own theorizing: the cosmic does not end with the sphere of capital but insinuates a plane of immanent, non-hierarchical relationality and connectivity, a world filled with discontinuities and oscillations, a deterritorialized earth of cosmic forces. Becoming worthy of what happens to us does not mean changing or controlling those events, but rather entering into them, becoming connected and

engaged with them...relationally, intensively, and affectively. The event that we have to be worthy of is a unilateral uncompromising intrusion, all the more profound because it is the inhuman itself; the earth as an assemblage of material processes (Gaia) (Stengers, 2015, pp. 43-50), which can no longer be silenced or ignored.

And it seems that this is the task for thinking and learning, the pedagogical imperative, that in one way or another lies before us – a common refrain presents itself, that what we need is an ontological shift in awareness, which I have entitled moving ‘from the earth to the cosmic,’ where the cosmic involves a transformation to *geological* [slow] time rather than anthropocentric historicity, and the recognition of the molecular forces that inform and transform us. As I have said, this would require two intertwined tasks: (1) developing an awareness to the level of force and intensity by which the cosmic arises and operates – what I call a sensitivity to affect and immanence; and (2) the invention of practices and ways of being that allow for or precipitate this development.

According to Deleuze and Guattari, we have the tools at our disposal. What characterises the modern age is a different ontological relation to materiality (to the earth), looking beyond the matter-form relation to the direct relation of material-forces, molecularised matter. Deleuze and Guattari envision the Earth as a plane of rhythmic, intensive vibration, which displaces the question of the origin of a people toward questions of pure relations, chance encounters, and perpetual motion (oscillators). The modern figure responsive to this terrain is not a founder, nor a creator, not even artist, but a cosmic artisan (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 345), working from within the scrambling of terrestrial forces – including those we might consider ‘social’ forces: machines, mass media, computers, weapons. Deleuze and Guattari define the artisan as

‘one who is determined in such a way as to follow a flow of matter, a machinic phylum. The artisan is the itinerant, the ambulant’ (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 409), who wanders and etches new paths. The cosmic artisan fabricates rather than replicates, her materials are flows and forces, which by necessity, testify to an always present overflow of the present, exposing the illusions of completeness, which buttress the stratifications of methods of control. We must become cosmic artisans. The question is ‘how does this relate to the anthropocene?’ Additionally, ‘what are the positive or effective political, social, environmental outcomes?’

Here Deleuze and Guattari’s framework for geophilosophy is illuminative, and Greg Lambert does an excellent job of expressing the potential for a transformative politics in terms of geophilosophy’s ability to identify the indices of the over-stratified earth characteristic of the Anthropocene in his essay, ‘What the Earth Thinks.’ Geophilosophy’s appeal is that it creates a system of explanation that can be applied immanently and horizontally in order to make the relationality of different levels of being visible, and stratification, which is the capture and organization of forces, is indicative of geological as well as biological processes. Moreover, human beings create strata, through processes of coding and territorializing, at the meta-level of the socius. In other words, the coding of the earth is a fundamental activity that creates various social bodies and subjectivities, which, ‘in turn, [has created] the condition for the emergence of the great territorial machines that have distributed themselves across the surface of the earth’ (Lambert, 2005, p. 227). Each of these is like another level added to the mute and immanent continuum of the earth. Human societies are ‘mega-machines’ (ibid)– a language that fits well with an attempt to make sense of the processes that lend

themselves to the epoch of the Anthropocene. Our current machinic assemblage is advanced Capitalism, and its specific characteristic is that it dismantles all those preceding it (Lambert, 2015, pp. 227-29). And, though it operates through the deterritorialization of all flows, it is always for the purpose of recoding these in service of a greater degree of capture and stratification in order that *nothing escapes* - so much so that it seems to be an inescapable and inevitable fate (producing the overwhelming affect of fatalism). Therefore, geophilosophically speaking, our present condition is that of a crowded, bloated earth overburdened by territories, despotic forms of sovereignty, an Earth suffering from *too much* stratification.

