# The Philosophy of Mannerism

From Aesthetics to
Modal Metaphysics

Sjoerd van Tuinen

Bloomsbury

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*From Aesthetics to Modal Metaphysics*

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# Contents

# Preface

In the face of modernity's 'side-effects,' this book excavates and reconstructs a concept that I deem crucial to any contemporary resurgence in ontology. At the same time, it sets out from the acknowledgement that philosophy does not have an original domain. It certainly has its own means, but it has no intrinsic ends, except for the difference its concepts make to problems that it encounters in other disciplines and practices. Taking up a point of view immanent to art history, namely the problem of the 'secondary' and 'artificial' nature of mannerism, the aim of the six chapters that follow is to develop a new interpretation of the early modern insofar as it involves a contemporary revaluation of mannerist modes of imagining and inhabiting the world. This task is introduced by a series of short historical and methodological considerations that lead up to a first systematic philosophical positioning.

The texts presented here find their origin in research done for my PhD dissertation on Gilles Deleuze's use of Leibniz, *Mannerism in Philosophy*. Despite the programmatic title, many of my intuitions regarding the consistency of a mannerist philosophy were still inchoate and vague at the time of its defense at Ghent University in 2009. Their subsequent development would not have been possible without several groundbreaking publications and the manifold work of relaying that surrounds them: Bruno Latour's *An Inquiry into Modes of Existence* (2012), Giorgio Agamben's *The Use of Bodies* (2014), as well as the English translations of Étienne Souriau's *The Different Modes of Existence* (2015) and Gilbert Simondon's *Individuation in Light of Notions of Form and Information* (2020). The result is a coming to terms with what is perhaps less a tradition than an echo, a delayed Copernican revolution in which ontology, ethics and aesthetics intersect in the idea of a continental modal philosophy.

Mannerism approaches things from the middle. It does not start from their identity or essence but by following their multiple modes of existence. These are the immanent and operative forms, relationally constituted and forever incomplete, in which they become concrete. The coming about of this book, too, is the result of a decade of intensive participation in the plethora of styles of writing, conversing, teaching, and living that makes

up contemporary academia. In particular, I wish to thank the following people for their inspiration and/or complicity: Robin van den Akker, Ridvan Askin, Jelle Baan, Erik Bordeleau, Vlad Ionescu, Bertrand Prévost, Andrej Radman, Heleen Schröder, Peter Sloterdijk, Isabelle Stengers, Frans Sturkenboom, Rosa Vieira de Almeida, Stephen Zepke, and the students at ESPhil, Erasmus University Rotterdam.

# Acknowledgements

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# Introduction

## Posthumanism

'And yet the earth moves.' Following Michel Serres, Bruno Latour makes the striking claim that the Anthropocene is closer to the sixteenth century than to the self-image of the modern world. Through a complete reversal of Western philosophy's most cherished trope, the domination of nature by the human subject, our societies seem to be playing the role of the dumb object while nature has unexpectedly taken on that of the active subject. 'Such is the frightening meaning of "global warming": through a surprising inversion of background and foreground, it is human history that has become frozen and natural history that is taking on a frenetic pace.'[1] This image of the foreground sinking into a background that rises up of itself reminds us of the mannerist compositions of El Greco. While in the High Renaissance, clear and distinct forms functioned as humanistic representations of a *storia* situated on a natural stage (Alberti), they now participate in a metamorphic zone in which it is no longer clear who acts and who is acted upon. In the crisis of form, Gilles Deleuze echoes Schelling, 'it is as if the ground [*fond*] rises up to the surface, without ceasing to be ground.'[2]

Today this 'melting [*effondement*]' or 'deterritorialization' of the surface means that while, from the brain to the planet, the human world continues to depend on its natural and historical conditions, at the same time these conditions rumble with a life of their own and are now on the verge of becoming uninhabitable to us. 'Like a mannerist painting that stretches the rules of classicism to breaking point', Timothy Morton writes, 'global warming has stretched our *world* to breaking point.'[3] The intrusion of Gaia does away with the romantic concept of nature as unavoidable *Urgrund* of harmonious living. Or rather, it shows that nature is immanently deviant. Instead of being limited to nature, contemporary ecology concerns the manners in which things exist, that is, the ways in which they express, and thereby change, themselves, each other, and their environment. We live in a thoroughly synthetic world in which everything comes to show signs of human conditioning. But contrary to being transformed into the manifest image of the human or aligning itself to our privileged conduits, this general anthropomorphism teaches

us just how not alone we are. The whole earth system increasingly turns out to be a patchwork of interlocking machines, composed through microbiotic, financial, digital, industrial, institutional, algorithmic, and infrastructural feedback, which are as maladapted to humans as they are to each other.

To speak of the world as a problem of composition and synthesis is to break with the modern habit of making a strict distinction between the natural and the artificial. Chemists speak of synthesizing natural products when they want to express a relation of identity—imitation, simulation, completion, improvisation, or counterfeit—between the natural and the manufactured product. From margarine and polystyrene pearls to phosphorescent rabbits and Frankencorn, this relation is generally far from perfect. In art, by contrast, the copy occasionally claims to be more complete than the original. Just as contemporary biotechnology and AI rival nature in their replication, the mannerist artists and craftspersons already showed that no material is entirely natural, just as no artifact is entirely unnatural. Once we take the emphasis off the product itself and focus on its *mode* of production, something as seemingly unnatural as glass is actually a product of nature, whereas the exaggeration of nature in art can acquire its own degree of perfection.[4]

The classical concept of art, or rather of the fine arts, is established on the exclusion of mannerism (together with baroque), which the European aestheticians of the eighteenth century deemed either too close to nature (the paradox of the 'rustic style'[5] in a massive building such as Giulio Romano's *Palazzo del Tè*) or too artificial (the paradox of the 'stylish style'[6] of Giovanni da Bologna's serpentine figures), but in any case kitschy, tasteless, and decadent. Much of the development of romanticism and modern art would be based on the subsequent dialectic between art and its historical other. In the spirit of Baudelaire, it has been argued that mannerism is both the negation of art and its convex mirror, as if modernity is driven by something that escapes it and that can only be rendered visible in an oblique way.[7] However, we will see that even today, when artists and art theorists seek to move beyond the postmodern deconstruction of their historical self-understanding, the concept of mannerism retains its problematic status. Mannerism continues to haunt contemporary art as a source and an element even if it remains without identity. If we have never been modern, and if the conjuncture just before the flight of modernity took off gives us a more adequate historical image of ourselves and our world, then perhaps the time has come to investigate the nature of this mirror and revisit a question that is as old as art history itself, but that will now be asked also from outside of it: What is mannerism?

## Compositionism

If mannerism can be said to be at once too natural and too artificial, this is because it is the symptom of a culture 'that relished accumulations of all sorts'.[8] One of the main motifs of mannerist art, Peter Sloterdijk points out, is to bring to the fore the arrangedness of works (in the sense of their 'workings'). Instead of organic beauty and proportion, it gives us ugly and sterile deformations highlighting 'that the artificial, the artful, the human-made non-human is always much too complex to be merely aesthetically and organically pleasing'. At the same time, this formalism regains a natural quality to the extent that forms do not stand alone, but are folded, sometimes smoothly but more often in a fraught way, into their surroundings. What makes mannerist forms interesting is the vital force that makes them vibrate in a variable and open field of nested compositions: 'bodies out of bodies, works out of works, figures out of figures'.[9] Combining reptiles, herbs, mythical creatures, foliage, and scrolls on sumptuous objects apparently made for human use (e.g., Wenzel Jamnitzer's fruit serving vessel personifying Mother Earth (1549), a mixed product of engraving, goldsmithing, and enameling), the mannerist grotesque is a labyrinth full of transformation, hybridity, creation, and disintegration.[10] It is precisely to the extent that it exacerbates this tension between the artificial and the natural into a plastic continuum, that mannerist art already seems to point ahead into a radically constructivist future made up of an infinite scale of entities that have no prior or independent existence.[11] Every composition is already a decomposition of prior and posterior compositions. Against its discursive closure in pathology, our aesthetic task is therefore to release the ontological dissonance of mannerism from the anticipation of order and the presumption of meaning.

In the tradition of composite painting, the frontispiece of Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan* is typical of classicism. It is the organism of the sovereign subject composed of individual human souls who have emancipated themselves from the state of nature. The social body towers over the objectified earth as its Master and Possessor. Contrast this to Arcimboldo's grotesque portraits, composed as crowded tableaux of animals, fruits, and vegetables. In both cases, we are dealing with highly artificial compositions, but the latter no longer reflects the power of the human subject. Both designs are highly anthropomorphic, but the latter is no longer anthropocentric. Rather, heterogeneous elements that mingle nature and history now make up the portraits of Adam, Eve, princes and princesses, The Sense of Smell, the seasons, admirals, and jurists.[12] As with fractals, the visual field cannot be totalized. The shallowness of the foreground and the flatness of

the background emphasize a deep ambiguity between planimetric outlines and volumetric details. In a multifocal panorama, not lit by any natural light, things radiate of themselves, in full transparency, leaving no interval or demarcation between them.

Referring to the portrait of Rudolf II, Holy Roman Emperor disguised as Vertumnus (1590–1), the Milanese cleric Gregorio Comanini called Arcimboldo an artificer of fantastic imitation (*imitazione fantastica*, also *sprezzatura artificiosa*). The work is both natural in its analytical attention to detail and unnatural in its combinations.[13] In the friction between extravagance and common sense, it is no longer clear what is ideal and what is real. Or rather, instead of a privileged commitment there is always the possibility of their reversal. Between cultivated produce and sovereign power, still life and portraiture, the raw and the cooked, there is no hierarchy, although everything is aligned with everything. What is the secret of this strange mimesis?

Paul North mobilizes the Plotinian notion of circumradiation (*perilampsis*). He contrasts Arcimboldo's *Vertumnus* to Velasquez's *Las Meninas* (1656), painted half a century later. Instead of a royal surveying his family, we experience the immaterial power of the sovereign to produce natural abundance and receive it in return as tribute in a circuit of riches. From a classical (representational) point of view we could say that in Arcimboldo things, fruits, objects, and beings together approximate the contours of a face. But from a mannerist point of view, it is the 'gift of traits'—contours and colors—that distributes likenesses beyond all ontological relations of commonality, belonging, or dominion. To paint is to rotate a bizarre kaleidoscope made up of overlapping 'likenesses' in which 'mimesis turn[s] in on itself and become[s] another mode': 'a surreal misbirth, the instauration of a nonspatial, antiperspectival mode, in the midst of the other, better-known revolutions' of geometric perspective and naturalist verisimilitude. In effectuating a total mutual possession or 'through-reflection' of components, painting brings 'homeotically' near what seemed ontologically distant, revealing the whole cosmos as 'family' (which North defines as 'homeotic vicinity').[14]

Earlier on, Roland Barthes had sought to explain the magic of an Arcimboldo face in the double articulation, or double bind, of meaningful sign and mirage. Take one element away and the composition changes completely. What in detail or in the whole appears as a full-blown organism, on another scale or from another point of view turns out to be a hypertrophied organ or a skin disease. This is the key to Arcimboldesque semiosis: at their surfaces, all things lose their

literality. It is the very method of composition which disturbs and pulverizes the unitary development—the beauty—of form in an audacious *coup de force*:

> Arcimboldesque flesh is always *excessive*: either ravaged, or flayed (Herod), or swollen, or sunk, dead. . . . What . . . dooms Arcimboldo's heads to an effect of *malaise* is precisely that they are composite: . . . not only does the figured head proceed from a labor, but even the *complication* and hence the duration of this labor are represented. . . . Arcimboldo's heads are monstrous because they all refer, whatever the grace of the allegorical subject (Summer, Spring, Flora, Water), to a *malaise* of substance: *seething* or *swarming*. The swarm of living things (plants, animals, babies), arranged in a close-packed disorder (before joining the intelligibility of the final figure), evokes an entire larval life, the entanglement of vegetative beings, worms, fetuses, viscera which are at the limits of life, not yet born and yet already putrescible.[15]

Notwithstanding their differences, both North and Barthes agree in this respect: Unlike with Hobbes, we see nature out of control. Instead of being nicely compartmented in essences and accidents, portrait and landscape, nature turns out to be a continuous movement that invades and decomposes forms just as much as it provides their ground: 'The principle of the Arcimboldesque "monsters" is, in short, that *Nature does not stop*.'[16]

For nature not to stop means, first of all, that it no longer submits to the Aristotelian taxonomy of genera and species, that is, of the stable subordination of matter under form (hylomorphism). Instead, the world of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries harbors an infinite movement or hylezoism, not in the sense of the universe as a living being but in the sense that life is everywhere, although not everything is alive. Neither finite nor indefinite, matter is 'actually infinite'. It cannot be divided without further changing its nature. As Giordano Bruno puts it, matter is endowed with a pervasive desire for new beginnings. Reality must be conceived as a 'unitary process in which matter is both content and form', all the while 'forms vary infinitely, one after the other, and the matter always remains the same'.[17] There are no such things as substantial forms; instead, there is an infinitely fecund matter in which potentiality and actuality are both one and forms only modally or provisionally individuated. Alexandre Koyré famously described the age of Bruno, Johannes Kepler, Tycho Brahe, Bartholomeus Spranger, and Hans von Aachen as an opening of the closed world to the infinite universe. The macrocosm is no longer reflected in the microcosm of the human mind, but opens up to 'the immeasurable and inexhaustible abundance of reality and the unrestricted power of the human intellect'.[18] What

seemed solid now turns out to be fluid, such that, as Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz put it a century after Bruno, in each fish there is a pond that is itself teeming with other fish and so on.[19] This is the age of the Copernican revolution, which decentered the human in the affirmation of infinite possible worlds. At the same time, it is an age which has not yet succumbed to the mechanist project of the total geometrization of nature. The development of 'science' coincides with an acceleration in the domains of magic and the art of memory (*ars memoriae*): systems of hieroglyphic signs and gestational images rather than clearly identifiable causes. Henceforth the first principle for reality itself to become possible is neither God nor Nature, neither the Subject nor simply Being as differentiated from beings, but mutiplicitous becoming.

Just as nature lacks a stable identity, so too does art, which becomes increasingly unlocalizable within it, with a multiplication of artificial grottos, gardens, and topiaries directly confronting the earth's own processes of generation and corruption. If it is a classical requirement that all bodies are a composite of form and matter (or, say, of line and color), then mannerism, in its rivalry with nature, invents a new way of combining form and matter, namely by treating them both next to and in one another. In the 1930s, Erwin Panofsky pointed to the rise of 'antihuman and antinatural forces' that meant a fundamental rift in the society, religion, economy, and art of the renaissance, and that somehow needed to be integrated: 'The rise of these new forces, not the baroque movement, means the real end of the Renaissance, and at the same time the beginning of our own epoch of history—an epoch which is still struggling for an expression in life and art, and which will be named and judged . . . by the generations to come.'[20] In the renaissance, art still referred both to what would later be known as the 'fine arts' and to technology and the science of materials. With mannerism, this explodes into a general ecology of practices such as ceramics, magic, and diplomacy—arts which, each in their own way, already anticipate the traumatic difficulties with the earth as an open-ended problem of cosmopolitical construction.

It is true that all these arts were still regarded as so many vicariances of nature, technics in which nature reflects itself. But with every art, nature is further diversified into an infinite variety of modes of existence. At the threshold of modernity, mannerism is the ecstasy of matter, its continuous aspiration to forms and experiences that remain strangely contingent and inchoate.[21] Instead of leading back to an unchanging and more perfect foundation, it would be better to say, with Étienne Souriau, that the different modes or manners rise up from being 'like the tip of the sword from the sword'.[22] The mannerist world is one of spontaneous duplications and reduplications that endlessly redistribute what it

means to exist. And as we may ask with Latour: What are today's multifarious intersections of politicians, activists, fishermen, sushi bars across the planet with the biological species and ecological territory of the red tuna, if not a marvel from the cabinets of curiosities, the microcosms of the Florentine *studiolo*[23] and the Prague *Kunstkammer* (more than the more religiously connotated Habsburg *Wunderkammer*)?

## Metamodernism

We do not lack historical determinations of mannerism. There are expressionist, surrealist, Marxist, psychoanalytic, semiotic, and postmodern conceptions of mannerism to name but a few, and then there are also those who, precisely because of this very multiplicity, argue that mannerism has never existed at all. This ambivalence and pluralism, however, is in fact essential to the philosophical concept of mannerism, and it is also an essential component of our contemporary condition. Just as contemporary art actualizes transhistorical tendencies, the sixteenth century offers not a model for the present but a futurity that is already included in it and that allows for new alliances between the old and the new.[24]

In this book, mannerism is not another name for the postmodern condition, but neither is it a-modern, as Latour would have it. Rather, it is a different interpretation of modernity and modernism, a decentering one, which may shed new light on what it means to have been early modern as well as measure the extent to which we continue to be modern today. Colin Rowe already spoke of a mannerist modern movement in which modern architecture discovers ways of regenerating itself, exemplified by the repetition of Sebastiano Serlio's blind windows and niches in Le Corbusier's *Villa Schwob* (1912).[25] More recently Peter Eisenman has pointed to a mannerist lateness in Adolf Loos, Aldo Rossi, and John Hejduk, in whose designs the intransigence of conventions to history (the objectivity of style) and expression (subjectivity of style) produces a temporal ambiguity. Treading in the footsteps of Theodor Adorno, he claims that lateness is 'different from the modern relationship to history, which focused on a break with precedent, and different from the postmodern relationship to history, which focused on citation and a return to past historical cycles'.[26] Thus mannerism is syntactic rather than citational. It is not a system of sterile linguistic signs, to be varied at will, but of vital gestures that insist in and apart from the present. Every material—say, a building or a language—is a body with its own character, that is, its proper, historically grown, obstinacy (*virtus*). This constitutes the

implicit potential of its linear development, or explication. To the extent that we already know what the end product must be like, the implicit is generally passed over. Yet virtuosity is a matter of showing what a given material can do in a repetitive gesture. The mannerist re-implicates her- or himself in it by asking the complicating, infinitizing, speculative question: What else is it capable of?[27] Of what other modes of accomplishment?