Lambert observes that Deleuze and Guattari's political geology seeks to undo the totalizing underpinnings implicit in philosophies that rely on concepts of the absolute and universality – those that ultimately have been used in service of supporting the assumption of human domination over the earth and teleological progression that places human consciousness at its apex, and that leads to the fatalist assumption of Capitalism's universality. Geophilosophy provides a methodology for analyzing the construction of strata and accretions of power, exposing their inessentiality. This line of reasoning leads Lambert to the optimistic conclusion that rather than the culmination of a universal History, capitalism only produces *the illusion* of universality as its mode of capture and control (Lambert, 2005, p. 229). Yet, this critique, the loosening of the universalizing illusion of Capital, is only visible to us from what Lambert calls the full body of the earth, by which he means 'the absolute point of deterritorialization' (Lambert, 2005, p. 230). I would like to add that this is where one must insist upon Deleuze and Guattari's ontological shift, from the earth to the cosmic, and the need for a commensurate shift in

our own perspective. This cosmic perspective is akin to what I have called the sensitivity to immanence and reflects a register or plane *within* the earth comprised of molecular, inhuman forces. This emphasis on the necessity of a particularly holistic view, a cosmic perspective, which eliminates or surpasses the purely human realm of earthly existence as necessary for a properly conceived ethics, does not originate with Deleuze and Guattari. The Stoics, Marcus Aurelius in particular, do this when calling for meditative practices that minimize our human existence in light of the greater schema of material reality, of which we are just an infinitesimal part. Yet, Deleuze and Guattari's reconceptualization of the ontological as a genetic process of becoming that operates below the common thresholds of substance and molar entities gives us a new standard by which we must judge what it means to be true to the earth (Sellars, 1999; Sholtz, forthcoming).

Moreover, through our recourse to geophilosophical analysis of processes of stratification, we can see that the very process that allows capitalism to spread across the earth is also the tendency that threatens to bring it to its limit – deterritorialization. Deleuze and Guattari are explicit about this even in the first volume of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, where they juxtapose the limited deterritorializations of Capitalism to the unlimited deterritorializations of desiring production that Capitalism seeks to dominate and control. The nature of Capitalism is to continually deterritorialize the socius, producing an awesome schizophrenic accumulation of energy or charge 'against which it brings all its vast powers of repression to bear, but which nonetheless continues to act as capitalism's limit' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1983, p. 34). A flow that might elude the code always haunts and threatens to expose the constructed nature of its universality.

As Lambert rightfully observes, the earth is that which resists all stratification

(Lambert, 2005, p. 235, also see Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 40). Because the earth, as resistance to stratification, operates within all strata, the potential for change lies then in our tuning in to the rhythms of the earth; *there* are the processes of resistance that we seek, those that will allow for opening rather than foreclosing worlds. But, I reiterate, it is really a question of whether we are captured by these flows and affects *or begin to live and create from them*, to become adequate to perceiving ourselves as intertwined with these processes rather than having the Capitalist mega-machine devour, manipulate, and capture every flow and desire and us along with them.

This is the work of the cosmic artisan, to reframe the indices of modernity, the powers revealed through Capitalist capture and proliferation of the cosmic in an affirmative manner, and to produce new subjectivities that do not deny the present, but do not succumb to it either. The cosmic artisan intensifies and enlivens the event, connecting flows and traversing genres, in order that the bombardment of the miniscule, the mundane, or the machinic is transmuted into a vision of excessive beauty or intensity which provides the possibility of breaking open the configurations (and institutions) which have harnessed these molecular forces, those which operating as control mechanisms for setting and policing the limits. Cosmic artisans exist at the limit, as fabulators who counteractualise lines of flight, potentials that exist immanently, virtually, and intensively.

How do we become these cosmic artisans? Who is worthy? What initiates such a transformation in awareness? This would require an ontological attunement that is resonant with the ontological messiness of the cosmic and inspires immersion and experimentation with these processes. But, how does one develop a new sensibility to

cosmic immanence? Braidotti, who also identifies the need for a new kind of consciousness and critical thought that addresses the post-modern transformation of the politico-economy, makes the salient observation that inner, psychic or unconscious structures are hard to change by sheer volition (Braidotti, 1994, p. 31). This is reminiscent of the paradox to which I referred earlier, that of developing a sensitivity to that which is beyond our normal levels of attentiveness, but it also speaks to the radically non-voluntaristic nature of what Deleuze and Guatarri want to accomplish. They are also interested in transformations of the subject that occur at the pre-subjective level of passive synthesis. Essentially, To effect these deep changes one must keep in mind the distinct levels between willful politics and unconscious desires and develop strategies that are suited to each (ibid). Willful politics implies a *logos* based on reason and rational persuasion, while the latter, the realm of desires, expresses itself through non-signifying affect. The clear demarcation between these is rather like wishful thinking or desire itself. What passes as rational *logos* is built on a bed of lava, or even more dramatically, *logos* is mere façade, one more manipulation meant to engage and stimulate our deeper sensibilities – advertisers and war-mongers know this well.

Affect and Art: The Visceral and Visionary

In order to progress with our inquiry, it will be necessary to turn to realms more sensitive to the nuances of sensibility. That is, it is here that my philosophizing intersects considerations of art, as a transformative potential that operates from the outside of philosophical thought, and the field of affect studies, which takes up the question of the nature of this being affected, this affective experience, explicitly. Affect theory offers a nuanced view of how our bodies are situated within a material environment and the way

that non-signifying, non-semiotic, and often imperceptible forces work upon us, much of which is influenced by Deleuze's theoretical restoration of the autonomy of affect.

Deleuze ascribes a radical power to affects; whereas concepts 'lack the claw of absolute necessity... of an original violence to thought' (Deleuze, 1995, p. 139). Affects epitomize 'the claws of a strangeness or an enmity which alone would awaken thought from its natural stupor or eternal possibility' (ibid).

At the same time, affect is the logos of postmodernity, and its invocation is marked with ambivalence, in much the same way that we have characterized the anthropocene as the ambivalent site of an impending disaster *and* a call to invent a new future. As affect theorists have long insisted, affect is the level at which much of the information, disciplinary power, and the regulating forces of capitalism operate: 'pre-individual affective capacities have been made central to the passage from formal subsumption to the real subsumption of life itself into capital' (Clough, 2012, p. 221). Underscoring this contemporary shift towards affect, Colebrook provides a diagnosis of modern culture as 'suffering from hyper-hypo-affective disorder' (Colebrook, 2011, p. 45), which is exacerbated by the appropriation of affect through and by Capitalism, wherein we experience affect in terms of a diminishing intensity, all the while addicted to the consumption of more and more affects. The capacity to circulate affect becomes a matter of capitalist production, where bodily affect is mined for value and media is in the business of circulating and continuously modulating and intensifying affect. Food, sex, sociality are all marketed affectively, leading to 'affect fatigue' whereby the wider the extension of affective influx, the greater the diminishment of intensity. Thus Colebrook observes that we are in the grips of two catastrophic tendencies: 'a loss of cognitive or

analytic apparatuses in the face of a culture of affective immediacy,' and yet a certain deadening of the human organism and its migration towards the generic, both of which are perpetuated by the tyranny of a relentless capitalism economy of consumption which routes affect for its own purposes.