Nowadays this question of the use of bodies returns with a concept such as 'metamodernism': instead of a parody and pastiche of clearly defined historical moments, other repetitions have already replaced the classical chronology with a wave that knows only singular manners, each of which revirtualizes the actuality of modernism in its own way. Just as historical mannerism was the hyperbole of the renaissance in which the mastery of primary geometry or the depiction of the human figure was put to 'unnatural' use, there is also a virtuoso modernity in which any given material or technique is pushed to its limit and tested for further artificial becomings. Giorgio Agamben suggests that the word 'modern' comes from the Latin *modo*, meaning 'just now',[28] a temporal gap or tension between the present and its immediate past. Mannerism, in other words, is not so much an ironic critique of the past as an intensification of its genetic moments and an expansion of memory.[29] Instead of a critique of originality or authenticity, it is the repetition of the forces of a past potential that was never, and could never be, fully actual. It is a prenatal modernism.

In their conjunction, both mannerism and modernism become something quite different from what canonical art history makes of them. Mannerism is perhaps more modern than modernism, but in the sense of a non-modern dialectic that reverses their priority: modernism already stirs in the sixteenth century, in the guise of a mannerist classicism, but only begins to rediscover its own rupture by the end of the nineteenth century. This explicitation of its own mannerist condition has perhaps culminated in postmodernism, which is sterile precisely because it suffices with manipulating established codes and recreating what it already knows. Nevertheless, as the ongoing self-historicization of art in terms of beginnings, breaks, and ends is replaced by a-historical and non-artistic forces, should we not rather say that modernism itself is now absorbed into a mannerism of cosmic proportions, and that its temporality exceeds any essential relation to the twentieth century?

In contemporary aesthetics, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari are the most rigorous theorists of this Copernican revolution. For them, modernism is not just the historical moment of the final crystallization of the canonical fine arts, each with its specific matter and form. Neither is it exhausted by the

event that Alfred North Whitehead named the 'bifurcation of nature' into the (objective) domain of Science and the (subjective) domain of Art. Rather, as perhaps prefigured in Russian constructivism, it is the moment when art becomes exclusively a question of technicity, the elaboration and assemblage of any material whatsoever charged with harnessing unformed and unlocalizable forces. Deleuze and Guattari speak of modern art as 'abstract machine' and of the modern artist as 'cosmic artisan': 'we must become machinists, operators.'[30] But what is cosmic about the modern?

At stake is the unity of the arts, the absolute or outside of art that normally remains invisible. The classical artist found this unity in the pre-established harmony of God's creation, or rather, in the assumption of God's task as his own: to confront chaos with the creative organization of raw and untamed matter into stable, analytical relations of form and content. The romantic artist saw himself as the privileged mediator of Nature or the earth producing itself as infinite and continuous variation of synthetic form, thus keeping the *a priori* unity of the earth even in its constant deterritorialization. The modern artist, by contrast, no longer confronts or mediates chaos through any kind of form at all but immediately operates an informal 'synthesizer' of matter-energy. She inverts the genealogical relation between earth and cosmos, or indeed between the infinite depth of the past and the unlimited finitude of the future. Nature is redistributed without reserve onto the disjunctive unity of the contemporary where it is in fact indiscernible from an apocalyptic multiplicity.

Crucially, for Deleuze and Guattari this sequence in thinking about the unity of the arts is neither part of history nor a post-historical conjecture. Rather, it is a matter of discerning tendencies. 'Everything we attribute to an age was already present in the preceding age', even if it had been obscured by 'different perceptual conditions'.[31] Just as early modern physics is based on a vitalist materialism, mannerist art already replaced the organic regime of form and content with 'a life proper to matter, a vital state of matter as such, a material vitalism that doubtless exists everywhere but is ordinarily hidden or covered, rendered unrecognizable, dissociated by the hylomorphic model'.[32] Paul Cézanne discovered in Tintoretto a 'cosmic obsession' with impersonal forces, a blend of the supraterrestrial within the terrestrial that is not given in perception but is itself a perception.[33] As with El Greco, earth and sky collide and combine in an electric sensation that precedes any symbolic or figurative code. In molecularizing perception, similarly, Arcimboldo managed to capture the infinite in the finite without any notion of transcendent design, whether theological or humanist. These forces/sensations/infinities are cosmic in the sense that they constitute 'pure beings of

the sensible'. If they are usually hidden, this is because they reveal sensation to be durational, not spatial or historical; they are 'a bit of time in its pure state': 'The image is a little ritornello. . . . The image is not an object, but a process.'[34]

Deleuze and Guattari claim that the 'eternal object' of art is to make a monument for sensation, a hallucinatory memory as it were, not of a past present mediated by the flow of time, but of a past that has never been present but that nonetheless retains a potential for the present's becoming. Or put differently: to produce an aesthetic fact is to construct a possible world from the chaotic interstices between a material and the deterritorializing forces to which it is exposed. Whereas for art history, art is always a thing of the past, they follow Bergson in taking the entire past as coexisting, virtually, with each moment of the passing present as the condition of the new. Art itself is a mode of figuring the past differently, of encounters and experiments with the depth of duration (*l'épaisseur de durée*).[35]

Looking back, a more adequate model for creativity than the classical or romantic artist-genius, who belongs only to art's official and exclusive 'history', is therefore the artist–alchemist as cosmic operator, not so much of the past but of pastness, who destabilizes and redramatizes the very relation between art, history, and life. The challenge of composition is neither that of God's creation nor that of a romanticized Nature but that of geo-engineering, bio-art, and living currencies, all of which open up the experience of a strangeness or untimeliness (as opposed to the timeless) that remains entirely immanent to material construction but without coinciding with it. From matter to manner, art makes matter 'ascend' into a spiritual domain of sensations 'where', as Deleuze and Guattari write, 'all disparate and heterogeneous elements are convoked'.[36]

## Continental Modal Metaphysics

Yet while it shares their methodological premises, my aim here is not a commentary on Deleuze and Guattari. Elsewhere I have put forward a reconstruction of their take on mannerism,[37] as well as an account of their contributions to art history.[38] Here the task is to develop their point of view further toward what could be called a continental modal metaphysics. Perhaps it should be said that this book paints a group portrait in neo-mannerist philosophy. It does not summarize or inventories, it redistributes and multiplies. Combining early modern philosophers such as Bruno and Leibniz with modern philosophers such as Henri Bergson, William James, Alfred North Whitehead,

John Dewey, Étienne Souriau, and Gilbert Simondon, the aim is to distill from them a concept with enough historical and systematic depth for expressing the signature of mannerist practices in art, philosophy, and beyond. For just as, from its inception, the question of mannerism's historical existence has been a constituent problem for the history of style, there is a way of thinking and acting that one can call properly mannerist.

Bergsonist philosopher Vladimir Jankélévitch opens his trilogy *Le Je-ne-sais-quoi et le Presque-rien* (1980) with an opposition of 'modal' to 'substantialist' philosophy. Personified by the mannerist poet Baltasar Gracián, who argued that manner constitutes a 'second being', modal philosophy means that 'all is an effect of style', that there is 'nothing behind appearances', and that 'being is practically what it resembles'. This notion that appearances are not less than being but otherwise than being takes the form of a 'rehabilitation of the accident' from its Aristotelian subordination to substance and the ensuing dialectic of essence and existence.[39] Whatever exists exists because there is change. Identity as expressed in subject-predicate logic is only the mode in which a being has being in becoming, but there is no additional underlying reality to explain its continuity over time. Rather, there is appearance creating its own being, and thereby its own possibility. For in itself, a mode is nothing but what will be; it is pure 'advent'.[40] As with charm or grace, Jankélévitch argues, the mode of making something is both less and infinitely more than the thing made. It is at once the *presque-rien* that is a merely qualitative addition to a being, like a second nature, and the *je-ne-sais-quoi* that constitutes the individuality of beings, their intrinsic *pneuma* or magnetic pole. Passing between being and becoming, modality is the potential (*quod*) by which a thing (*quid*) becomes what it is, by which it is differentiated from abstract flux, and by which it continues to communicate with other things in a metastable state:

> the fact is nothing without the making, just as the making is nothing without the manner of making, and equally the determined manners of indeterminate being are nothing without the great determining Manner of all these manners, and finally the being of manners is nothing without the great Manner of being which goes by the name of *Becoming*.[41]

There are things that exist, the ways in which they are produced, the generic being of those ways, and the way of this being, which is pure becoming. In modal philosophy, being and becoming are formally distinct but not really. There is an ongoing spiraling between them, but neither is foundational for, or opposed to, the other. Rather, as Simondon writes, becoming is an immanent,

non-dialectical dimension of being corresponding to its capacity to dephase and overflow itself.[42] Being in general has no unity of identity but becomes as the being that it is by way of a cascade of modes or thresholds of individuation. Whatever exists exists because it has a manner of coming about, yet manners are real only insofar as they inhere in individual existence—which is to say that while manners have no actuality in themselves, they subsist and insist virtually as relative unities and real continuities in the material processes in which things come about.

With the concept of modal philosophy in hand, it is possible to identify key moments in twentieth-century philosophy that are more or less mannerist. The later Wittgenstein was to define language as a form of life, thus making meaning entirely conditional on its fluctuating manners of use and doing away with all external criteria. For Heidegger, the being of the phenomenon is defined by the way in which it reveals itself (*ta phainesthai*, for example the thing 'things'), just as 'existentials' such as *In-der-Welt-sein* and *Mit-sein* are the factical (*faktische*) possibilities or 'guises' (*Weisen*) of an otherwise propertyless 'being-there' (*Dasein*). In phenomenology, experience is not the subjective qualification of real quantifiable objects in nature; rather nature, things, relations, quantities, qualities, events, and meanings are themselves constituted by the plurality of ways in which they are experienced. What all three examples reveal is how every mode of being equals an inessential modus operandi. Being is resolved into praxis and praxis is substantiated into being. At the same time, we are still dealing with modalities of something that remains constant regardless of its actual modifications: the stable form of language, the monolithical question of Being, the originary nature of lived experience. They are modalities predicated on something else that remains constitutive of them and that transcends them. (Husserl wanted to 'overthrow the Copernican theory in the usual interpretation of a worldview' because it deterritorializes 'man' from his horizon whereas 'the original ark [*archè*], Earth, does not move'.[43]) As a consequence, classical substantialism and its oppositions of depth and appearance, essence and accident, ground and phenomenon, being and becoming, potential and actual, form and matter, and subject and predicate persist. At times they are suspended, but they are not overcome.

Contemporary analytical metaphysics or so-called modal logic, too, is still Aristotelian insofar as it moves within the holy trinity of ground, essence, and modality. Its three categories of modality are necessity, possibility, contingency, and impossibility, each of which is predicated on the primordial logical modality of identity or essence rather than existence.[44] But modes are not categories,

that is, concepts applicable to all possible things, like forms independent from their contents. As different ways of saying many things about the same thing, categories partake of one and the same mode of existence, that of essence.[45] This amodal mode then tends to be seen as merely possessing a varying degree of reality on a scale from potency to act. To put it in the words of Thomas Aquinas: 'Each thing is perfect according as it is in act, and imperfect as it is in potency.'[46] Moreover, this division between ideal and real, in which the latter limits and selects the former, hides the problem of modal indeterminacy: In what way does the possible exist in actuality? Traditionally, the mode of existence of the possible is qualified either by being separate from actuality according to modal priority or by separating the multiplicity of possibles through the conceptual scaffolding of 'worlds'. In Aristotle, actuality is for the most part prior to potentiality; for David Lewis, each world is actual to itself and possible to all others. Either way, only one world exists, the rest subsists. In both cases, this separation of possibility and actuality renders mysterious the mode of existence of potential, or indeed of anything non-actual or inessential considered in itself.[47]

The crux of mannerist philosophy lies precisely in the contestation of the separation of ideal and real. Agamben expresses it succinctly: 'If essence and existence have to be divided like potential and act, nothing is more problematic than their relation.'[48] What is at stake is the reality of the modes of individuation, which can be taken for granted neither in essence nor in existence, and which remain obscure as long as we derive the principle of individuation solely from what is already individuated. The problem is that, as Simondon says, 'anything that can serve as the basis for a relation is already of the same mode of being as the individual'.[49] In order to approach the operation of individuation, we must therefore modalize the relation itself between potential and the actual: what passes from potential to actual is not an essence, but the modality or sense in which being alters itself.[50] As being 'is' not, but must itself be effectuated and actualized, *energeia* or 'power in action' is no longer opposed to *potentia*. At the threshold of potential and act, modes are transgeneric principles contemporary with individuation. Each mode is its own more-than-logical genre in the sense of 'kind': not just a class of similar things (genera and species), but the real and continuous relationship that generates them.[51] There are in fact just as many modes of existence or degrees of perfection as there are becomings, since modes are not quantities of essence but mutant potentialities in which quantity turns into quality (instead of vice versa[52]).

The problem with logical essentialism is not just that, in reality, existence always precedes essence, but that essence is itself only one mode of existence, and

a very limited mode at that. Essence not only hides the pre-individual field with which it forms a conduit but also excludes becoming. Every mode is relation-in-becoming, a dynamic equilibrium of different potentials; not itself existence, it is a way of making exist. Simondon shows that a genetic understanding of being must not be based on complete individuality, but on provisional resolutions of pre- and transindividual tensions. 'Individuation must . . . be considered as a partial and relative resolution that occurs in a system that contains potentials and encloses a certain incompatibility in relation to itself—an incompatibility made of forces of tension as well as of the impossibility of an interaction between the extreme terms of the dimensions.'[53] This means, first, that to be is to relate and to be related to, such that being is never individual, and secondly, that a mode of existence is always only half individual and remains half pre-individual. Because of this relationality and 'metastability' of modes, as opposed to the atomism and unchangeability of essences, nothing is ever fully concrete in itself. Things are always affected by a certain attraction, a tending to whatever tends their way. They are part of a series in which there are limit states, but no unique and superior ends. In turn, a mode is the law of a series, but as such it is the realization of a system that has larger dimensions than any essence, as its tendency is the operation through which potentiality itself acquires reality and produces determinate (thing-like) effects.[54] Thus, neither the modality nor the existence of a table is the same as, or similar to, those of an electron, a language, a value, a world, a soul, a law, a fictional being, an idea, a phenomenon, a subject, an object, a work of art, or a god. No matter how fragile, all these things 'are' only insofar as they effectuate and transform certain existential relations that define their unique reality. These relations do not inhere in them individually, however, but collectively. Neither things nor concepts, modes are perhaps best understood as habits. They are recursive systems that have an (in)operative mode of existence: they are dispositions to behave in a certain way under certain types of circumstances, but also the ability to not-do, to remain suspended in their own potentiality.[55] Consequently, individuation and modality, the real and the possible, are inseparable but not the same. Being itself is not one or equal, but a multiplicity—not only of individual beings and their classes but of capacities, operations, and interactions. 'To exist is to differ',[56] writes the neo-Leibnizian Gabriel Tarde, since it implies a vast multiverse made up of different modes of existence with no unified or unifying ground.

This operative sense of being as ontogenesis indicates that modal already meant modern. First formulated by Duns Scotus, for whom the freedom of every creature is at the center of the universe and immediately reveals God simply by

being wholly and uniquely itself, the univocity of Being marks the Copernican revolution in ontology, because it forms a break with the Scholastic thesis of *analogia entis*, according to which Being is not said of God and finite creatures in the same way. Things exist in various manners, but these manners are not measured by the degree to which they participate in a more noble form. There still remains a formal distinction between common being and individuality, but on the condition that every individuation is a singular combination of the modalities in which it occurs, and that these modes are not immune to ongoing variation. Univocity therefore does not mean that ultimately everything is one or the same, like the night in which all cows are black. 'Being is never One',[57] that is, it is not a genus. Rather, it is always *haecceitas*, a becoming-such or -thus in a relational clustering, like a season or a flame regardless of its duration, or a swarm or a pack regardless of its regularity. Haecceities are not numerically one but the reasons for numerical difference, for the convertibility of being and unity. The ultimate unity of being is not collective but distributive. It consists of multiple becomings-one, where each one is itself understood in the sense of an indeterminate article (e.g., Deleuze's concept of 'a life' the charm of which does not belong to anyone but is a purely intensive presence or event in a body, even when it appears 'in person'[58]) and becoming manifests the creative difference of *this* existence rather than the always more generic *that*. This is also implied by Bergson's famous 'multiple unity of duration': every duration is perfect unto itself, while each of its shadings retains its own irreducible 'power' or 'order of greatness'.[59]

Mannerist ontology could be said to be a genetic monism, since only becoming can assume the unity that envelops difference. As Heidegger says, the being of being is *Zwiefalt*, being with alterity folded into it.[60] Individuations by haecceity do not take place against a common background populated with fixed essences, rather each on its own immediately effectuates this common background in its own way. But this also implies that becoming itself is multiple, since there is an infinite variety of ways in which, to put it with Whitehead, 'the many become one, and are increased by one'.[61] As soon as they enter into new relations, haecceities morph into different individuals. While these relations cannot exist except inside of individuals, they subsist outside of them and are irreducible to them. Every individuation potentially reshuffles the mereology of the world. The magic formula of modern philosophy, Deleuze and Guattari claim, is that 'pluralism=monism'.[62] In a world in which substance revolves around modes instead of vice versa, there are just as many species as there are modes of individuation, since the only true substance, the only true substantive, is multiplicity.[63]

# Matter and Manner

This outline of a philosophy of modal individuation is of course far from exhaustive. It merely gives an indication of what the challenge to de-essentialize possible worlds entails: How to count beyond the single mode of existence of substance/essence and become worthy of all the other modes? How to finally break with the spell of being and the grammar of subjects and predicates, and what language to replace it with? Where to locate the origin of processes of individuation, or rather, how to activate and commune with them? And last but not least, what difference does the philosophy of modal individuation make for contemporary art and art history, especially with respect to the vexed problem of mannerism?

The first part puts forward the concept of manner (*maniera*) as a differential power of repetition. It derives this concept from a series of epistemological and axiological problems in art historiographical approaches to mannerism. These problems pertain to the consistency of the notion of mannerism, the modes of temporality (such as lateness) implied in it, the difficulties it raises with respect to the classicist distribution of objective style (or perfection) and subjective mannerisms, its contested modernist revaluation as early modern avant-garde, its prioritization of the operational use of models over the models themselves, its pluralist affirmation of all the minor modes that are contained in every major mode without declaring themselves, and finally the resistance of the concept of style to the modern distinction between nature and history. In following the course of these issues from mannerism as the object of art history toward mannerism as aesthetic fact (Chapter 1), and by developing a set of critical conceptual tools adequate to this fact (Chapter 2), the aim is to learn to perceive manneristically rather than to merely historicize mannerism differently.

In taking art-historical problems as motives for philosophical creation, this book does not shirk from critically confronting art history with art's a-historical becomings, but neither does it advocate a return to philosophy's old role of teacher of art history. Instead, it demonstrates how the two disciplines are situated differently with regard to problems that are immediately divided over the different modalities in which they are posed. Philosophy contributes to the writing of art history with an ethico-aesthetic paradigm in which there exist no such things as pure facts, raw materials, subjective intentions, or unchanging significations. Or rather, all these things matter only to the extent that they are constructed in certain manners. What modal philosophy brings into play is the difference between content and expression. Manner is the affective dimension

of matter. It contains the information that determines how matter matters: how historical givens distinguish themselves and continue to evolve.[64]

This re-singularizing approach by way of iterative modes is also what gives philosophy its critical affinity with art.[65] It entails an alternative interpretation of discrepancies between formal and iconographic features within an established collection of artists and works, and contributes to a queering or decolonization of the canon of Western art.[66] At the same time, it provides a historical anchor point that resists the general loss of historicity in the contemporary, which in the increasingly desperate attempts at securing the future threatens to render the past itself redundant, that is, to strip it of its potentiality. Thus the main criterion of success in our endeavor lies in whether we can put forward a concept of manner that is adequate to what is irreducibly new to historical mannerism, and to the reverberations of this event that still constitute a potential for creation in the present.

If, historically speaking, mannerism marks a veritable explosion of styles and practices, the systematic delimitation of aesthetics from other philosophical subdisciplines is also up for reconsideration. The formal rather than real distinction between matter and manner comes together with the inseparability of ontology from ethics and aesthetics. For Bruno, to think means to learn to perceive the bonds (*vincoli*) that hold things together. Whether in magic, art, rhetoric, religion, or love, bonds are not so much explanatory as they are operations: they substantialize becomings into being. Put in a more Jamesian key, bonds are 'lived beliefs', since we experience them immediately, as produced by the consistency they produce in the very movement in which they produce it. Being itself does not exist outside of these multiple ethico-aesthetic modes of existence. Essentially presubjective, they are like signatures; they can never be entirely formalized but only repeated, and thus they come to be known only in accordance with singular terms.

In order to account for this self-generating or binding quality of manners, the second part of this book puts forward a new concept: secondness. Whereas mannerism always comes late with respect to an established situation, being second is also a condition of the new to the extent that it comes with a power of repetition that relates matter and manner non-comparatively. This can be illustrated with the following summary of the paradigm laid out by Louis le Roy, author of *De la vicissitude ou variété des choses en l'univers* (1575):

> First moved by an outside force, the elements soon become causes of movement and agents of their own transformation. Engaged in constant internecine war, they mix and stir, creating bodies that are no sooner assembled than decomposed and recomposed differently. As a result, primal matter is variegated—according to the principle of variety—and protean—by the law of vicissitudes.[67]

Whereas essentialism is a retrograde philosophy in which only pure chance, like a deus ex machina, can explain the production of the new, the philosophy of bonds engages with effects as immanent or structural causes as opposed to transitive causes. The more belated an effect is, the more retroactive power of futurity it contains. Whereas firstness is the cult of the original, 'the excellence in all things is late (*tardive*), difficult and rare',[68] as this is what provides the sufficient reason to their actuality, all the while coming second from a dynamic point of view.

In fact, every individuation involves both matter (efficient causes) and a manner (a final cause). As Raymond Ruyer argues, bonds (*liaisons*) are created in the improvisation upon a theme (the 'absolute form' or virtual 'task' of the event, its pure 'being-together'), which is like a dominant aspiration or recurring problem within a physical aggregate that remains poised for further relaying.[69] Between matter and idea comes manner: 'The horse is not material organic tissue plus the Idea of Horse. The horse is a horse because it "horses"',[70] on the condition that we do not conflate classes of being and modes of existence. The continuous existence of an individual horse is not bound to adhere to this mode alone, because it is the mode of existence that is absolute, not the material thing or its category (and, say humans too can exist according to the horse form, as well as in many other ways). To perceive in the mode of bonds is thus to dismiss the alternative between the thing and its relations in an affirmative way. Unlike a negation waiting to be overcome, there is secondness when accidents endure on their own. Everything then happens as if the derivative comes first, bound up with the transformative immediacy of a mode of existence that in turn exerts its demand for individuation in a material state of affairs. As with the striving possibles in Leibniz, manners are not juxtaposed like things in space, but superimpose in time. Under the aspect of its modalities, the materialization of the world becomes the problem of an ongoing composition of virtual themes according to their elective affinities: What combines with what, under which conditions and to what measure, in which temporal order, in order to produce which effect?

As historical personification of mannerist secondness and its associate art of combinations and permutations, I paint a portrait of Leibniz as the main inheritor of the sixteenth-century philosophy of bonds, as well as a key precursor to contemporary challenges of transitioning and world building.[71] Unlike Descartes and Spinoza, who are usually declared to come first, Leibniz tends to get a secondary treatment. His work has often been read against the background of the baroque, and thus as constituting a reconstruction of the old world at the threshold of the new. The purpose here is to demonstrate that his revisionism

is nonetheless driven by the mannerist revolution of which, arriving late on the scene, it provides the most systematic account. His radical decentering of divine determination in a general theory of repetition, the separation of subject and predicate implied by the operative understanding of being as grounded in exigency, the theory of self-determining yet objectively conforming monads, his disjunctive synthesis between bodies and souls, the notions of secondary matter and derivative forces that define corporeal forms, and his vivid diplomatic language of concepts and percepts, all serve to navigate possible worlds and minor perspectives with the aim of making them more coherent.

In taking this practical task, which is also our own, as its starting point, Chapter 3 reconstructs Leibniz's attempt to provide a real definition of modal individuation. This already implies that we must be careful not to read Leibniz as a theoretical philosopher alone. The ultimate criterion of coherence does not lie in the perfect consistency between principles, perhaps least of all in the theory of pre-established substances that has become known as the monadology. In practice, his philosophy excludes the possibility of any *a priori* model and demonstrates that thought knows no economy, only an ecology. His swaying between classical substantialism and modern modalism is marked precisely by the pervading intuition of an incompleteness or contingency at the heart of the world system. It leads him to a perversion of the old Scholastic notion of degrees of perfection in the form of a play of versions, insofar as each principle, hyperbole, detour, compromise, and invention technically functions as an irreducible enrichment of all the others, and thus as exemplary step toward the perfection of the best of all possible worlds.

In Chapter 4, we see how Leibniz's controversial notion of the *vinculum substantiale*, the substantiating bond often dismissed as a theological corruption of his mature philosophy, inspires contemporary understandings of the individuation of what Simondon calls the transindividual, understood as a relation of relations, one internal to the psyche and another to the collective. Himself a Protestant, Leibniz at a point late in life seems to have turned his entire metaphysics of substances into a mode of counter-reformatory Catholicism, at the heart of which lies the problem of (trans-)substantiation or of the invention of a mode of commonality that cannot be assumed in advance: the effective communication, in liturgy as much as in social and intellectual life, of a real presence across hitherto incommensurable orders or potentials. Here we discover the problem of mannerism as that of the diffusion and contagion of events. From the speech act 'This is my body' to the mode of subjectivity that is implied by this body in its composite nature to its development into the communal perception

of a common cause, the bond must be understood as a speculative gesture that carries a new and durable form into being across the different individuals that actualize it—individuals who transform, and accept being transformed by, this form along the way. One of the most obscure (or indeed, 'magical') practices of Catholicism thus provides an ethical and aesthetic model that not only lies at the heart of operative ontologies from James to Dewey, or more recently of Deleuze and Guattari's understanding of the work of art as a self-positing percept and Isabelle Stengers's cosmopolitical proposal for imagining alternative futures; it also drives the system of communication in Serres's epistemo-irenicism and the anarcho-communist concept of form-of-life. In all these cases, what defines mannerism in philosophy is a radical pluralism *qua* the second natures in which things, including humans, find themselves. It reminds us that no situation is simply natural and thus supports the pragmatic demand that another world always be possible.

Setting out from a Bergsonist reinterpretation of the (mostly Florentine) doctrine of the idea (*concetto* or *idea*) that guides the practice of design (*disegno*), the third part of this book concretizes the perspective of the cosmic artisan in the context of the contemporary celebration of craftsmanship and alchemy. For the first time in the history of Western art, mannerist artists such as Vasari, Danti, and Lomazzo raise the speculative question, itself already pushing toward the verge of an implicit reversal of historical Platonism, of the relation between artistic practice and thought. Given their still mostly Aristotelian frame of reference, this theorizing usually tends toward hylomorphism, as if the idea resided within a material like a preformed possibility waiting to be recognized and realized. This is, however, a strictly theoretical representation of the creative act, based on the division of a concrete process into the two abstractions of a clear and distinct idea and a confused and indifferent matter. It led Panofsky to his famous neo-Kantian critique of mannerist rationalism. In practice, the mode of existence of the idea is never apart from the material in which it is (distinctly but obscurely) intuited, as well as from the manner in which it is (clearly but confusedly) imagined and carried out. As Souriau explains, the mode of existence of the idea is that of 'work to-be-done'.

Like Ruyer's transspatiotemporal theme or the Leibnizian possible, an idea always still needs to be worked out, as an unresolved potential that does not exist outside of its partial and shifting resolutions.[72] It is neither *a priori* nor a posteriori, a distinction that presupposes full individuation, but, in the words of Simondon, *a praesenti*. Manners, in turn, are not just the schematic intermediaries between thing and concept; they are processes of articulation or 'instauration' (Souriau)

that re-model what they put into play. Thus if manner is the affective capacity of matter, the idea is the vertigo of matter. This raises the question of what drove the mannerists into theoretical speculation on the cosmic origin of art in the first place. How does the classical concept of the idea help to compose the virtual dispositions, inclinations, or tendencies of a relatively unformed material into a relatively stable form? And what other schemata of instauration can the classical notion of the idea be replaced with?

In posing the question of the creative act in this strictly operative sense, Chapter 5 excavates it from the early modern bifurcation between the arts of design (painting, sculpture, architecture) and the other crafts in order to reinstate a continuity, not just between fine art and applied art, but between art and other immanent modes of creativity. In particular, it enables us to approach mannerist *disegno* together with strategies of production-through-modulation such as alchemy and metallurgy, which never relied on the transcending illusions of subjectivity or preformed possibility in the first place. From the unfinished work in Michelangelo to the diagrammatic inventions of Tintoretto, what is indefinite or accidental in matter is indiscernible from what is finished and complete in manner.

Today this question of manner has become mostly a question of technology rather than magic or art, but this does not erase them. Starting from an analogy between the earthenware of Bernard Palissy and contemporary design practices, Chapter 6 provides a non-essentialist relation to the technologies we are affiliated with. Couched in the cybernetic language of control, command, and communication, Simondon calls this approach 'allagmatics'.[73] It is the operator's view from the vicissitudes of matter and form for whom the model of artistic creativity is the genesis of forms in life. Accordingly, the thought and the act of design meet in a transductive experience, an activation of the possible that is at the same time an initiation into matter. Both in the sixteenth century and today, a more adequate model of design and creativity than the eighteenth-century artist-genius is therefore the mannerist alchemist. The *homo magus* is no Prometheus but cooperates with nature as well as with the divine. Obsessed with an experimental fusion and fermentation of signs, materials, fabrics, and formulas, he has acquired a taste for mixed connections, wondrous analogies, animisms, and controversy—a taste, in other words, for hoarding, creativity, and assemblage.

What is ultimately at stake in these mixtures is not just the richness of materials but the different manners in which they are combined. Only the latter are the fibers that enable further composition with what, from an essentialist or technological point of view, seems opposed. Manners are the metamorphic

powers of the world. We have never been disenchanted, let alone re-enchanted. The spiritual task of art and technology acquires new poignancy when we figure out anew how to co-inhabit our various emergent worlds: not in the form of the realization of an essence or idea, but in the form of the re-animation of our material (natural, historical, symbolic, technical) realities according to collective manners that give it relief. The same task is also set for our three philosophical contemplations of manner, secondness, and idea. They are meant as variations of the eternal return of the same: the non-identity of matter and manner. Their difference-in-inseparability is what we must learn to believe in and live with in order to live well.

# Philosophy and Art History

## The Problem of Mannerism

In art history, mannerism generally refers to European art situated chronologically between the Italian High Renaissance and the early baroque, with firm roots in the former and in part overlapping with the latter. Roman and Florentine practitioners of the fine arts such as Michelangelo, Pontormo, Bronzino, Rosso, Parmigianino, Lomazzo, Beccafumi, Salviati, Cellini, Del Vaga, Macchietti, Cavalori, Bologna, and Buontalenti are widely regarded as mannerists, as are North Italians such as Dossi, Romano, Genga, Lotto, and Tintoretto and, outside of Italy, El Greco, Arcimboldo, the School of Fontainebleau, and the Schools of Antwerp and Haarlem. Whereas renaissance artists seek a harmonious relation, however fragile, between genius and rule, creation and imitation, beauty and reality, according to received wisdom, mannerists defend artistic freedom, resist authorities, break the rules—not out of ignorance but in the name of rivalry and virtuosity. Even when they set out from the imitation of natural models and earlier masters, they subordinate this imitation to a quest for amplification and renewal. The doctrine of *disegno interno* (Federico Zuccaro), the drawing after an inner vision guiding the hand, replaces the *disegno esterno* of external models that dominated renaissance formalism. Unlike fifteenth-century classicism where the prevailing image of art prescribed that art's task lies in the reproduction of beauty found in nature as a divine product, in the sixteenth century the principle of *fantastica idea* leads to a confrontation between nature and artistic creativity. Formal traits include an abstract and derealized treatment of content, elegant and witty figures, a skewed perspective, or an extremely crowded composition. The organization of the pictorial surface, for example, often deliberately contradicts the illusion of depth, flattening and obscuring the deep, linear perspectival space of High Renaissance painting, such that mannerist figures appear as forms absorbed in a background of indeterminate dimensions,

with their contours bent and extended into those of other objects whose spatial orientation is different or even opposite or lost. Typical characteristics are small but graceful heads, queerly elongated limbs or slender physiques, hyper-refined gestures that nonetheless lack subjective control, contrived and constricting spatial relationships emphasized by juxtapositions of harsh colors and/or grotesque scalar and thematic imbalances.

Deeply rooted in rhetoric, the single most important aesthetic premise of mannerism is the cultivation of style. The term 'mannerism' derives from the Italian *maniera*, which has its origins in the older literature of aristocratic etiquette. In the sixteenth century, the 'age of refinement' (Henri Focillon), it becomes used by artists for justifying themselves in public controversy. In aesthetic theory, the notion appears with Giorgio Vasari, in whose work the idea of manner is used in at least three different ways: for affirming a positive judgment of artistic quality; for describing the stylistic freedom and method specific to an individual artist; and for defining a general style, such as the *maniera greca* (the Byzantine style) or the *maniera moderna*, to which Vasari also counted himself and to which we now generally refer as mannerism.[1] In Vasari, manner marks a loss of artistic innocence, since the 'modern' artist is now explicitly expected to go beyond the general taste. For the first time, the infamous figure of the artist as 'born under Saturn' makes his appearance, with eccentric behavior rooted in Platonic mania, the sacred madness of enthusiasm and inspiration without which there would be no fantasia or imagination, and thence no disegno, or artistic design.

As historic-stylistic category, it is contrasted to the aesthetic judgment of mannered stylization (*manierato*, *manieroso*) that Vasari criticized for example in the self-generating abstraction of Perugino, in whose work artistic creation would be reduced to stereotype, witty affectation, preciosity, artificiality, and technical facility.[2] Reflecting its vulgar meaning until today, art historians have for a long time regarded mannerism mainly in this second sense, as the uncomprehending and mannered imitation or *Entartung* of some previous, more mature style.[3] From the beginning, they have understood the history of art as something that is cyclical, passing through successive stages of blossoming, flowering, and decay, and it was classical proto-art historians such as Giovanni Pietro Bellori and Luigi Lanzi who gave the art of *maniera* its negative connotation as the outside against which the historical self-understanding of classical art has traditionally established itself. They saw art reduced to artifact, a form experiment that blocks the transparency and spontaneity of natural forms. Their rejection bears great similarity to the way postmodernism would

later be regarded as a decadence of the modernist revolutions, with artists trying ever harder to be noticed, developing signature styles and personal quirks that make them instantaneously recognizable but prohibit the growth of new schools. Perhaps the most exemplary is the judgment of Heinrich Wölfflin, the first art-historical authority to undertake an anti-classical revaluation of the baroque, who still ignored mannerism as an independent movement and took the 'first stage of the baroque' merely for 'the style into which the renaissance resolved itself or, as it is more commonly expressed, into which the renaissance degenerated'.[4]

The twentieth century has seen a great diversity of attempts in art history to reinterpret and revalue mannerism in positive terms and for apparently non-classical purposes.[5] The first was prepared by Aloïs Riegl's studies of late Roman art (1901) and of baroque art (1908) and can be situated in the 1920s in Germany and Austria. While the founders of art history (besides Riegl, Wölfflin) struggled to explain the phenomenon of the baroque, their pupils— among them scholars such as Max Dvôrák (1924), Walter Friedländer (1925), and Nikolaus Pevsner (1928)—undertook a first canonization. Since among the 'gothic', the 'renaissance' and the 'baroque', mannerism alone is an '-ism', even allowing for '-esque' variations, it solicited analogies with modernist movements such as expressionism, which it provided with an alternative to the opposition between academic realism and impressionistic idealism. As Erwin Panofsky acknowledges in his classic *Idea* (1924), 'expressionism is related to mannerism in more than one sense, it comes with the particular speculation that guides us back to the paths followed by the metaphysics of art from the sixteenth century theory, paths that seek to derive the phenomenon of artistic creativity from an extrasensory and absolute, or as we say today, cosmic principle'.[6] Moreover, the expressionists recognized in mannerism a spiritual crisis and a sense that history was coming to an end that prefigured the catastrophes of their own time without any compromise with baroque kitsch. Thus in the almanac *Der blaue Reiter*, Robert Delaunay's *Eiffel Tower* featured directly next to a *Saint John* by El Greco.[7] They saw mannerism as a time of intense disenchantment and contrition, in which the natural light of the renaissance was replaced by a new opacity. Beauty and truth, form and significance were no longer theologically connected:

> One could speak of a spiritual catastrophe, which preceded the political one, and which consisted of the collapse of the old, worldly, ecclesiastically, scientifically and artistically dogmatic systems and categories of thought. What we observe with Michelangelo and Tintoretto on the limited field of artistic problems was

the criterion of the whole age. The paths which until then had led to knowledge and to the construction of a spiritual culture, were abandoned, with the result an apparent chaos, just like our own age appears to us as chaotic.[8]

The second attempt at a non-classical approach to mannerism emerged in and around the 1960s when more specialized works flourished by scholars such as Wylie Sypher (1955), Eugenio Battisti (1960), Franzsepp Würtenberger (1962), Jacques Bousquet (1964), Giuliano Briganti (1965), André Malraux (1974), and Roberto Longhi (1976). As forty years before, Ernst Curtius (1957) and Gustav René Hocke (1957) discover in mannerism a 'first "modern" avant-garde', a precursor to the work of Cézanne, Klee, Kollwitz, and Matisse. For them mannerism is not just the name for the style of the (late) *cinquecento*, it is used for a surrealistic and structurally anti-classicist phenomenon that critics see recurring throughout European art, from François de Nomé (Monsù Desiderio) to De Chirico and from Arcimboldo to Dalí. Classicism is no longer identified only with the High Renaissance but with any ordered or formed milieu whatsoever; and mannerism with a proto-revolutionary tendency toward monstrosity and *terribilità*.