What also becomes clear is that affect in and of itself is no panacea – it isn't the case that affects can 'save' us from an over-intellectualized, over rationalized world, or that they will necessarily be agents of change in our perceptions or behaviors, because affect has already become the mode of exchange in our current economy. In fact, the problem is much deeper – the oversaturation of affect actually means that we have become impervious to its effects.^{iv} In order to think through these issues, Colebrook calls upon the work of Deleuze and Guattari, as thinkers who offer a 'complex history of the relation between brain, body, intellect and affect' (Colebrook, 2011, p. 50). While she is sympathetic to their work to uncover the power or force of affect and its centrality in human experience, she is also critical of the way that Deleuze's emphasis on affect has been reintegrated into discussions of affectivity, that is, of the assumption that the force of affect can be referred back to the affectivity of an organized living body (Colebrook, 2011, p. 49). In order to see beyond this dilemma, we have to separate affect from affectivity in a more robust way. We need a concept of affect that would open a space for thinking beyond the immediacy of the 'ready and easy responses craved by our habituated bodies' (Colebrook, 2011, p. 50). We have to think the autonomy of the affect.

This more nuanced understanding of affect is certainly one that has its roots in the kind of autonomy that Deleuze ascribes to affect: 'Affects [...] go beyond the strength of those who undergo them [...]' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p. 164). Returning to

Colebrook's demand for an account of affect does not become reintegrated into the lived body and affectivity as such, I want to argue that we need to develop an even more radical account of affect's autonomy. Namely, that affect exists independently of living bodies altogether; affects are materially separate, active entities that act upon our bodies, a view that I believe is latent within Deleuze's account, but, because of our tendency to rely upon phenomenological description, is immediately lost.

In other words, affect must be perceived as not incumbent upon the affectivity of the subject but rather as an autonomous monument, comprised of circuits of force, which stand alone, outside of the body. Affect, understood thus, opens us to a different temporality than the affections that we feel through the lived body, and that this temporal disconnect can destroy the immediacy of affection that is often associated with affect, and, thus, would destroy the efficiency of an economy that systematically and seamlessly incorporates and neutralizes affect by creating a system of hyper-consumption which paradoxically anesthetizes the social body from the force of affect itself.

It is at this point that we must invoke the power of the artwork, as it presents an occasion to understand the nature of the affect as that which exists independent of our affective registers, and yet has a unique potential to disrupt and recalibrate our affectations. According to Colebrook, 'The power of art is not just to present this or that affect, but to bring us to an experience of any affect whatever [] -- or that there *is* affect' (Colebrook, 2004, p. 18). Deleuze emphasizes the particular double potentiality of artworks in *Logic of Sensation* and returns to this particular relation of affect and art in *What is Philosophy*, where he says explicitly: 'It should be said of all art that, in relation to percepts or visions they give us, artists are the presenters of affects, the inventors and

creators of affects. They not only create them in their work, they give them to us and make us become with them' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, 166).

Experiencing the artwork's capacity to 'create circuits of force beyond the viewer's own organic networks' opens up a space of delay (*an interval*) – frustrating immediate gratification. Posing this possibility of delay or interval becomes the occasion for thinking forces detached from the lived. Affect, rather than a response (the biological and internal model) must be considered from the perspective of that by which we are confronted and having an entirely other and external nature. 'Affect becomes a genuine concept when it poses the possibility of thinking the delay or interval between the organism as a sensory-motor apparatus and the world that is (at least intellectually) mapped according to its own measure' (Colebrook, 2011, p. 54). It is in this gap – between our lived bodies and the affect as a stand-alone entity, which cannot be reduced to the lived, that a space opens up for us to experience the inhuman, the forces of immanent being from out of which we are generated.

To Colebrook's demand for thinking the temporality of affect as an interval that breaks up the immediacy of our subjective experience, and thus our experience of the homogenous space of State philosophy and onslaught of Capitalist flows of affectivity, I would add that this also allows us to imagine affect in spatial terms, as a place in which inhuman forces can arise, or be illuminated. But rather than an empty space, or gap between spaces,^v interval has to be thought as a temporal-spatial dimension that is already full, a crystallization and slowing down of the space that is already present, with its myriad relations, dynamisms, and forces, which would correspond to Deleuze's understanding of the minor as a way of occupying space and transforming political space

from within the already instantiated major institutions and hegemonic formations.^{vi}