Others such as Arnold Hauser (1964) and Tibor Klaniczay (1971) placed mannerism in relation to ideological movements, which, like expressionism, are seen as stemming from the unrest of their age. Whereas the decades around 1500 constituted a period of great hope for harmony and tolerance that was reflected in ideals of humanism and perfection, the sixteenth century brought to light the weaknesses of early capitalism, marked by diseases and famines caused by urban overpopulation, a crisis of faith and conscience that culminated with the closure of the Council of Trent in 1563, Ottoman and religious wars of unknown intensity and cruelty, the rise of absolutism, the Inquisition and the witch hunts, the sack of Rome, and political revolutions in Florence. For artists, this situation became even more precarious with the attainment of equality between the mechanical arts and the liberal arts in defiance of the trade guilds, as it consigned them to fierce competition and the capricious patronage of princes and nobles. The mannerist artists found themselves 'alienated' in a situation of social uprooting, often resulting in an apocalyptic sense of time. There appears to have been a veritable suicide epidemic, noted by Michel de Montaigne, who observed that 'even the children are taking their lives'.[9] The mannerist crisis of style would mirror these spiritual, material, and intellectual crises that brought about the decline of the renaissance. But whereas mannerists still represented the spiritual elite of their age, upholding the cosmopolitan point of departure of renaissance humanism, this attitude was soon, with the 'anti-intellectual inclinations'[10] of baroque sensualism, to become an anachronism.

Many of the inspirations and references in the arguments that follow come from these major attempts in art history to provide both an 'anti-classical' and 'modernist' concept of mannerism and differentiate it from the baroque. It is the dissolution and not the appearance of the renaissance that created the conditions for modern art (expressionism, surrealism, pop art, postmodernism). The counter-reformatory baroque attempt to overcome this crisis in the name of a renewed cultural unity or harmony, by contrast, is too reactionary and historically bound to pass for a revolutionary breakthrough. Mannerism is, to borrow a term from Riegl, a battlefield, a struggle over a tradition of which the certainties begin to falter. It reveals the renaissance itself to be less the splendid and mature equilibrium between matter and form perceived by Winckelmann than the impure and incomplete play of forms and forces described by Jakob Burckhardt.[11] Only when style becomes problematic does it become programmatic. As Hauser argues, its critical condition is the normal state of creativity rather than its exception: 'During its longer periods in history . . ., art seeks to retain as much as possible of the confusing, incomprehensible and inexhaustible wealth that classicism seeks to hide behind its crystalline forms.'[12] Thus instead of keeping us from using the term 'mannerism', the often-heard warning that art during 'the period following the deaths of Pope Leo and Raphael lacked the unity of the Classic style and that the artists' preference for experimentation has resulted in a variety of styles'[13] is precisely a reason to opt for it. If there was a 'triumph of mannerism', as the title of the first comprehensive exhibition worldwide (Rijksmuseum, 1955) suggests, this is also a triumph for art as it emancipates itself from the classical identity of Art in a generalized will to style.

## The Concept of Mannerism

Although the last decades have brought to light many important new findings on particular figures, currents, and controversies of the sixteenth century, no new sweeping attempts have been made to give an encompassing definition of mannerism. As a consequence, the problem of its diverging interpretations and evaluations has never really been solved. Instead, everything happens as if the ambition or nature of art history's relation to historical episodes itself has changed to the point that it has become 'both impossible to use and impossible to abandon' the notion of mannerism.[14] Today it is acknowledged that mannerism is a twentieth-century 'construction', an inexhaustible mirror image capable of giving our own time its own historical validity and prestige.[15] But is it not typical

of stylistic epochs that they can be scientifically determined only retroactively, and that they possessed no actual reality in that moment when they are said to have been current?[16]

In fact, the rejection of mannerism as a retrospective construction can neither be seen apart from the rise of formalism, iconology, and semiotics in art history in the past fifty years, nor from the discipline's increasingly positivist approach to its objects and its historicism with respect to their contexts. These are developments in which no earlier position has been saved from 'critical' re-examination, albeit at the cost of the loss of an idea of artistic and creative practice capable of guiding historical research.[17] With respect to mannerism this shift in method is exemplified by the work of Craig Hugh Smyth (1962), John Shearman (1977), Antonio Pinelli (1993), and Daniel Arasse and Andreas Tönnesmann (1997). In each case, the inverse correlation between the extension of the concept and its comprehension—the more particularities it covers, the less meaningful it is—is given as one of the main reasons for restricting the attempt to define mannerism as a real movement in art. But perhaps philosophy offers a different way out.

Here we will not attempt to answer art-historical questions, important in themselves, of whether mannerism should be considered a historical, geographical, cyclical, or structural phenomenon; whether it is typical of a specific art or whether it is common to all arts; whether it is bound to a certain ideology; which artists can be grouped together under its label, and so on. Instead of reproducing, historicizing, or even summarizing all the controversies that abound in the determination of its extension, we should take seriously Deleuze's claim that a concept, insofar as it is philosophical rather than scientific, in itself contains neither extension (in our case, a judgment on what can be empirically and historically classified as mannerist) nor comprehension (a judgment on the meaning or content of the concept of mannerism). Rather, its power is measured exclusively by its intension, that is, the singular tendencies that it manages to bring together according to 'the logic of the AND' rather than of the 'IS'.[18] Variety and conflict are not shortcomings of thought, but the original, primitive form of dramaturgy that belongs to philosophy and distinguishes it from science: Who? Which one? How many? From what point of view? In which case? To what extent? Philosophical concepts have neither an eternal essence nor an actual history, but only the virtual becomings they construct and concretize. While straddling as many diverse fields as possible, they abandon all reference to the actual and instead involve only allusions to it: philosophy as speculation or science fiction, and the concept as a cloud, a multifaceted pearl (*barocco*).[19] Concepts are not

generalities, but universal singularities in continuous variation such as the 'fold' as pure 'operative trait' or 'pliability' of the baroque.[20] They always correspond to a multiplicity, a system of entangled, connected, bifurcating trajectories: 'it's not a matter of bringing all sorts of things under a single concept, but rather of relating each concept to the variables that explain its mutations.'[21]

Given the pandemonium of mutually contradicting historical determinations of mannerism, we should therefore resist the usual definition of mannerism in the widest possible sense as based on ambiguity or contradiction. Rather, if the historiography of mannerism has been a 'kaleidoscope'[22]—so many theses, so many empirical mannerisms—then the challenge for philosophy is to produce a concept that both retains the wealth of historical occurrences and brings them together in a negentropic order of becoming, that is, an inessential coherence that exceeds (not: transcends) a shared age of reference and the confused determination of its historical existence. 'Philosophy does not consist in knowing and is not inspired by truth', as Deleuze and Guattari repeat in the manner of the pragmatists, 'rather, it is categories like Interesting, Remarkable, or Important that determine success or failure.'[23] The criterion of failure or success for proposing a concept is thus not adequacy to the given but the movement to which it subjects the given. How does it redistribute the problems and concepts we think we already have? Even if the art historian and the philosopher refer to the same empirical facts and sources, their focus is not the same. No matter how detailed, the former is inclined to speak of whatever exists through general categories, while the latter seeks out its singularization, or what comes down to the same, the potential for novelty within the given. The task is therefore to combine mannerism as historical conjuncture with mannerism as a torsion of historicity that takes the form of afterwardness (*Nachträglichkeit*): a history deferred and redoubled in relation to itself. For the very emphasis on manner or style—a purely processual term that enables us to define art as practice and event rather than as historical object and lineage—reflects this plurality and enables us to distinguish mannerism from the stylistic unity of the renaissance and the baroque.

## The Late and the New

The properly philosophical distinction between history and becoming deserves special attention, since mannerism, due to its intrinsic relation to a previous, more classical style, cannot be conceived without its own conception of time. The period is often described as a natural extension of the art of Andrea del Sarto,

Michelangelo, and Raphael. But we have to distinguish between the multiple temporalities that condition an event and the kind of linear causal relationship that art history as a science is habituated to prioritize. Adorno's concept of 'late style' (*Spätstil*) is particularly relevant here, since, as a sequential rather than a biographical or even chronological concept, it applies to historical epochs no less than to the development of individual artists such as Beethoven.[24]

On the one hand, lateness is a cliché from romantic art history that locates artistic genius in a creative apotheosis in the serenity of old age. It has informed the interest in the late Shakespeare (notably *The Tempest*, in which Prospero gives up his magical art toward the end of his career), the late Rembrandt, the late Turner, the late Goethe, but also Keats, Goya, and Picasso. In all these cases, lateness serves as a reevaluation of times of decadence with respect to the classicist assumption that creativity peaks with maturity and declines thereafter. It culminates in Titian's statement at the age of ninety, when his work acquired a new, all-penetrating and dissolving light: 'I'm finally beginning to learn how to paint.'[25]

On the one hand, what romanticism regards a moment of final reconciliation between subjective freedom and objective form, on the other hand, Adorno sees through modernist eyes. Instead of a grand synthesis at the end of a constant development, the late Beethoven turns against the new bourgeois order and already anticipates Schönberg. His last five piano sonatas, the last six string quartets, the *Missa Solemnis*, the *Diabelli* variations, the bagatelles for piano, even the Ninth Symphony do not express reconciliation but alienation and suffering. While it is tempting to psychologize the radical severance between form and substance, the point is that precisely subjectivity 'steps back from appearance'.[26] As Edward Said emphasizes, there is nothing sanguine about growing old, which is rather like a state of 'exile' from the present that can only be endured and deepened.[27] The old Beethoven was almost deaf. Like the late madrigals of Gesualdo three centuries earlier, his late works constitute a sui generis dissonance: it is music about music, a formal play with repetition and variation that is no longer made for human ears.

If lateness is related to modernism more than to romanticism, that is because it is both new and unreproducable. As T. S. Eliot remarked, Shakespeare was not a classicist and there is no Shakespearean school.[28] Since torn-ness (*Zerrissenheit*) reveals more about the past than about growth, it is no surprise that the historiography of art was itself born with Vasari in the context of the sixteenth century. For Hegel, the fundamental character of reflexive thought is that it is socialized in the experience of its afterwardness ('the Owl of Minerva spreads

its wings only with the falling of dusk'). As we shall see, however, mannerism and the mannerists seem to escape history. Their conditions of success must be sought elsewhere. Art not only relies on the past to legitimate the present in the sense of providing its enduring model or image but also seeks to legitimate the past precisely through the emerging present. By giving the model a second existence in the copy (as a copy of a copy), it makes the past return in the present (now-here) as virtual participant in the construction of the future (no-where). It thus turns repetition against itself, making it a transformative force that grounds a tradition of the new. As Bergson says, 'backwards over the course of time a constant remodelling of the past by the present, of the cause by the effect, is being carried out'.[29]

For the art historian, this means that mannerism's way into the future also provides a way back into the past—thus giving a whole new meaning to the notion of the 'early modern'.[30] Indeed, as Georges Didi-Huberman has shown in his study of Aby Warburg, the very notion of the *renaissance* implied a layered and non-linear temporality, in which what survives (*Nachleben*) is a germinal, plastic life of forms that does not cease to be reborn and metamorphize with each of its adaptations and variations, and that 'anachronizes' the historical object by making it coexist with different and heterogeneous times.[31] Perhaps this untimeliness, a strange ambivalence of the late and the new, has led to the paradox that mannerism never received its own place or actuality within this history. As an essentially contested concept, it has nonetheless persistently been among the constituent questions of art history. And if art history has gradually come to rid itself of its speculative origins, then perhaps philosophy could offer an alternative, indeed more affirmative interpretation than that of an art of epigones. What if mannerism is an abstract tendency that cannot be reduced to its historical conditions of appearance and recurs throughout history, all the while subsisting and insisting virtually, like a problem that outlives its solutions?[32]

Instead of abstracting from art history, perhaps we can extract from it a systematic concept that could contribute to art history's concreteness. What is at stake is mannerism not as object of enquiry but as field of operation and creative thought: a slice of chaos which must be turned into a consistent event. The question is not what mannerism is, but what mannerists do or how they work. How does mannerism break with historical causality and what is the consistency of its (com)possibilities? Like all tendencies or events, mannerism should be taken not as a noun and mannerist not as an adjective, but rather as an adverb describing an abstract movement without fixed limits.[33] As Werner Hofmann writes: 'mannerism does not exist as eternal constant, but under

different temporary conditions manneristic modes of behavior are possible, which potentialize themselves in the subsequent processing of particular models and materials.[34] Sometimes mannerist tendencies are fulfilled (taken to their limit) in concrete works of art; more often they are but a deposit for augmentation, diversion, or transmutation in another kind of art. 'Artistic styles', Hauser reminds us, 'cannot repeat themselves in the form in which they have become actual once.'[35] This means that when they do, it will be a repetition based on difference instead of the resemblance of models. In this book, every reference to historically dated objects therefore serves to express a certain transhistorical tendency emphatically and exemplarily, that is, according to a particular intensity, albeit never exclusively. Without wanting to compete with art historians, yet by relating to the historical reception of works of art as much as possible, I will propose a purely philosophical answer to the question raised by Deleuze in the informal setting of his final class: 'what is the mannerist vision, and conception, of the world?'

## The Paradox of Style

It is a commonplace in modern art history that style only becomes a key in the perception of the arts with the rise of aesthetics in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Art historians begin to use 'style' both for referring to the individual freedom of expression of artists and works of art and for generalizing a formal aesthetic epoch. Style is predicated on both distinction and similarity, both freedom and necessity, Panofsky observes, as it preserves coherence while offering difference.[36] At the same time, it would be a mistake to think that the sixteenth-century theoreticians of maniera regarded practices solely as based on academic method and discipline. Vasari, in his discussion of perfect art, lists five qualities: *regola*, *ordine*, *misura*, *disegno*, and *maniera*. The first four are technical terms amenable to precise definition and determinate judgment, but maniera is not. It is an aesthetic quality, 'a grace that simply cannot be measured'.[37] In fact, with mannerism there appears an interesting problem for philosophy, because it reveals a logical paradox in the concept of style.

On the one hand, the sixteenth century marks a crucial moment in the individualization and emancipation of the artist. Benvenuto Cellini explains in his *Autobiography* how the artist seeks refuge against the vagaries of the market in autonomous creativity and singular personality. At around the same time, Vasari developed a whole taxonomy of artist's different personal manners:

besides Raphael's graceful manner (*maniera dolce*) and Michelangelo's heroic manner (*maniera grande*), Pollaiuolo's anatomical manner, Parmigianino's sweet manner, Bronzino's diplomatic manner, and so on. At the beginning of art criticism and art history, manner is both an affirmation of a positive judgment of artistic quality and a description of the freedom and method with which each artist deviates from nature and the more original models from the past. In Vasari, manner marks a loss of artistic innocence, since the 'modern' artist is now explicitly expected to go beyond the general taste in a particularly affected way.

On the other hand, the mannerist focus on particularities puts at risk the very idea of a unified art and the principles of its historical development from the *vecchia maniera* to the *maniera moderna* and the *terza èta* (the 'third age' in Florentine painting that begins with Andrea del Sarto), as well as the criteria for distinguishing historical and geographical manners such as the *vecchia maniera greca*, *maniera egizia*, *etrusca*, *tedesca*, *fiamminga*, *italiana*, *di Lombardia*, *di Roma*, and so on. A selection needs to be made between a true style and its perversion and decline. Almost without exception, art historians and philosophers have therefore tended to reduce many of the personalized manners to artificial tricks or stereotyped 'mannerisms', which ultimately would lead to the rejection of mannerism tout court. Kant and Hegel's judgments are typical: 'Mannerism [*Manierieren*] is another kind of aping—an aping of peculiarity (originality) in general, for the sake of distancing oneself as far as possible from imitators, while the talent requisite to enable one to be at the same time exemplary is absent.'[38] And: 'For manner concerns the particular and therefore accidental idiosyncrasies of the artist, and these, instead of the topic itself and its ideal representation, come out and assert themselves in the production of the work of art.'[39] But is a manner by definition also mannered? And does it follow that the artistic significance of a whole stylistic epoch ultimately lies in its dissolution in subjective idiosyncrasies, as if the 'stylish style'—to pick up on John Shearman's famous formula, which, like Robert Klein's notion of mannerism as 'art of art', emphasizes both estrangement and self-referentiality[40]—was ultimately lacking all style?

If the concept of mannerism is to resist the stock judgment implying artistic degeneration, then the classical division between an essential style and its particular varieties or mannerisms is impossible to uphold. In the analytical understanding of style, whatever lies beyond the checklists of psychology and history, the difference that is neither generality nor particularity, can only be analyzed as 'extrastylistic'.[41] As Shearman's tautological definition reflects,

however, in mannerism the particular itself aspires to the status of a universal, forcing into contradiction the generic set of which it used to be a part and becoming itself like a class that includes itself as its sole member. Mannerism constitutes an anomaly, and each manner produces its own conditions of anomaly. Everything happens as if the epoch explodes into so many divergent becomings which can no longer be objectified as the sum total of historically identifiable instantiations or mannerisms. The mannerists are the uncollected. They may share a momentum, but not a program. Like the Arch of Constantine (AD 352), despised by Raphael and Vasari for its crude mixture of epochs and styles, the mannerist age exists only in the plurality of its modes. Speaking with Bertrand Russell, it therefore appears to constitute an 'illegitimate totality'.