We encounter artworks as provocative, the combinatorial possibilities of which indicate the possibility of never before considered affects, which shock and confuse our ease of consumption. The feat of the artist is to straddle the line between chaos and order, to provide just enough consistency within the artwork for the myriad forces that are being captured to hold together, while allowing them the most freedom possible. Thus, artworks' framing of chaotic immanence allows for simultaneous thinking the cared out territory of the bloc of sensation and the transversality of the frame/sensation coupling as a kind of rhythmic bloc of sensation that interacts with its surroundings (Sholtz, 2015) and provides a model of spatial interval. They are studies of intensity that make visible or amplify these forces themselves, forming what could be considered a pulsating space by purposefully flirting with and precariously maintaining the tension between these two tendencies. Thus, these spaces of affect constitute an opening of immanence with which we can tarry to produce a sensitivity to this intensive and immanent realm that normally eludes us, or through which we clumsily pass unaware.

Yet, any naïve exuberance for merely producing *more* affects fails to account for oversaturated affective economy that has already routed and co-opted affect for its own purposes. In other words, the question is, "How to get out of the feedback loop of the human and the capitalist affect producing machine?" We must consider the kind of affects that must be generated in order to allow us to engage with this new concept of affect. What kind of activities, affects, and encounters can open a space whereby this sensitivity arises?

Intersection with Artistic Practice

In October 2015 while giving a keynote speech at the Moscow Biennale, Yanis Varoufakis, the former Greek finance minister, said, ‘Art must not be anodyne, culture cannot be decorative...[artists] should be feared by the powerful in our society, if you are not, you are not doing your job properly. Now, rather than interpreting this as a straightforward call for artists *to get political*, it strikes me that it holds a more profound message – as an implicit acknowledgement that art has a potential to open spaces of resistance and that it is uniquely poised to do so in a way that calls upon the artist in the mode of obligation. The exigency for the artist is amplified by a world that is practically cinched up by the overwhelming predominance of an all-encompassing capitalist economy that gobbles us, and our affects, up as quickly as they can be produced. Where and how can one escape from the singular economy of production if not in the intervals and spaces that artists uniquely open up. Moreover, art practices are the place in which the space of affect can be reflectively engaged. Of course, this is a potential of art, not its essence, a potential that becomes an imperative if one desires a different future. My argument is that it becomes an imperative to produce affects that are themselves embodiments of delay or interval. I will focus on one example that can help us understand this possibility of art practices to create or provoke intervals or delays in which forces of immanence overwhelm us.

Silence

I have in mind John Cage’s explorations of the affect of silence. It may seem strange to speak of affects of silence, rather than concepts of silence, but this is exactly the precipice that must be traversed to shift towards an understanding of the autonomous power of affect. These affects, in particular, resist easy incorporation and they are unlike

other affects that can be immediately connected to our own affective registers (as our tendency is to understand the products of art as reflecting our own anthropocentric registers and language of affectivity). I want to claim that these particular affects provoke an experience of interval or delay required for shattering the subjective paradigm and thus initiating us into a realm of inhuman force and immanence, which we have called an imperative for thought.

Cage is perhaps most well known for developing chance operations, which are meant to eliminate the subjective intention involved in the creation and highlight the aleatory as the main operator of the work. For instance, *Music of Changes*, which Cage expressly claims is ‘an object more inhuman than human’ (Cage, 2011, p. 36), imposes the aleatory by casts the ruins of the *I Ching* as a way of determining the structure of the composition. Indeed, Cage’s methods of producing the aleatory in art were taken up in many other art registers, and set the tone for the development of performance art, as a medium that embraced the spontaneity of live action, minimally directive scores or instructions, and the unpredictability of audience reaction as the barriers between performer and spectator were challenged. But what is interesting is that Cage situates the aleatory in a larger framework beyond the orchestration of chance operations that disrupt intentional structure. What he suggests is that his method of chance operations was a stage along the way to exploring something more profound, the indeterminate, which is accessed by abandoning structure, chance or otherwise, altogether. For this reason, Cage emphasizes the importance of the indeterminate with regard to performance. The purpose of indetermination is to bring about an unforeseen situation (Cage, 2011, pp. 35-37), and, though chance operations do succeed in rendering the structure of a composition