But then how could we still use the concept of mannerism in any meaningful way? At this point we should remember that Vasari called his portraits 'lives' (*vite*) and not 'rules' or 'general principles'. Like all paradoxes, the paradox of style submits logic to something that exceeds thought: practice. As the word suggests, 'mannered' is a subjective quality of an objective standard. It describes an accessory deviation from a more original identity or rule. Mannerisms are therefore conceived as external variations on a given model, a form that is already deemed 'ideal' or 'perfect' in itself. A manner, by contrast, is also capable of immanent deviations that assimilate every established model. Giancarlo Maiorino has pointed out how, in sixteenth-century art theory, the Italian term '*perfettamente*' puts the highest standard of classicism into a superlative quantification that appears logically redundant but effectively marks the point where quantity turns into quality. By the end of the High Renaissance, it seemed that everything that could be achieved had already been achieved and no more difficulties, technical or otherwise, remained to be solved. Yet while the detailed knowledge of anatomy, light, physiognomy, human expression, the use of the subtle gradation of tone, all had reached near perfection, mannerism marks the vital excess of perfection. From humanist 'perfection' (*perfezione*, employed by Brunelleschi and Alberti) to the early mannerist 'wholly perfect' (*perfetissimo*, used by Baldassare Castiglione and Vasari) to the later mannerist 'perfectly' (*perfettamente*, used by Vicenzo Danti), this hyperbolic excess 'brought perfection within a "modal" reach at the other side of the concept itself. Mannerism returned to the realm of practice what humanism had raised to ideal heights'.[42] In the shift from the noun to the adjectival to the adverbial—from idealization to stylization—mannerism discovers an inventiveness and variability beyond measure: 'The adverbial mode toned down teleological concerns, so that perfection brought out forms of a "mannered" understanding of its own potential.'[43] With mannerism, style

becomes a playful repetition that gains strength from its own redundancy. It is precisely not the bare repetition of the same, rather, it absorbs all content into its own expressivity: 'excess took on itself, reversing matter into *maniera*'.[44]

Rather than a stable identity, then, mannerism reveals style to be an internal manner of change.[45] It marks both the breakdown of the classical distribution of the general style and particular mannerism, and the breakthrough of manner. Instead of owing its existence to a more original style, a manner multiplies the original and constitutes an original multiplicity itself. That is to say: with every degree of perfection, quantity may turn into a new quality. And whereas a mannerism is nothing more than a reified and essentialized manner, a manner can be infinitely repeated and continuously varied upon, all the while retaining all of its originality. Our understanding of the mode of existence of mannerism is inseparable from what we understand by a manner's originality, its capacity to both unify and disperse.

Within art-historical methodology, this mannerist breakthrough returns in Svetlana Alpers's famous argument for a history of style in terms of modes instead of the linear development of the system of the arts. In solving classification problems, Panofsky and then Gombrich prioritize first models over invention. This preempts questions of style by questions of meaning, premised on the objectifying perspective of the Italian renaissance. While such an approach guarantees the unity of the work of art at a distance from the artist at the same that it is fitted to the measure of the spectator, Alpers points out that Dutch landscape painting is a description of the world, not an imitation of significant human actions. Drawing on 'the relational or, perhaps better, the modal nature of [Riegl's] understanding of style', she therefore replaces art's unity of scale and place with the multiplicity of modes of mediating between the maker and the world as they appear in nature.

> For a dichotomy is built in (a false dichotomy to my way of seeing) between the individual style and the period style that cannot be bridged as long as we persist in speaking in stylistic terms. In taking a modal way of thinking, we realistically link the maker, the work, and the world and leave the fiction of the stylistic problematic to be just that—one of the many modes in which man makes sense of his experience.[46]

But the ontological question that remains untouched in Alpers's work is what precisely constitutes the simultaneously unifying and differentiating power of a mode.

A a-mereological understanding of originality or potentiality can be found in the concept of iterable singularity. In *The Coming Community*, Agamben

discusses a series of third figures in addition to genus and species, including what Scholastics refer to as exemplars or *maneries*: one singularity among others that simultaneously stands for each of them. In discussions of the problem of individuation, a manner defines individuality not by particular properties divided according to a common nature, as was the case with Thomas Aquinas, but according to the habitual disposition that is continually (re)generated through its continually taking place. Agamben gives the example of twelfth-century Scholastic philosopher Uguccione da Pisa: 'Species is called manner as when one says: grass of this species, that is, manner, grows in my garden.'[47] Here the manner of the grass, its 'suchness', is neither the property of a specific leaf of grass or type of grass nor of grass in general; it is 'whatever (*quodlibet*)', meaning not indistinction, but that it is 'expropriated of all identity'.[48] There are single leaves of grass, but their grass-ness is inseparable from the shared *being-such* that inheres in them collectively rather than singly. More than a relation of similarity between separate members of a class (nominalist indifference, the degree zero of individuation and intimacy of relation), *being-such* is a real continuity between an object and its successive actualizations over time (the indistinction of the common and the proper).[49] The 'being' of the grass equates with an 'inessential commonality' and its 'such' with the self-inclusive manner of belonging. A manerie, then, accounts for both individual existence and the commonality between them. It is a paradoxical concept that precisely by referring to itself also refers to all the other members of its extension; it is singular and common at the same time.

Crucially, not even existence is a property, since this would still presuppose a relation to some underlying essence. Rather, whatever exists is immediately and without remainder recognized through the manner of its coming about. Formal equality implies a distribution of degrees: some have more than others. To exist in a certain mode or form, by contrast, does not mean to exist as a given, but only as more or less, that is, as a pure process of *manare* ('rising forth') of something that remains inappropriably in the singular plural. A singular manner of being knows only 'a manner of rising forth; not a being that is in this or that mode, but a being that is its mode of being, and thus, while remaining singular and not indifferent, is multiple and valid for all'.[50]

As a principle of individuation that is both constitutive and pragmatic, a manner is prelapsarian, simultaneously new and eternal. It never finishes individuating and is constituted only by the infinite series of modal oscillations in which it takes place and shows itself. Whether in the Roman Empire or in the Weimar Republic, Spartacus is an infinite possibility of resurrection as opposed

to the repetition of identity. As Alain Badiou writes, to exist in the mode of Spartacus is to be eternal or 'invariant' in a unique way; what does not have modes, by contrast, is animality.[51] And as Agamben points out, the rare condition for happiness is for one's life to be engendered solely from one's improper manner, that is, to expose oneself to the consistency of a shared existence by living it without presupposing oneself. To strip life bare by destroying its relations to others or reducing them to the empty form of the law, by contrast, is to destroy the soul. We cannot commune on the basis of our individual *dominium* alone, but only on the basis of much more intimate forms of intermingling becoming. Since maneries 'communicate only in the empty space of the example, without being tied by any common property, by any identity', 'they are the exemplars of the coming community.'[52]

This is not the place to discuss the political ramifications of this concept of manner. But it is obvious that, as a concept that suspends explanation and justification in terms of the historical and the personal, the understanding of manner as exemplarity is more adequate for the freedom of an age that seems to have neither existence nor essence, and that much more than the relative homogeneity of the renaissance and the baroque already heralds the plethora of modes of the new that was to characterize the modern. Perhaps the problem of baroque displays of harmony such as Bernini's Rome or a neobaroque total work of art such as the opening ceremonies of the Olympic Games in Beijing was already the problem of what Agamben calls Tiananmen: 'Wherever these singularities peacefully demonstrate their being in common there will be Tiananmen, and, sooner or later, the tanks will appear.'[53] Irreducible to a historically recognized objective standard and therefore irreducible to a subject or state that would be its creative drive and owner, a manner exists as a truly common potential of perceiving and living: the work of art as exemplary consistency or possible world. The subject and object of art appear separately but simultaneously in the creative act as effects of a potential that, while not existing beyond actual differentiation, is inimical to property. While it is easy to appropriate a readymade or reproduce a posture or a historical object, every manner contains its own 'ease', its own 'zone of irresponsibility'[54] or power of creative continuation that is inexhaustible in principle and that propels the subject to seek immortality ahead of itself. Before the fetish of the subjectivity and skill of the author and the associated market dominance of the artistic original (its 'uniqueness'), the work takes on a serial existence of possible reproductions and multiplications virtually of its own accord. (After all, it is only in visual art that the autographic singularity of the work tends to be conflated with the non-reproducibility of a material body.[55])

# Mannerist Aesthetics

## Deleuze: The Reversal of Platonism

The mannerist reversal of essence into manner inaugurates in the history of Western art a movement that Nietzsche, following Burckhardt, would later denominate more generally as the reversal of Platonism. Having only imperfect models and indeterminate ruins, the imitation of antiquity in the renaissance was inseparable from mimetic excess, a reawakening of the dead as in the case of Gradiva, in which new media and new practices replace and collect what is left of the Roman corpse with an uncanny hallucination.[1] Like the resemblance between Paul and Luther, the very notion of the renaissance implies a selection and idealization within a whole field of complex relations between antiquity and (early) modernity, which find their ultimate aim and legitimation in the preservation and reactivation in contemporary life. Hence Nietzsche's claim in the *Gay Science* that the criterion of the eternal return is actuality rather than the past. Or Marx's observation in the *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon* that history always repeats itself twice, and that the mimesis of the Roman republic in the French Revolution does not happen in the reflection of the historian but comes from the future.[2]

In order to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate repetitions, Plato invoked the mythical ground of an original identity or model and conceived of representation as its hierarchic principle of distribution: true copies participate in the Idea to the extent that they internally resemble it, whereas simulacra are judged too different to have a rightful claim to its presence. As set out in book X of the *Republic*, the danger of mimesis is not so much its falsity but its capacity for change. All mimesis is dialectical. It is both poetic and admirable, in the sense of generative, and treacherous, in the sense that it cannot exist without alterity. Precisely because difference and multiplication are irresistible, they must be made the means for the political control and the didactic formation of bodies within the established division of labor.

In an underproblematized form, this intuition that order is established in repetition returns in Aristotle's contained definition of art as the imitation of nature or the medieval ideal of *christomimesis*, and lies at the heart of Western culture up until modernity, which imposed a ban on imitation, first of all in the cult of genius. Because it takes truthful representation as its principle, however, Platonism does not allow for an adequate understanding of simulacra as original repetitions, whereas Plato himself still had an intuition that, with respect to the necessity of repetition, the difference between what is and what is not has no relevance. Simulacra must be understood as differing from copies not in degree but in nature. Rather than through internal resemblance and external difference, they participate in the original through internal difference and external similarity. Deleuze therefore argues that Platonism is not the manifest doctrine of the model and its iterations but, first of all, a latent practice of selection among the multiplicity of rival claims, which share only a certain resonance across their disparity. Difference is the ordeal of repetition: 'difference is behind everything, but behind difference there is nothing.'[3] To reverse Platonism is not to overturn the hierarchy of Idea and copy (and thus remain stuck in the representational logic of original identity, including the repetition of the historical essence of Platonism as deriving from Plato himself, like a repeated signature as warrant of authenticity) but to liberate repetition from the regime of representation and truthfulness to the point that resemblance itself turns out to be only displaced metamorphosis. 'The new, with its power of beginning and beginning again, remains forever new.'[4]

Thus we have two kinds of repetition, bare repetition or representation and the masked repetition that is repetition proper. 'Repetition can always be "represented" as extreme resemblance or perfect equivalence, but the fact that one can pass by degrees from one thing to another does not prevent their being different in kind.'[5] Only in the case of masked repetition, iteration in a certain manner or under a certain guise, is the repeated itself changed by the repetition. Here a repetition does not resemble or equal but effectively becomes the repeater that absorbs the repeated and thereby renders inoperative the very notion of the copy. Considered 'for itself', repetition merely repeats its own internal singularity, such that the first is not an original but an event that internalizes what follows. Deleuze illustrates this inclusive disjunction with reference to Charles Péguy, who spoke of the power or mystique of the initial event as something, for example Monet's first water lily, that calls for virtuoso repetitions that pay homage to it without aiming to resemble or equate it. Such a repetition that superadds itself is not an expression of generality (repetition of the same or

equal) but of the universality of the 'unrepeatable'.[6] Like a breath within a breath, it is the production of an asymmetrical or disjunctive synthesis between past and future that escapes the present as stable reference for their distinction. 'The present is the repeater, the past is repetition itself, but the future is that which is repeated.'[7] This is why Nietzsche's philosophy of the eternal return of the same is not so much the content of a metaphysical doctrine (like Plato's founding myth of circular time), but a practical test in which only what differs returns.[8] Instead of recoining becoming as Being, it is the univocal being of all the revolutionary becomings of the modern world, in which the ground is inseparable from a 'universal ungrounding'[9] and the 'creative disorder or inspired chaos' of simulation challenges the 'conservative order of representation'.[10]

For both Nietzsche and Deleuze, this reversal of Platonism in the logic of simulation constitutes the mode of existence of modern art. In replacing the ontology of essence with the generative and transformative force of difference, it makes what is participate in a political ontology of what can be. Even the most stable identity or the most natural style can become the object of an artistic repetition that exacerbates a difference in the pursuit of its own end or possible world:

> Art does not imitate, above all because it repeats; it repeats all the repetitions, by virtue of an internal power (an imitation is a copy, but art is simulation, it reverses copies into simulacra). Even the most mechanical, the most banal, the most habitual and the most stereotyped repetition finds a place in works of art, it is always displaced in relation to other repetitions, and it is subject to the condition that a difference may be extracted from it for these other repetitions. For there is no other aesthetic problem than that of the insertion of art into everyday life. . . . [Art] aesthetically reproduces the illusions and mystifications which make up the real essence of this civilization, in order that Difference may at last be expressed with a force of anger which is itself repetitive and capable of introducing the strangest selection, even if this is only a contraction here and there—in other words, a freedom for the end of a world.[11]

In this revolutionary ambition of worlding, modern art is heir to the sixteenth-century crisis of the renaissance and the emancipation of manners, which, precisely by repeating their own difference, shed their representational straitjacket and redistribute or even upend the very distinction between art and life. The naturalistic and normative distinction between classicism and mannerism is itself only a posteriori construction that can now be reversed in terms of the motivation for imitation. Classicism is a servile imitation and reduction of life (transcendent imitation), while mannerism points toward the

more creative imitation of art as a stimulus for life (immanent imitation, or 'masked repetition').[12]

The paradox of style nonetheless shows that a categorical substitution of difference for resemblance is not enough to guarantee the authenticity of art. After all, no mannerist artist would have conceived of himself as anti-classical. Mannerism, seen as overtly stylized and tending toward camp, continues to appear at right angles with modernism, with its dizzying velocity of style changes driven by the paradox of non-style or the notion of a style-less, transparent style.[13] Modern art, precisely to the extent that it continues to define difference in terms of originality and truthfulness, continues to put its fate in the hands of the historicist's cycle of the progression of style and its regression into mannerisms. Just like classicism, its historical mode of existence therefore seems inseparable from the eternally different recurrence of its accursed share.

This problem in modernism exists only from the classicist point of view, however, since from a mannerist perspective, the modern breakthrough of manners constitutes not the historical essence of art but its a-historical becoming, its de- and re-territorialization. The mannerist excess of the late renaissance already erases the idea of a radical a-mimetical modernity, replacing it with a more continual messiness that exceeds epochal sequences. Their mode of participation is perhaps best characterized through play: 'The mannerist plays precisely when he feels desperate. The classicist becomes serious when he wants to play.'[14] The affirmation of play, of its adverbial surplus value through the artifice of '-esqueness', as Massumi calls it, corresponds to a power of immanent variation. It calls for repetitive gestures that do not so much turn against the potentials of the past as they compose in sympathy with them, actively holding together with them in a mutually inclusive present becoming or counterpoint ('an instantaneous back-and-forth between now and future and disparate domains of activity').[15]

Because of this transsituational movement, moreover, it is necessary to reconnect a systematic sense of mannerism with its art-historical sense. Like a Cambrian explosion, mannerism embodies both centripetal and centrifugal forces. More generally, this sheds light on what Jean-Luc Nancy, following Adorno, has called the paradox of 'the singular plural of the essence of the arts'. Well before the beginning of the historical era of Art and its alleged modern end, mannerism already demonstrated that the vestige of art, once we give up its claim to an essence or dominant style, is a plurality of manners, each of which marks 'art's beginning'—or becoming—'otherwise than art'.[16]

If all art is false, then mannerism is like Borgesian storytelling; it is falser than false. Every time modern art produces a classical image of itself by imposing its metaphors of ruptures and breaks in the linear and unique development of style, this history is doubled with a continuous series of metamorphoses of mannerism.[17] With the absorption of classicism into its own practice, mannerism had already marked the invention of the work of art as virtual process.[18] It conceived of art as an experience and experiment that goes beyond the actual objects to which it gives rise. Firmly rooted in modernism, John Dewey writes: 'Art is not a noun, but an adjective adhering to a doing impinging on different materials and media.'[19] In this way he repeats the adverbial reduction of mannerism. As an infinite movement, mannerism expresses what Nietzsche called the 'powers of the false'. Perhaps this is why mannerism remains a mystery in art history, having neither beginning nor end but simply occurring in various ways at various moments. Before and beyond the wrenched duality of false mannerisms and the linear sequence of true periodical styles, it gives us only a supercession and rivalry of manners. 'Mannerism puts on top of the first floor of popular habits a second, a third floor of increasing extraordinariness. The higher, the more mannerist.'[20]

What defines the unity of the mannerist work of art is neither its material makeup, nor its historical context, nor the genius of its maker. Rather, all these elements are internal to a manner that repeats its singularity throughout the process of production and reproduction. Mannerism is not just a 'domain of second appearance' with all aesthetic criteria of métier and form suspended, as Jeff Wall has suggested.[21] Or rather, it is precisely this secondness that we need to reconsider. Instead of a spectacular attempt to emulate the achievements of more classical practices, it is always also the latent transportation and translation of an original difference that implicates us in the past's a-chronological survival. More fundamental than essence is the derivation of analogy, the reverberation of echoes, and the hallucination of resemblances. Mannerism is precisely this pastness perpetually in the present and tending toward the future as opposed to a present that has passed. It has a durational unity that is irreducible to its present instantiations and remains in constant variation.

This is why Deleuze can claim simultaneously that Francis Bacon paints in the manner of Michelangelo[22] and that every painter 'recapitulates' the whole history of painting in her own way.[23] Irreducible not only to his own psyche or the cultural codes of his time but also to its historical sequence of instantiations, Bacon restores the Michelangelesque *maniera* as occurrent becoming or event. Because it is singular, the practice of painting in the mode of Michelangelo

cannot be appropriated and copied without undergoing a change, yet because it is universal, it can still be used as a creative potential up until today. Modal essences persist, but not immutably.[24] In the play of repetitions without external end, the criteria are not those of qualitative resemblance or quantitative equivalence (the two aspects of the generality of exchange) but those of theft and gift (the circulation of the singular). Good artists copy, great artists steal. Liberated from the moral role of identity, model and copy, life and art engage in a mutually inclusive relation, a double deterritorialization. In Bacon, the *maniera grande* is not subjected to a play of individuated mannerisms and readymades from the past. It is not the degeneration from grand manner to mere manner. What binds him to Michelangelo is a transhistorical and transindividual torsion, a form of expression which mobilizes the past itself toward the future and which succumbs to a subjective mannerism only when its power of repetition is depleted and reduced to historically objective representation. 'In every respect, repetition is a transgression. It puts law into question, it denounces its nominal or general character in favour of a more profound and more artistic reality.'[25] For art history, this means that art precedes science.[26] Every history of art is also an antihistory, an account of the various chronological moments—contractions of 'here and there'—in which artists have found means to create blocks of floating time or becomings that escape from the stable strata of history and call forth an emerging future.[27]

## Deleuze and Guattari: Major and Minor Usages

It goes without saying that the prevalence of manner over essence or practice over identity is by no means restricted to a single historical age. Neither is it restricted to art. Mannerism merely brings into experience a becoming that otherwise remains implicit, and that is therefore generally forgotten and easily denied. But in this way, it does afford a new perspective from which old problems can be revisited. For example, it reveals that traditional stylistics, as part of rhetoric, is fundamentally essentialist. Not only does it subordinate style to content (signification), it relates style to the 'organic play of identity and variation'.[28] From Aristotle to Leo Spitzer, Michael Riffaterre, and Umberto Eco, stylistics has defined style by the way a text deviates from an invariant general rule.[29] It is the study of practical deviation. Yet precisely because it is bound to the general, it always explains practice through its likeness to something else and hence subsumes a style's particularity under the extension of a wider concept

or determining analogy. Because of this incorporation, classical stylistics may never have had much to do with style.

Contrary to stylistics, modern linguistics seeks to extract rules from language. Yet it is precisely the distinction between particular deviation and general rule that Deleuze contests. For example, he denies Ferdinand de Saussure's classic distinction of the grammaticality of written language and the agrammaticality of the spoken word and instead proposes a generalized stylistics or pragmatics that denies *langue* any reality and accepts only *paroles*: 'A writer knows well that a language is a system of imbalance, so that there is no difference between a level of *langue* and a level of *parole*. Language is made up of all sorts of heterogeneous currents, in a state of multiple disequilibrium.'[30] Similarly, in *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari hold against Noam Chomsky that there are no universals of language that enable us to define it as a homogeneous system. Instead, the humanist concept of *varietas* (eclecticism), taken from Ciceronian rhetoric, offers a better model. All languages are in immanent continuous variation. A language is a dynamic system that is 'always far from equilibrium and in perpetual bifurcation,'[31] meaning that 'there is always another language in every language *ad infinitum*'.[32] Around each actual determination of a linguistic relation—phonological, lexical, syntactical or grammatical, semantic, and so on—there exists a cloud of potential determinations. Language is placed in variation as soon as an atypical expression uproots it from its state as constant. In practice, this is what happens all the time. Style is therefore not to be regarded as a de facto deviation of a de jure standard, leading to a modification of language only by cumulative effect or syntagmatic mutation. It should rather be seen as the primary feature of all language, 'the becoming of language'[33] as such: 'style can be the most natural thing in the world; it is nothing other than the procedure of continuous variation.' This general pragmatics of style not only is presupposed by all other dimensions and distinctions of language but also demystifies language by exposing it to 'the necessarily exterior sources of a style': non-linguistic elements such as gestures, sound waves, mnemic technologies, that all participate 'in the same continuum'.[34] Instead of being an artificial ornament, style determines the very 'economy of language'[35] and, as a total energetic investment, is the only thing to justify our belief in the world.

If a writer is easily distinguished through the style in which they actively manipulate the potential of language, it doesn't therefore follow that other language-practitioners abide by the laws of linguistics. Just as constant is not opposed to variable, so too, there are no strictly personal statements or enunciations, as if public language were the mere environment or background of

private literary concerns. From the point of view of a generalized stylistics, every style is already a composite of languages, or rather, a heterogenesis of language itself: 'the actual writer and the virtual linguistic community—both of them real—are pieces of a collective assemblage (*agençement*)' of enunciation.[36] Style designates agency in the use of a language, in other words, but this agency does not belong to an author but to the world it expresses. Instead of an intention, style has a thrust.[37] It is the illocutionary force of an utterance, the vector that directs what to say next. As Gabriel Tarde says, the first act of language is a command. 'The word has not begun by being exchanged. It was given at the beginning as a command, that is, a kind of action of priestly or monarchic function, eminently authoritarian.'[38] We like to think that language serves the communication of stable meaning between subjects, but in order to achieve this, every act of language first needs to effectively perform this communicative vocation. Language acquires its meaning in the effects of its use, not in being predicable of an individual author. Instead of asking 'Whose style?' we should therefore ask which world it belongs to.

Saying that there is no such thing as an individual style is not to deny that language is always already divided by its different uses and users. On the one hand, style is an inattributable and open potential of repetition. We all iterate the same language to some degree of perfection, that is, according to some form of rule or norm: 'If language always seems to presuppose itself, if we cannot assign it a non-linguistic point of departure, it is because language does not operate between something seen (or felt) and something said, but always goes from saying to saying. . . . The "first" language, or rather the first determination of language, is not the trope or metaphor but *indirect discourse*.'[39] There exists no first speaker who has seen and then a second speaker who repeats, but only a second and a third speaker. On the other hand, repetition/perfection is also the condition for change and the form of invention: 'Repetition is the power of language, and far from being explicable in negative fashion by some default on the part of nominal concepts [essence, rule, or law -svt], it implies an always excessive Idea of poetry.'[40] In the use of language, everyone is in principle an artist, and in art, style overflows general rule. Indirect discourse means that there are 'all manner of voices in a voice',[41] such that each of these voices potentially constitutes its own singular use of language. When Marcel Proust states that 'there are only so many rules as there are artists', he is rehearsing anti-academic claims made by Giordano Bruno, who argued that 'poetry is not born of the rule, except by the merest chance, but that the rules derive from the poetry. For that reason there are as many genres and species of true rules as there are of

true poets.'[42] Rather than an increasing inconsistency or manneredness; in other words, each manner is here understood as a sectioning of language or a 'plane of composition' made up not of 'invariable or obligatory rules, but [of] optional rules that ceaselessly vary with the variation itself, as in a game in which each move changes the rules'.[43]

If there is nonetheless an 'economy' to this game, this is because there are two kinds of entropic forces that block the poetic becoming of language: 'homogenous language, or, conversely, a heterogeneity so great that it becomes indifferent, gratuitous, and nothing definite passes between its poles.' Again, what matters is that style is not individual as opposed to collective, but that there is no moment to which its development can be pinned. A manner is never only individual, but precisely because it is what individualizes the open whole of language as such. This means that, rather than the homogeneity of general discourse and the heterogeneity of individual speech, 'between a main and a subordinate clause there should be a tension, a kind of zigzagging'.[44]

However, not every style or manner has the same power of asserting itself and communicating its world. In place of the classical mereology of individual mannerisms and general style, Deleuze and Guattari introduce a new duality that lies at the heart of their investigation of the conditions for literature. '"Major" and "minor"', they write, 'do not qualify different languages but rather two usages or functions of language.'[45] A major language is a homogenized, centralized, standardized, and ultimately redundant language, because all it does is effectuate its own conditions of possibility. It has the form of a general indirect discourse in which the statements of the one are the enunciations of the other with no tension or confusion between them. I think therefore I am: the utterer of the sentence (the determining I) is the same as the subject of the statement (the determined me). Everyone repeats the others, writing or speaking through others and following others. At the same time the deviations in repetition constitute the various subject positions, each with their own, recognizable manner of enunciation: man or woman, urban or provincial, national or foreign, human or cop. Made up of 'order-words', a major language thus reduces language to an exchange of information that serves the control of our typical behavior. It is the classical and classifying language of Power (*Pouvoir*): 'the unity of language is fundamentally political',[46] because it is the main medium for the stabilization and unification of a historical people and its territory.

This understanding of the major use of language raises the question where language comes from, or how one could challenge the rigidity of a system

without setting up an equally inflexible alternative. After all, if all discourse is indirect, it follows that 'there is no mother tongue, only a power takeover by a dominant language'.[47] In contrast with a major language, although not in opposition to it, is a minor language made up of varying powers (*puissances*) of becoming.[48] A minor language is not a generally recognizable idiolect or dialect belonging to a small and powerless group of people. Rather, it is bi-lingual by nature. Like an unstable tonality in music, it is minor in the sense that it sets the major language adrift in a kind of free indirect speech. Both the particular and the general use are internalized by a third mode of use that acts as their tensor and defines their becoming. Neither accidental nor necessary, a minor language is a secret language, precisely because it is continually engendered from its own manner. 'At the limit, [a great writer] draws his strength from a mute and unknown minority that belongs only to him.'[49] Far from being abnormal—every style is abnormal to the extent that it has both major and minor aspects—this mode is anomalous:[50] it indicates not a divergence from some group norm or a lack of coherence, but their cutting edge, the edge of deterritorialization of the group itself.[51] The subject positions blur in a cloud of possibilities and become expressive of an incomplete world—a world that has lost the referential system between words and things.

Deleuze frequently cites Proust's claim that a literary style is like 'a foreign language within language'.[52] It replicates less in the mode of an organism than in the mode of a virus, that is, as parasitical surplus, since it is always 'based on an earlier style but breaking with it'.[53] In the poetic use of a major language, the becoming-minor of language is therefore 'a question not of reterritorializing oneself on a dialect or a patois but of deterritorializing the major language'. A minor literature consists of the attempt to conquer one's own major language, the language that warrants an author, in order 'to delineate in it as yet unknown minor languages'.[54] Following Maiorino, it is acquired through a particularly mannered use of language's potential, a repetition of a higher—in the sense of more perverse rather than more true—use of perfection. No longer recognizable as an established art form, it is a self-potentializing repetition of the language that everybody speaks. A literary style is therefore 'managing to stammer in your own language'.[55] In stuttering, from *est* to *et* to *eh*, 'everything shifts'.[56] Instead of a formal or superficial repetition that stabilizes its content, it involves a syntax in the process of becoming. While fallible insofar as the work is not yet done but the maker no longer knows what to add, a new syntax is a creation that resists the thrust of the major style by drawing on exchanges between content and expression that verge on the asyntactical.

Whether it is by way of non-sense and invention (Carroll), taking language to its physical limits (Artaud) or by whittling away all metaphorical guise (Kafka, Beckett), Deleuze and Guattari never cease to emphasize that the stuttering is that of 'an affective and intensive language, and no longer an affectation of the one who speaks'.[57] To stutter is to resist the behaviorism of language and cut out a possible world from within language itself. Its radical novelty does not lie in its unrecognizable or illegitimate use of language but in making language itself vibrate to the point of it becoming unrecognizable in turn. In a far from equilibrium manner, style then becomes 'nonstyle'.[58] Stripped of the grandeur of representation, words no longer signify what they used to. Their inchoate consistency now appears as open-ended sequence of gestures, as a body language or 'living and expressive material that speaks for itself and has no need of being put into a form'.[59] By revealing the habitual subject positions to be only the most easily recognizable forms of a multiplicitous potential—or, in other words, by destabilizing language and making it slip between manners—a literary style pries open the interstices in our established mode of writing and speaking. At the limit, it is like a 'polyphony of expressing subjects and modulation of statements'[60] and thus constitutes 'the madness of language, its delirium':[61] 'asyntactic, agrammatical: the moment when language is no longer defined by what it says, even less by what makes it a signifying thing, but by what causes it to move, to flow, to explode—desire. For literature is like schizophrenia: a process and not a goal.'[62]

It is in this sense that in *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, Deleuze and Guattari refer to Kafka's strategy as 'mannerist'. In a letter to Max Brod, Kafka explains how, in Prague at the time of the breakdown of the Habsburg empire, it is impossible for a Jewish writer to speak in German, impossible for him to speak in Czech, and yet impossible not to write.[63] He has no choice but to develop a new style, a new language. But how could one sustain anti-canonical stands without transforming them into new canons? Unlike authors such as Gustav Meyrink and many others, including Max Brod himself, who are representatives of 'the symbolic and allegorical mannerism of the Prague school' which aimed at a symbolic reterritorialization in German through hidden signifiers based on archetypes, Kabbala and alchemy, Kafka resists the bifurcation of symbol and natural language, preferring a 'mannerism of sobriety' or 'stretching' within the German language that is all the more deterritorializing.[64] Despite its political immediacy and its revolutionary potential, a minor literature is nothing spectacular. The creator is the opposite of an avant-garde revolutionary all set on changing the world starting from his own genius. Rather, he creates by becoming

imperceptible in the heteropoiesis of a new collective assemblage of enunciation. Literature confronts us with a repetition of language in which the collective subject of enunciation is very different from the official enunciation of a people or of national consciousness. The former exists only in a latent or virtual state—the 'anonymous murmur' of the 'fourth person singular', a term that Deleuze and Guattari adopt from Lawrence Ferlinghetti—that cannot be located in the civil and juridical language of statutes and laws, the paper language of bureaucracy, or the technocratic language of administrators and entrepreneurs.

In particular, Kafka's sobriety, closely related to what Barthes will call the 'degree zero' of modernist writing, lies in his doing away with metaphor understood as carrying over an original meaning. Gregor Samsa's becoming-beetle, for example, is an intensive metamorphosis or static deformation, a playful slowing down of language about which there is nothing sensational:

> Metamorphosis is the contrary to metaphor. There is no longer any proper sense or figurative sense, but only a distribution of states that is part of the range of the word. The thing and other things are no longer anything but intensities overrun by deterritorialized sound or words that are following their line of escape. It is no longer a question of resemblance . . . even less a question of a simple worldplay. There is no longer man or animal, since each deterritorializes the other, in a conjunction of flux, in a continuum of reversible intensities. The animal does not speak 'like' a man but pulls from the language tonalities lacking in signification; the words themselves are not 'like' the animals but in their own way climb about, bark and roam around, being properly linguistic dogs, insects or mice. To make the sequences vibrate, to open the word onto unexpected internal intensities—in short, an asignifying *intensive utilization* of language.[65]

Mannerism uses language in such a way that it places writing into variation and moves it into a multiplicity of intensities out of which order-words will always be stabilized, but only secondarily. A mannerism of sobriety is a matter of finding 'pass-words beneath order-words . . . words that pass, words that are components of passage, whereas order-words mark stoppages or organized, stratified compositions'.[66] Here mannerism has nothing to do with a particularly affected use of language but with a use that makes language partake of an animal continuum. Kafkaesque is not an adjective but an adverb. Language is pushed into intensive or unformed expressions that cannot be attributed to culture at large or even to an individual author, but rather call into being new collective assemblages of enunciation: new, schizophrenic or animal manners of using language that carry within them the seeds of a real revolution.

It is no longer the subject of the statement who is a dog, with the subject of the enunciation remaining 'like' a man; it is no longer the subject of enunciation who is 'like' a beetle, the subject of the statement remaining a man. Rather, there is a circuit of states that forms a mutual becoming, in the heart of a necessarily multiple or collective assemblage.[67] Ultimately, this aesthetic strategy of heightening language is essential to a politics in which the majority is always that of an abstract standard held up by nobody in particular (hence its redundancy) and the minor entails the becoming of everybody.[68] The enunciative procedure of free indirect writing is to resist the 'conspiracy of imitators'[69] that blocks the conditions for literary creation and foster the invention of 'another potential community, to forge the means for another consciousness and another sensibility'.[70] If it is through the order-words of a major language that the people as subject can become a subjected people, a minor use shows how it already bears in its fragmented body 'the seeds of a people to come'.[71] This does not mean that writing consists of reterritorializing the literary machine on a general culture reduced to a sub-compartment of the political unconscious. On the contrary, writing calls for the deterritorialization of the collective enunciation so as to produce an expression of force or a linguistic being in veritable affective power-relations with real political consequences. Far from being merely symbolic, a literary mannerism of sobriety gives readers, speakers, and hearers a way of understanding life together according to their own desires and interests and a different way of affecting one another through speech.

## Souriau: The Different Modes of Existence

Everything we said about language could be said of any medium or métier: creation is always irreducible, but never ex nihilo. Instead of a historiography, Deleuze's work offers a whole cartography of styles or manners that are constitutive of postures in sports, symptoms of diseases, modes and rhythms in music, lines and colors in painting, even of mathematics, science, philosophy, and of life in general. At all times, the concept of style is a vital protest against the regularity of order and its distribution of subjectivities. Style is not merely a new ordering of content, but first of all an expressive component devoid of content. In fact, it precedes content and 'drags it along'.[72] The consequence of this reversal of Platonism is that being itself becomes an aesthetic phenomenon and that style is the cornerstone of the modern world. As Susan Sontag writes, art is just like the world is. There is no longer any opposition between form and content, manner and style, or becoming and being: 'The hyperdevelopment of

style in, for example, Mannerist painting and Art Nouveau, is an emphatic form of experiencing the world as an aesthetic phenomenon. But only a particularly emphatic form, which arises in reaction to an oppressively dogmatic style of realism. All style—that is, all art—proclaims this. And the world *is*, ultimately, an aesthetic phenomenon.'[73]

Souriau was perhaps the first modern philosopher to develop these aesthetico-ontological intuitions into a radically pluralist metaphysics, with special advocacy for the minor modes of existence or possible worlds that make themselves felt without ever being fully present and that for this reason are vulnerable to the judgment of all the skeptics who resist the desire for creation that these virtual modes incite and require.[74] For if, in the title of his book *The Different Modes of Existence* (1943), the emphasis is on the 'different' quality of each mode, this is because it is crucial not to conflate reality and existence. As Souriau argues, a mode does not constitute a reality all by itself; rather, it is a way of realizing something. It is not a mode of determination of substance or being, but a 'means of existence, specific conditions of existence, routes traveled or to be traveled in order to obtain access to being, modes of constitutive intentionality'.[75] As such, a mode of existence must not be identified with what is realized. It is a differential that modalizes what becomes actual. Vice versa, things can become more or less real, but no matter their degree of reality, they won't come to exist more or less. Modes are all equally perfect in themselves, with their existence fully integrated, whereas the vacillation between degrees or intensities pertains to real beings. Thus reality is a matter of presence, while existence is a matter of modality.[76] I think, therefore I am? On the contrary, Souriau argues: I think but precisely therefore I am not an individuated self; I am only on my way to real presence. I am a thinking being only to the extent that I think. But no matter how much the intensity of my thoughts varies, thinking itself remains a fully self-sufficient and pre-individual mode.[77] It is an impersonal modality that constitutes my personal being, not in essence but in a nascent state.