unknown from the beginning, the performance itself is foreseeable as it follows the edicts that the chance-operations have determined. Maintaining that, 'However, more essential than composing by means of chance operations, it seems to me, is composing in such a way that what one does is indeterminate of its performance' (Cage, 2011, p. 69), Cage recounts his necessary progression from the intentional incorporation of the aleatory (chance operations) to a process that is itself aleatory (indeterminate).

Simultaneous to these experimental operations, Cage begins to develop a theory of silence, of which one only becomes aware once the structure and process of composition are disrupted. Traditionally, silence is seen to be the counterpart to sound, a mode of duration. Silence, then, is thought of in terms of the division of time-lengths and partitioning of sound and silence. But while Cage first attempts to make structure aleatory which eliminates 'the presence of the mind as a ruling factor' (Cage, 2011, p. 22), he is led to understand that structure is not necessary at all. In his subsequent work, he devises scores in which structure is no longer part of the composition, an activity characterized by process alone. It is in this context that he asks, what happens to silence, or the mind's perception of it?

Rather than a time-lapse between sounds, where there is a predetermined structure or organically developing one, 'silence becomes something else- not silence at all, but sounds, the ambient sounds. The nature of these is unpredictable and changing. These sounds may be depended upon to exist. The world teems with them, and is, in fact, at no point free of them' (Cage, 2011, pp. 22-23). Cage insists that new music is nothing but sounds (Cage, 2011, p. 7), which include those that are notated and those that are not. The non-notated are 'silences, opening the doors of the music to the sounds that happen

to be in the environment.’ Silence is not voided, empty space; it is an affect that holds open a space for the unintentional, ambient sounds that pre-exist us, that compose us, that exceed our activities: ‘inherent silence is equivalent to denial of the will’ (Cage, 2011, p. 53). Therefore, silence is a filled space, a space of plenitude, that eradicates the priority of our cognitive and affective circuits, and which opens an interval for that which arises independently therein – that is, concatenations of myriad forces of the external and yet immanent environment in which we are immersed.

The discovery of an unintentional silence, something that breaks free of cognitive determination (Cage, 2011, 14), opens a space of materiality where forces arise. The composition becomes what arises in these spaces or intervals of silence – thus accomplishing two things: the eradication of the intentional subject and the rendering of the performance completely indeterminate, even more so given that the performers are something like inhuman, ambient forces. One could say that this study in silence brings about another affect, that of the indeterminate.

Perhaps in revisiting artworks such as this, with special attention to the affects that it was able to release, we can engage a new potential – a space in which humanity can become that which understands itself from a new conception of immanence and affect, to become a people is sensitive to open, dynamic system of intensities, forces and multiplicities. This is not to become inhuman, but to think about the human, or being human, differently, as an open possibility constantly bombarded by and in tandem with myriad forces and affective relations to other beings, human and otherwise. It is to inhere, to dwell even, in the same space – the interval, yet differently and with an alternate relation to these potential connections and minor voices. In this context, we would

understand that resistance is not loud, it happens in the cracks between time. It is the silence of increasing intensity, the eventual release of an amplified force that tears through spaces, cultivating a new sensibility, as open vulnerability to this outside, for which art prepares the way.