This mannerist notion of the 'existential incompletion of everything [*toute chose*]' implies not only an infinity of degrees between being and nothingness ('Nothing, not even our own selves, is given to us other than in a sort of half-light, a penumbra in which only incompleteness can be made out'), it also implies an 'existential pluralism'[78] of modes. Besides a thinking being, and to a much larger extent, I am also a feeling being, as well as a being that exists in many other modes. My being not only combines all sorts of modalities, each of these modes of existence in turn presupposes other beings and other modes. Taken for themselves, thinking and feeling 'are' not substantial or thing-like (being-

qua-being) but relational (existing-qua-other). They cannot obtain existence or persist in existence except by way of what they are not, and this also in another manner.[79] Some modes of existence may be 'aseitic' (existing absolutely, that is, in and for itself), but no mode emerges out of nothing. Each mode requires 'abaleitic' modes of (co-)existence (i.e., those modes existing sympoetically in and through something else) that make up the situation that supports it. The multiple modes always function interactively rather than comparatively, such that agency is divided over an intricate meshwork, in which the many different modes find themselves in a situation of co-originarity.

The pluralism of modes of existence means two things: (1) that, instead of one mode of being or even a single 'world' for all beings, things exist in several modes at once and no thing is bound to a single mode. Hamlet is a persona in Shakespeare, a presence on stage, a reference in discourse, a hero in a film, and so on. In each mode, Hamlet envelops a different 'plane of existence' or material world.[80] But it also means (2) that there is no foundational unity of being that sustains this plurimodality. Instead, we have an 'ontology' of an infinite variety of modes distinguished by the way each of them inhabits, and thus selects its distinct form of alterity through its own 'network determined by constitutive relations'.[81] I think, feel, breathe, and so on, and it is only through their divergences and convergences that my being is produced and distinguished from yours. This double pluralism not only defines the richness of a world multiplied by its modes, it also separates a mannerist ontology from a fundamental ontology; it is the difference between 'manners of *being*' and '*manners* of being'.[82]

What ultimately characterizes a mannerist ontology is that, as Souriau puts it, 'each mode is an art of existing unto itself'.[83] To be is to be in a certain manner without this manner existing in itself (thinking does not belong to the thing that thinks). Every being has a sui generis (in the literal sense of self-engendering) art by which it gets 'instaurated [*instauré*]'. This means that in mannerist philosophy, ontology is principally the work of gestures (deriving from *gerere*, which combines behavior, gift, suggestion, and birth). Every gesture contains a conatus, inspiring a sort of trust in its return, in its persistence in time and taking possession of space.[84] Since a mode does not delimit a being but is a manner of making exist on this or that plane, there is a mannerism of gestures in which being is produced and composed. The instauration of reality is an immense drama or 'ceremony' of spontaneous acts, appearances, and semblances.[85] Ontology itself presupposes art, just as art, before it becomes a separate domain with its own plurality (painting, sculpture, architecture, and so on), is inseparable from a diversity of manners of making exist. 'For art is all

the arts. And existence is each of the modes of existence. Each mode is an art of existing unto itself. And the same goes for them as for the different arts of the aesthetic order.'[86]

Needless to say, the consequences of this mannerist revolution are immense. If there lies no ultimate identity at the basis of the different modes of existence, then there is no external plane of reference or ideal existence with respect to which this or that existence would be more or less perfect, more or less strong. For Descartes, I am a thing that thinks, to the extent that I imperfectly resemble God's infinite intelligence. This shows how much he was still a man of the renaissance. Existence is measured against the transcendent being of God in terms of finite degrees. In a mannerist ontology, by contrast, the self can be a bit of a thinking thing and a bit of a feeling thing, all the while not lacking in any way. A new-born is the object of love not because of some insipid generality or because of a particular property, but because of the growing charm or strength with which it integrates its modes beyond the planes of existence they define by themselves. In Tiepolo, it is not the modes of visibility that can be analyzed according to degrees of perfection but the reality (*chosalité*) of the pink cloud that always exists interior to several modes.[87] 'As integral or analysable elements of this existence, they [these modes] do not divide existence, which only results from their assemblage in a single presence.'[88]

Incidentally, the irreducible yet non-exclusive unity of such assemblages is pointed out in Marx's famous description of daily life in a communist society:

> For as soon as the distribution of labour comes into being, each man has a particular, exclusive sphere of activity, which is forced upon him and from which he cannot escape. He is a hunter, a fisherman, a herdsman, or a critical critic, and must remain so if he does not want to lose his means of livelihood; while in communist society, where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticise after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, herdsman or critic.[89]

Souriau reminds us that it's not a question of accumulating modes or remedying their lack of unity in a mode that cannot be analyzed in turn. Unification, for example in the form of the real subsumption of labor under capital, can be as bad as dispersal. Rather, 'what interests us is a totalization, which, beyond the plurality of the kinds of existence, brings about something that not only embraces

them, but distinguishes itself from them and surpasses them.' My presence is no longer a realization of different modes of existence according to a larger or lesser degree. Rather, as a thing that both hunts and fishes, rears cattle and criticizes, I am instaurated as existing strength or weakness unlimited by any established plane of existence (relations of production)—as an adverbial individuation of a positivity that 'surpasses' and 'adjoins' the diversity of the modes 'without, however, subverting or annihilating their specific existences': the singular way in which I live all these universal modes of production and thereby produce myself as a self-valorizing member of a society with no fixed division of labor.[90] The self remains interior to a variety of collectively shared modes, but it is also the realization of an intensity without analogy, a non-numerical degree of the absolute, contracting and perfecting its various modes in a new manner of being of its own.

Over the course of our examples, we have passed from becoming to being and back from being to becoming, or what comes down to the same, from the many to the one and from the one to the many. More than just a summation or ontic combination of existential specifications into a substance, an individuation is an event that posits itself and that involves a convergence between several modes. While instauration appears to result in a mode of existence of the second degree, the purism of the modes of the first degree does not disprove its novelty.[91] On the contrary, transmodal passage or *surexistence* is the inherent condition of all reality. Every instauration is accomplished in a style without style, as a 'synapsis' among styles, some more achieved and others more virtual, while equally having its own style. Considered for themselves, every one of them is of 'equal dignity' and contains its 'indubitable and sui generis' haecceity ('patuity' or radiating presence). This is why Souriau says that in addition to existential semantemes we need morphemes[92] and why Deleuze replaces IS by AND. 'Be water, my friend', the Hong Kong protesters repeated with Bruce Lee. No matter how much the state wants to fixate our being, we are all dividuals existing like 'so many distorted images in running water'.[93] Manners are like masks behind which there is nothing to hide, certainly not property relations. An instauration resembles an insurrection. It is not a movement from essence to existence or vice versa, but a surexistential resonance. It pertains not to being but to existence, which derives its consistency from the modes even when it is made referential to being.[94] 'It is when the smile is without a cat that man can effectively become cat as soon as he smiles.'[95] The very existence of intensive variation attests to the inexhaustible variety of the modes of instauration, and to the eventual indiscernibility of first and second degrees.[96] Even the cogito contains the undispersed positivity of

a new manner of being that surpasses the modes that it brings together: 'The Cogito is not only proof of the [modes of] existence of the self and of thought, it is an event that declares itself through itself and bursts forth like shattering glass.'[97]

All this is not to suggest that such events of passage between modes of existence are unproblematic. Sontag describes her feeling of discontinuity as a person—her surexistence—in paranoid terms:

> Feeling of discontinuity as a person. My various selves—woman, mother, teacher, lover . . .—how do they all come together? And anxiety at moments of transition from one 'role' to another. Will I make it fifteen minutes from now? Be able to step into, inhabit the person I'm supposed to be? This is felt as an infinitely hazardous leap, no matter how often it's successfully executed.[98]

This description of nervosity could of course be understood as a nostalgic expression of longing for the integrity of individual actuality-based socio-juridical identities that saps our human potentials. A more interesting reading is that we no longer know whether we can still rely on our collective consistencies, precisely because they concretize on another level than that of the individual. While it has never been easy to come into existence across surexistential discontinuities, it is not so much the traditional division of roles but the ecology of modes that is increasingly under pressure. Doesn't Sontag describe the permanent crisis of presence of the self under the conditions of a recombinant capitalism, in which we are reduced to transitory functions in the socio-juridical management and regulation of 'human potential'?

This, at least, seems to constitute Souriau's point of view when he states that existence by definition has the transient form of a 'questioning situation'.[99] If nothing exists by itself and no mode transcends the other modes, then there is no model to measure its success. Intensive variation is the sole principle by which one mode distinguishes itself and betrays another mode. David Bowie opened worlds for us, because he morphed from one persona into the next practically without leaving a trace, as in the Vittel advertisement in which we see him get drunk on water. Similarly, Prince was a mannerist of whom it is impossible to say what his instrument is. Perhaps one could describe their smooth shifting in modal organization, their powers of the false, as a shift from one extreme of restlessness, paranoia, to another, schizophrenia.[100] Vacillating between simple being and the multiplicity of manners, existence becomes a question of intensity, just as intensity, located precisely at the intersection of quality and quantity, makes ontology a question of aesthetics, since it expresses the immediately felt

shape (ease) in which different aspects of the world are integrated. It is this general constructivism of being without a model, in which becoming has to pass through a degree zero of intensity each time it flashes up, that constitutes the modern core of mannerist philosophy. Modal equals modern, for it means that existence is not substantial and analytic but processual and synthetic. For good or for worse, modality is the basic building block of a superdiverse world of incessant transformations.

## Whitehead: The Heritage of the New

Where do the modes come from? On the one hand, their givenness is 'arbitrary' or 'contingent', since it is not a matter of legitimating or prioritizing one over the other. Their number cannot be determined in advance, new ones are still 'discovered', and they engender one another in a 'dialectic of existence'.[101] On the other hand, they are qualities or possibles that exceed the actual and that seem to subsist outside of time: they are '*de jure* always possible, *de facto* always effectible and at every moment'.[102] As pure generative suchness, modes are timeless not in the sense of enduring through time but in the sense of actively entering into the constitution of every moment.

Perhaps we should say with Whitehead that the modes are 'eternal objects': non-exhaustive potentials that abide outside of experience but that are always on the verge of becoming.[103] Like whatever singularities, eternal objects are objects of pure contemplation. They are powers of appearing that each time they are called upon appear abruptly as always having-been. They constitute the world's original 'moreness' that, while not existing outside historical occurrences, always beckons further occurrences.[104]

As set out in his *Process and Reality: An Essay in Cosmology* (1929), Whitehead's theory of individuation can be read as another possible inventory of expressive modes. Like Souriau's, it is rooted in William James's concept of pure experience, which defines *aisthesis* not as a passive experience rooted in the subject but as the 'bare activity' of the world: the general disjunctive process of ongoing activity which always has yet to sort itself in determinate becomings.[105] According to Whitehead's ontological principle, the final real things of which the world is made up are 'actual entities' or 'actual occasions'.[106] Yet what constitutes experience as flux is the modality in which their determinedness is combined by the indeterminateness of eternal objects in further discrete but cumulative individuations. This is because each actual entity is 'dipolar' and knows both

physical and conceptual 'prehensions'.[107] Physical prehensions concern the other actual entities that partake in individuation as its objective 'data', while conceptual prehensions have eternal objects as the ingredients of individuation. While other entities are thus the efficient or material causes prehended in the actual entity, these do not explain it and merely appear as its 'real potential'.[108] How they will cause is determined by the manner in which the data are taken up in their compossibility and this involves the ingression of possibles or pure potentialities. Every actual entity has a self-differentiating or creative manner in which it blends both the material flux of the world and eternal objects, coloring the former with the latter.[109] The special inflection of matter and manner is thus what characterizes the mode of existence of new actual entities. If matter is bare activity (insistence) and eternal objects are pure virtualities (subsistence), then 'subjective form' is the force that pulls itself forward and that circulates between them, concretizing both in the actual occurrence of a constructive functioning (existence). 'How an actual entity becomes constitutes what an actual entity is.'[110]

When Souriau and Whitehead speak about experience, this is not the experience of nature by something abstracted from it, just as aesthetic values are not a supplement added to nature by a perceiving subject. Rather, experience or process constitutes a generalized aesthetics: subjective experience is itself a factor of and in existence, since it determines the effectiveness of a prehension in the occasion of experience of which this prehension is a detail of activity.[111] In this sense, all reality depends on the experience of subjects and there is nothing outside of subjects.[112] This pertains not just epistemologically but also ontologically, which is why a new language uncontaminated with the subject-predicate form and the ensuing difference between primary and secondary qualities is needed. Aesthetics is a theory of nature consisting of a multiplicity of centers of experience, since feeling is the felt concrescence of every becoming. Feeling is 'fully clothed' with matter and thus partakes in an extensive continuum, but the primordial form of all relation and composition as well as the immediate unity of a mode of existence, its how of feeling, is affective tonality or intensity.[113]

Like mannerist art, mannerist aesthetics has less to do with aesthetic appreciation than with the enjoyment of creativity.[114] There exists nothing but subjects that use an anterior world made up of other subjects, but the manner in which the world is passed on in each is new and is not itself past or eternal. Beyond manner we find merely the trace of the possible, but a possible that does not exist outside its variations. In Souriau and Whitehead, individuals do not participate in eternal objects, rather eternal objects ingress in individuations.

The latter revolve around the former and not vice versa. For this reason, the question where the modes considered for themselves come from was perhaps not posed correctly. Eternal objects are not created but they are the conditions of creativity.[115] Manners are non-localizable abstractions that we never encounter as such, but they nonetheless function like attractors in the individuation of a subject of experience. And as we have already seen in Deleuze and Guattari's treatment of language, individuation never stops. This also means that we cannot own the manners in the Kantian sense of a subject that projects its own way of experiencing on nature. Rather, nature itself only exists in the ways in which experience is made, in the selective modalities in which it is inherited, in 'the way of enjoyment'[116] that lies in the imagination of possibilities and the evaluation of what is relevant or important. There is no difference in nature between production and reproduction, only a difference of degree. There is as much nature in art as there is artfulness in nature.[117] Instead of different modes of production, there is an irreducible plurality of different modes of instauration or expression—a whole ecology of possible worlds without identities or essences.

It is through Whitehead that we can return to the question of (art) history. This question is surprisingly absent from Souriau's work, while it features very strongly in the work of the latter's best-known inheritor, Simondon. Perhaps the reason for this absence is that for philosophy as well as for art, the question of what makes a tradition is ultimately subordinate to the question of novelty. Too often do we look toward old art for the auratic experience of original haecceity, a fetishized experience of virtual time that the present denies us. But the past cannot explain the present or the future. If an actual occasion is the universe taken in conjunction—the latter is always this perception, this vision, this sensation—the past is the antecedent universe in its entirety, that is, the multiplicity of actual occasions taken disjunctively. The real question of the occurrent arts, as opposed to the history of Art, is how to inherit both the past and the eternal. This emphasis on immediate novelty revaluates both history and art in terms of a fluid or actualist understanding of tradition as constituted through the repetition of occurrences, not of things or models. Time's very irreversible character consists in selective re-enaction, understood as 'the cumulation of the universe and not a stage-play about it'.[118] The real potentiality of the antecedent world is never fixed in history but is always multiplicitous. If history is linear, the actual is punctual. The mannerist continuum is an actual infinity of manners. Each actual occasion carries all the others forward as its material potential, but in the form of an atomization or molecularization of time. As Whitehead argues against Bergson, duration itself derives from these

events but never produces them by itself: 'there is a *becoming* of *continuity*, but no *continuity* of *becoming*'.[119]

This again confirms that, instead of seeing manner as a particular variation on a general and established norm, it must be defined by a certain creativity or novelty. The irreducibility of matter and manner means that experience cannot be reduced to a function that is entirely explained in terms of continuity. The time of the event is not the time of movement. Rather, in the classical canon of art, every manner is a 'moment' that is both singular and universal. With Souriau and Whitehead, mannerism appears not as the negation of classicism but claims its own full positivity. What counts is not the plurality of particular manners, but the multiplicity of manners as opposed to all mereology. The mannerist cosmos is the heterogenesis or heterosynthesis of the many as such. And this is why philosophy can provide us with a different outlook on its place in art history.

Understood as occurrence, art is an activity that derives neither from an essence nor from a potential being, but rather from other beings in action. We thus encounter the same problem that historians of style were confronted with, that of formal consistency or identity in action. It is the problem of the fashioning of artistic identity, the basis of the academic tradition of artistic education which begins with mannerism. Now according to Vasari, style is *una certa bellezza continuata in ogni minima cosa* ('a certain beauty continued in each small thing'), the legibility of unifying intention in the object.[120] In other words, style is not the object itself, but something implicit in the making of the object: the subjective aim or form that leads to its production. Even though, due to the nature of their discipline, they are always tempted to argue otherwise, art historians therefore know well that manners exist only in works, in the process of art in the making, and as such they are irreducible to social-historical context. We should therefore say that 'one obtains a manner [only] through a kind of auto-affection of practice'.[121] If, considered as eternal objects, manners are not derived from anything else, they also never cease to vary according to local conditions of existence. This is the *causa sui* nature of every idiosyncrasy or leaning. As a consequence, the past cannot be what must be left behind in order for the new to appear. Mannerism is an art that does not begin by rejecting the given, the existing. It betrays it, but it doesn't deny it. It exists, because it differentiates and distances itself. It is appetite for difference.[122]

Is it possible for art history to experience a work of art in its novelty, a novelty that exceeds the historicity of being a trace from the past, its 'as it was', Art history

based on style, from the rise of the consciousness of style among artists and patrons in the sixteenth century up to most of the twentieth century, has often been declared dead. Yet when it comes to the experience of art, or what Deleuze calls 'the logic of sensation', it is still unsurpassed, as it involves expert naming, academic rhetoric, ekphrasis that often cannot meet standards of empirical science. In fact, it is perhaps here, in its power of describing style in terms of individuating traits and ethological territories rather than subjects and characteristic predicates that mannerist philosophy comes into its own. 'Call me Ishmael': The magic of proper names is that they refer less to persons or things than to effects. They have the incorporeal power to make the corporeal world individuate according to varying intensities and enduring complexes (like the Doppler effect or the Shakespeare universe), just as infinite verbs describe the forces or modalities of individuation (as in 'the tree greens', or *l'être pommesque* in Cézanne's apples).[123]

Inversely, when defined as a sensibility (or taste) rather than a set of formal characteristics, it is also clear that a style can surface at various moments and in different guises in history. Style is the temperament of a living art that molds and, in its turns, bears an individuating imprint. But whose imprint? The history of codes, icons, techniques, and styles is part of the material of art but cannot explain its actual occurrence. They are only its real potential. They are the sum of negative conditions that condition it, but they may also hinder what seeks to grow out of them. The creative act confronts them with something that is not yet given in experience. Contemporary art history seeks to situate and make sense of an artist's methods within the conventions of practice of his historical time, whereas the more a-historical approach analyzes methods in their positive factuality. The great disadvantage of such explanations is of course that the way something evolves is not the same as its model, context, or material. To accept the processes of creativity as part of historical activity, by contrast, is to make a definite shift away from the focus on the finished art object as it is served up by catalogs, museums, galleries, and history books. The occurrent experience of art involves process and provisionality, including the possibility of unmaking in the act of making. There is still a history, but it is also turned inside out and reinvented with every further creative act. Only in retrospect can it therefore be determined that we were dealing with an occurrence that could be subsumed under the general category of art at all. In terms of Whitehead, 'what becomes involves repetition transformed into novel immediacy',[124] which means that 'objectivity is absorbed into subjectivity'[125] and that 'the cause is objectively in the effect'.[126] Moreover, it is only due to this externality of manner to matter, instead

of vice versa, that art is not limited to its own domain but directly intervenes in life itself. History, after all, is the substance of life, not its context.