Conclusion:

The demands of revolutionary politics and recourse to aesthetic creativity do not always sit well with each other. My thinking attempts to straddle these unsettled boundaries. Before political efficacy, before institutional change, something more subtle, more ontological, must happen. This is what I have been calling for a new sensibility or transformation in our awareness. This new sensibility must be attuned to the normally imperceptible flows and forces that impinge upon us, the affective registers that enter into our reasoning and decision making – without attention to these, we are left with the disturbing perspective that nothing can change. It also necessitates a new relation to the earth and a more ontologically incisive perception of the human situation as embedded and horizontally interrelated to the earth and its existents. Being worthy of the event is to think the cosmic, which lets in a modicum of indeterminacy and freedom, this is the place of resistance: a gap, a wound, a space of deferral where fate does not prevail, where the future arises.

Deleuze says that what we lack is resistance to the present exist' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, p. 108) and, in my view, this is a direct challenge to the fatalism and despair implicit in the attitude that there is no way to challenge state and corporate power, no way out of Capitalism. This position has led some to posit a kind of acceleration of Capitalist prerogatives as the only alternative - to drill and burn, however selectively, our

way out of the world that we have irreparably changed/damaged. Yet, as Deleuze explains, ‘absolute deterritorialisation is not defined as a giant accelerator; its absoluteness does not hinge on how fast it goes. It is actually possible to reach the absolute by way of phenomena of slowness and delay’ (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 56). In the spirit of Deleuze and Guattari, I want to suggest a different confrontation with speeds and slownesses. The interval, as an affective tarrying with slowness and delay, is a way of creating a sensitivity to immanence (the cosmic, earthly absolute) and all of its impermeable points and places that stratification fails to capture. In terms of the temporality of the Anthropocene, it is a response that neither pines for a nostalgic return to past nor rushes towards a post-human apocalyptic future. Rather, this spatio-temporal delay draws our attention to our immanent present, while at the same time, *resisting* this present. This is a space not just for the earth/cosmic to arise, but for humans to recognize that our bodies, our affects, have already been captured in the great capitalistic mechanosphere, and that our ‘individuality’ has been fashioned lock-step with the demands of the market and the flows of capital, in order that we may begin to redirect those flows and create a different future.

As the reversal of the beginning of this reflection on the Anthropocene, I would like to invoke the affect of hope. Hope, as a kind of optimism in the face of immense uncertainty and overwhelmingly oppressive conditions, is difficult to imagine, yet some are undertaking this task. In *Hope: New philosophies for Change*, for instance, Mary Zournazi implores that re-enchanting life and politics through chance-taking is the way out of despair (Zournazi, 2002, 274). Similarly (and quite reminiscent of Deleuze and Guattari’s imperative to experiment), Stengers expounds the necessity of taking risks for

moving to a politics of hope, as both crucial for generating the intensity and joy needed for making changes and for promoting a sense of community and belonging. She characterizes risks as kinds of (revolutionary) events, inventions wherein lies hope for the future (Stengers, 2002). If there is hope in all creative risks, we must create the space and the dispositions for such risks to be taken in order to reinvigorate our political imagination and to move beyond our reasons for despair. As we have seen, such a creative political imagination reopens within the cracks and the fissures of the present, rather than appeal to a sterile utopian future. My claim is that this is what philosophy, what I, should be doing – creating intervals where thought and affect intertwine and the immanent forces of the earth can rise up within us. We must risk thinking differently. Opening ourselves to Deleuze’s view of ontology is a risk – we risk our self-enclosure and our sense of stability and wholeness. But we also stand to gain - to gain a newfound awareness of the cosmic potential for the creative that exists as the flowing bedrock of our existence. There is hope because creativity is ontological. And I would like to add, hope, or affirmation for that matter, is not a sign of naiveté. It is our communal responsibility to cultivate the kinds of affects that fundamentally move us forward rather than those that celebrate negativity and keep us mired in a repetition of the present. Hope allows us to take those risks.

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ⁱ Most explicitly, Paul Patton's *Deleuze and the Political* (New York: Routledge, 2000), or more contemporarily, his *Deleuzian Concepts: Philosophy, Colonization, Politics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010); Nicholas Thoburn's *Deleuze, Marx and Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2003); Ian MacKenzie and Robert Porter's *Dramatizing the Political* (United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Nick Tampio's *Deleuze's Political Vision* (U.S.A.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2015)

ⁱⁱ 'As opposed to the kind of exclusionary myths that create a people based on a common origin, blood or race, or even language, ... the kind of people that arises from this earth would have to be brought together out of their common dispersion, from the very fact that they are engaged in or produced by the deterritorialisations of dominant (molar) apparatuses' (Sholtz, 2015, p. 242).

ⁱⁱⁱ I am distinguishing my interpretation of Deleuze and Guattari's relation to postmodernity and contemporary capitalist society, from those who equate their ontology with capitalist deterritorialization, as if they were either merely offering descriptive analysis or, even more egregiously, embracing its inevitability and resolving themselves to the necessity of hyperbolized production, which, I believe, commits them to solutions relying merely on difference in degree rather than difference in kinds (of production). Deleuze and Guattari offer us, instead, the tools to recognize and analyze the powerful deterritorializing forces of capitalism (as limited deterritorializations which hinder and encumber the true libidinal forces of desiring production) in order that other modes of unlimited desiring production and deterritorialization can arise. Neither do I agree that Deleuze and Guattari's ontological position has theoretically exacerbated or buttressed neoliberal ideology. For instance, when Châtelet suggests Deleuze presents an affirmative ontology of chaos, one that correlates with and supports a political shift towards neoliberalism and its belief in the myth of auto-emergence that empowers the ideology of the sovereign power of free market (what he calls "seductive market-chaos" (Chatelet, 2014, p. 60). Yet, to suggest that Deleuze and Guattari are advocates of pure chaos, of merely affirmation of difference and proliferation for its own sake is reductive. He offers more nuance than a mere repetition of the options presented by neoliberal adherence to the inevitability of the invisible hand market economy. They advocate something like attuning ourselves to the chaosmotic plane out of which our experience and reality is generated; thus what is indeterminate is not chaotic, but virtual, and production is both a matter of blockage and delays as well as affirmation and speeds. Deleuze's ontology of becoming points towards relations of forces, a methodology for analyzing assemblages and recognizing consistencies, which exceed even the political and economic planes to force us to engage the outside of our human productions. This view of Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy suggests a cosmic potential that might combat the closures instituted by the globalizing forces of capitalism and the ever expanding technization of contemporary control societies.

^{iv} In 'Affect's Future: Rediscovering the Virtual in the Actual,' for instance, Lawrence Grossberg posits that there are a great number of affective apparatuses to encounter and identify and that the failure to separate analytically those contexts has been a particular

weakness of critical theory and cultural studies. These types of nuance with regard to affect are necessary to navigate the kind of contemporary environment that is being proposed.

^v As for Aristotle, interval (*diastēma*) is an empty space that is between bodies, necessarily without quality or mobility, and already implies a present relation between a body and its place (*topos*), rather than a place of durational emergence of bodies or form (Hill, 2012, pp. 45-46).

^{vi} Luce Irigaray develops a conception of interval through her counter-reading of Aristotle's understanding in 'Place, Interval' (Irigaray, 1993, 34-58). As opposed to Aristotle who understands interval as an empty space between bodies indicating an immobile limit, she thinks the relationship between envelope and things as an open threshold, a place of passage and intersubjective becoming, which itself is predicated on the thought of difference that arises from thinking the space of interval. The development of the interval as a mobile or virtual place, that happens relationally, rather than as an already constituted presence provides an interesting parallel to Deleuze's ontology of becoming and theorization of the Event in particular. Yet, though her work is crucial for opening up a critical dialogue concerning the hegemony of the subject, and helps us rethink the priority of form over matter, Irigaray's interval assumes the priority of sexual difference, while Deleuze's difference does not. Thus, from a Deleuzian perspective, Irigaray's difference is too tied to the prerogatives of subjects (sexuate beings), even while multiplying them, and does not go far enough towards the inhuman and pre-subjective outside.