If manners are neither derived nor exist beyond actuality, then how is historical writing about style possible at all? We can understand a tradition or a historical trajectory with Whitehead as a 'society', a relatively stable nexus of actual occasions (persistence) such as an organ or a habit, in which eternal objects are transferred from one act to another and acquire likeness or duration in the form of a historical route. No tradition exists outside of the manners in which an act follows upon those it inherits, but that which is transferred from one act to another is not only the content of the act but also the genetic conditions by which a certain affective tonality (a combination of eternal objects) ingresses into a particular situation. While it intensifies or weakens, a style therefore always transgresses this situation and contains both its consistency and its plastic potential. But this also means that no tradition stands on its own and any tradition can always be unmade or absorbed in another, including that long tradition that goes by the Western name of Art. 'Life is robbery' and 'lurks in the interstices'.[127] If mannerism is the disappropriating appropriation of the past, it is not a diminished expression of the will to art but its revitalization. What counts in works of art is less their historical novelty than their power of becoming when they pass into one another. The heterogeneous multiplicity of manners reveals the uncontextualizable and untimely difference of practice itself.[128] If every heritage is always a reprise in anticipation of the future, then mannerism is the heritage of the new.

# Modal Individuation

## Genealogy of the Revolution

Modal equals modern. But there are various ways in which we can trace the rupture between classicism and mannerism in philosophy. Following Heidegger's interpretation of modern metaphysics, which he identifies first of all with Leibniz, we can determine modern philosophy as a transformation of being into operativity (desire, will, *Drang*) and of representational truth into effective certainty (belief, perception, *Vorstellung*).[1] The central concept of ontology, from Spinoza and Schelling to Nietzsche and Whitehead, is not substance but the demand to exist and to universalize itself. Only what is effective in one or more modalities is substantial or real, and thereby possible. To know a thing or idea in all its singularity is to know the consequences of its inner striving: *conatus*, *vis*, *appetitus*, *cupiditas*. This is why James relates reality to success and seeks 'the proper verbal custom' for the 'workableness' of ideas.[2] And why Souriau identifies being as a convergence of modes to be conquered in the form of work and drama (*opera*). The 'universal, philosophical approach to all of reality', Souriau concludes, is 'to discern, in all that is presented to us in the present or the past as fully made, a movement toward existence with the appearance of a work, which involves instaurative forces down below, and appeals and iridescences—in short, an assistance of which the apparently inert object is evidence—up above.'[3]

As Souriau's formulation already indicates, however, modern here does not necessarily mean atheistic or non-religious. In *Opus Dei: An Archeology of Duty*, Agamben defines modern philosophy as an 'energetic-operative ontology' rooted in the total absorption of being into praxis (*esse in effectu*). But he emphasizes that this mobilization of being, in the sense of its coincidence with its immanent causing and producing, was prepared by the Christian liturgy, in which the mystery of divine presence had become a question of pure effectiveness or actuality (*effectus*). Accordingly, language acquires a mode of existence that is

indiscernible from its realization in things. When the priest in office says 'This is my body', the speech act commands a transubstantiation in which substance is no longer allowed to remain in itself as the substratum of its accidents or sensory qualities. On the contrary, as the latter remain unchanged, it is substance itself that is modalized. Metaphor grows into metamorphosis. The presence of Christ becomes a purely operative presence, in which there is no difference between substance and act. The bread and the wine transform into the body and blood of Christ without any corporeal change. Their functioning consists of 'a real virtuality or a virtual reality',[4] that is, not just a simulacrum exterior to a more fundamental being but an incorporeal force (God's work to-be-done (*opus operatum*)) that produces effects as much as it is determined by them, such that between cause and effect there is a tense mutual presupposition and the distinction between the possible and the real becomes undecidable.

In a similar sense, Panofsky had already pointed to the concept of habitus or modus operandi as a tool for understanding the cohesion between the theoretical apparatus of Scholasticism and the practical work of gothic architecture.[5] The hylomorphic partition of Aquinas's *Summa Theologica* (1265) is diffused in the structure of the cathedral, just as theology itself is understood as an architecture of distinct materials and inner unity. In both cases, what is at stake is the *praesentia realis* of the soul in the body. The mode of existence of the soul is not a substance separate from the physical substratum but a form that organizes and unifies it. It exists only to the extent that it is set to work in the body and arranges its gestures, just as cathedrals do not have models that precede them but only a soul that is effectively poured into stone.

As Agamben indicates, in order for this modalization of the material world to become thinkable, *ousia* (unchanging substance, or being-qua-being) had to be replaced with *hypostasis* (the sediment or reification of process). Coinciding with what is known as the 'silver age' of antiquity, the Neoplatonists had found the basis of existence not in individual beings that actualize their potential in existence, but in the event of emanation and its modalities. Instead of a mereological conception of being as divided into genera and species, they argued, first, that all beings participate in a higher Unity beyond being itself, and secondly, that this Unity divides itself into multiple intensive degrees of existence. As hypostases of the One, things do not coincide with themselves like formal essences, rather, they partake in a continuity of flow or radiation. A temporal gap (*modo*) immediately separates their present from the past, such that they have to modulate themselves in flux by constantly stopping and taking themselves up again. (Whereas substance is an illusion that appears when we fail

to see the hiatus or discontinuity in its persistence.[6]) Composed of cuts and flows, Being thus acquires a rhythmic rather than schematic nature. Each manner of existence wells up (*e-manare*) from the One and realizes itself in continuity with, yet distinct from, all other manners of existence.[7]

In *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, Deleuze provides a similar genealogy of philosophical mannerism. In Neoplatonism a part is no longer a component but an expression or 'explication', just as the whole of all manners is no longer a totality but a 'complication'.[8] Of course, in the dominant strands of Neoplatonism this immanence of the one and the many is all but complete. What had to be avoided was the heresy of pantheism. The essence of each creature is that of an unknowable God. This means that, although being is no longer substance but dynamic progress, the relations of the composing parts must remain internal to the unfolding power. The One complicates the different modes of existence, yet even when it is explicated by them it does not explicate itself and it is not affected by its expressions. Its transcendence is warranted by a strict ontological hierarchy of categories and classes that still proceeds from the most general to the most particular. As a consequence, being remains equivocal and hierarchical. The effects do not transcend their causes but the causes continue to transcend their effects. In the great chain of being (*scala naturae*), the infinite ordinal series of degrees of perfection remains inferior to the maximally perfect thing (*ens perfectissimum*, that is, God). There is still the ultimate difference between being qua self (indivisible substance) and being-qua-other (modes), with each mode being as it were the analogical representation of the superior mode that precedes it.

Yet there are scattered moments in Neoplatonism when divine presence is tolerated at local levels of creation. Drawing on the work of his teacher Maurice de Gandillac, Deleuze speaks of 'zones of immanence' in which Being is equally shared or participated in by everything that *is*: 'rocks, flowers, animals, and humans equally celebrate the glory of God in a kind of sovereign an-archy'.[9] These zones can already be found in the Christian requirement that God, despite his eminence, be a Being among beings.[10] But they come to their full fruition in the renaissance in combination with Stoicism, occultism, cabbalism, mysticism, hermeticism, and the doctrine of *magia naturalis*—in other words, the tradition that runs from Meister Eckhart to Nicholas of Cusa, culminating in Bruno. What makes these philosophical positions modern is precisely the extent to which they replace emanation and distant analogy with the immanent causality of modes, that is, an expression based on the immediate inherence of the copy in its model without any degradation.[11]

*Deus ergo est omnia complicans in hoc quod omnia in eo, est omnia explicans in hoc quia ipse in omnibus.* The root of Cusanus's terminology of complication and explication, *plicare* or folding, indicates that what is at stake is less an identity of essence between God and world than an equality of existence, so that God is nature complicative and nature is God explicative.[12] As we have seen in the case of Bruno, participation tends toward the coincidence of potency and act, such that the effects remain in (*im-manere*) the cause no less than the cause remains in itself. The One emerges as itself nothing but the infinite set of all possible relations between the modes, and each mode (being-qua-other), in its emergence, singularly implies a kaleidoscopic plurality of other modes (or 'worlds') in its manifestation of divine plenitude. In such a 'world', there is no One but always more-than-one, an original moreness or overdeterminacy. Or as William James would later define pluralism: 'Things are "with" one another in many ways, but nothing includes everything, or dominates over everything.'[13]

Complication, explication, inherence, and implication are the aspects of expression that make expression immanent and immanence expressive. For Deleuze, it is with Spinoza's conception of the expressive immanence of *natura naturans* to *natura naturata* that imitation or analogy becomes fully subordinate to genesis or production.[14] The modes follow from the perfection of substance but not in the sense of a degeneration, since perfection has no model, only the virtual becoming that is the real immanent mode of what is because it has no other mode than its own actualization and continued difference from itself. 'By reality and perfection I mean the same thing',[15] on the condition that only the real is possible and all possibility is equally real. Immanent expressivity thus doesn't mean that modes are unconditioned or self-causing, but that causation is immanent. Every mode is a degree of perfection or power (*potentia*) that implicates God as proximate cause (God as infinite or ultimate 'complication'), but without being reducible to this cause, since the modes explicate their aggregate 'cause or reason' and thereby express the linear sequence of efficient causality in their own way. While each mode passively presupposes a field of activity and is itself a multimodal individuation, it is active to the extent that it modifies this field through its own existence.[16] With each explication, the modes fold back on, and thus further differentiate the power that remains implicit and irreducibly common in them. The fold is thus the minimal dynamic unity of being. Folding is a double articulation that implies the differences in a given domain (e.g., a cacophonous continuum, a climate system, a text, a thought-flow) and integrates them according to its internal structure (e.g., a musical piece, a hurricane, an interpretation, a philosophical concept), sometimes submitting this domain

to a whole new topology. To fold is to roll disparate causes into the emergent continuity of an effect. It is that which makes the infinite actual, the auto-positing of the infinite: infinity in action, or practical philosophy. The effectiveness or operativity of God or Nature 'immanates' in its modal effects and is functional to them: 'equal being is immediately present in everything, without mediation or intermediary, even though things reside unequally in this equal being.'[17]

Still there remains a last vestige of classicism even in Spinoza. For although equivocity and analogy are expelled in theory, and common nature is no longer conceived anterior and indifferent to its individuations (as was the case in Duns Scotus[18]), a practical asymmetry between a substance and its modes nevertheless remains. For substance is *causa sui* whereas modes are not. Substance is capable of existing independently of its modes (its existence follows from its essence), whereas modes cannot exist independently of substance (they have no essence). The distinction or distance between substance and modes is not itself modified by the modes, such that remnants of the subject-predicate form remain at work. We get modalities all the way down, with modes everywhere anterior to and supervening on substantial incarnations, but that which the modes are modalities of, the Being that is implied by them, its necessary law and order, continues to mediate its expressions.[19] That is to say: nature is an infinite causal chain with multiple modes, but the modes do not multiply nature with their own causal histories.

For mannerism to break its ties with classicism and pass into modernism, and for the modal relations to be freed from internal relations of resemblance, an ultimate reversal is necessary by which modes no longer revolve around substance, but substance comes to revolve around its modes. Only if the One participates in the modes without reserve and the modes express a power that remains entirely unconditioned by the identity of the One, can we truly guarantee that the whole is effectuated exclusively by the different ways it is enveloped in each of its explicative parts. For every expression is both explication and implication, and thus involves a dialectical, transfinite movement, an involuted process in which all that remains is difference itself. As Agamben writes, immanence must be dislocated in itself and acquire an absolutely immanent alterity.[20] Or in Deleuze's terms: 'that identity not be first, that it exists as a principle but as a second principle, as a principle *become*; that it revolve around the Different: such would be the nature of a Copernican revolution.'[21] Unlike Kant's Ptolemaic counter-revolution,[22] in which the modes are only emancipated from substance in order to be enclosed again in the subject, this would be a revolution that never ceases to revolve.

According to Deleuze, it was Nietzsche who most completely articulated this immanence of principles and consequences. As the ultimate implication of a reversed Platonism, the eternal return embeds expressive immanence in a practical conception of univocity. The speculative content of the eternal return—the physical or cosmological doctrine which defines the same not analytically as the nature of that which returns but, on the contrary, as the synthetic fact of returning for that which differs—simultaneously carries out a practical selection among differences according to their capacity to continue transforming themselves and changing into one another.[23] Henceforth the sameness of first principles such as Being, of God, World, and Self is subordinated to an excessive difference that is at once substantive and modificatory. 'The eternal return does not bring back "the same," but returning constitutes the only Same of that which becomes.'[24] Difference is detached from a potential that transcends the activity of modes and becomes operationally mobile or virtual.[25] As a consequence, modal individuation no longer emanates—it no longer resembles anything and has no exemplary causality—but acquires a pure self-determination, that is, a self-sufficient self-differing and self-differentiating. Expressive substance now equals a Dionysian constructivism, an abstract machine utterly devoid of any unity, in which passive and active, imperfect and perfect, the finite and the infinite, theory and practice become indiscernible.[26]

This double demand of expressive immanence and univocal being is precisely what constitutes a philosophical mannerism. Modes mutually implicate one another and persist, but not immutably like substances, which means that no mode is entirely internal to another. If the modes come before substance, then repetition precedes difference and selects and links differences. Repetition can be the temporal or durational form difference takes as substance. But as an expression of becoming, every mode contains its own recursive causality, such that only the actual entails the immediate future and not the causal concatenations of the past that have led up to it, even if they remain a necessary part of it. To speak with Whitehead, a mode creates actuality in its own way. It is a unique conjunction of disjoined efficient causes (the internal determination of history) and final causes that modalize the relation between condition and result (the external freedom that belongs to becoming). 'Efficient causation expresses the transition from actual entity to actual entity; and final causation expresses the internal process whereby the actual entity becomes itself.'[27] We thus have causal series flowing in both directions, from the future to the past ('causes') as much as from the past to the future ('becauses'). Only when substance becomes process and existence is fully temporalized, when 'difference proceeds by

differing' through repetition, when unity and multiplicity or the whole and its parts finally coincide in the perfection of each and every single expression, then 'the universal is said of the most singular independently of any mediation'.[28] In its purity, immanence means nothing if not this incessant springing forth of a multiplicity that remains vertiginously within itself.

## Leibniz between Classicism and Modernism

The history of Neoplatonism with the genealogy of the univocity of Being runs from the theory of formal (qualitative) distinction in Duns Scotus and that of modal (quantitative) distinction in Spinoza to the eternal return of the 'plastic principle' of the will to power as differential ground of being in Nietzsche. It is a well-known story, albeit not always well understood in its mannerist implications. Much less known, and more interesting for our purposes, is the ambiguous role reserved in it for Leibniz. Situated between the classicisms of the renaissance and the enlightenment, his work reveals the tumult, restlessness, and passion of the baroque beneath the apparent calm of modern reason, all the while making a bold but straining attempt at what Deleuze calls a 'schizophrenic reconstruction'[29] or 'orgiastic representation'[30] of the classical world:

> But what happened in this long history of 'nihilism', before the world lost its principles? At a point close to us human Reason had to collapse, like the Kantian refuge, the last refuge of principles. It falls victim to 'neurosis'. But still, before, a psychotic episode was necessary. A crisis and collapse of all theological Reason had to take place. . . . The baroque solution is the following: we shall multiply principles—we can always slip a new one out from under our cuffs—and in this way we will change their use. We will not have to ask what available object corresponds to a given luminous principle, but what hidden principle responds to whatever object is given, that is to say, to this or that 'perplexing case'.[31]

If the use of principles changes, this is because they have lost their unreflected self-evidence. Leibniz's theoretical division of principles among *a priori* (logical) principles (identity, non-contradiction, sufficient reason) and a posteriori (ontological) hypotheses (continuity, the best, causality, point of view, indiscernibility) is slippery, since each has the capacity to function both categorically (transcending consequences) and hypothetically (functional to consequences). 'My principles are such that they can hardly be torn apart from each other. He who knows one well, knows them all.'[32] In a properly mannerist

fashion, and in contrast with Descartes, Leibniz thus repeats classical logos, but in order to get a hold on the infinite and chaotic movement of the modern world. His best-known principle, that of sufficient reason, is the 'exclamatory principle, the identity of the principle and the cry'[33] that demands that for whatever occurs, no matter how haphazard, there must be a principle (and that in this sense of a demand is the equivalent of the infinite desire (Hegel's *sollen*) that drives any dialectic): 'on the one hand, Leibniz loves principles, and he is probably the only philosopher who invents them endlessly. . . . But on the other hand, he plays with principles, multiplies formulas, varies their relations, and incessantly wants to "prove" them as if, loving them too much, his respect for them were lacking.'[34] Thus if the procedure of the baroque is to extract essences from the inessential (representation), its other side is the mannerist procedure of extracting accidents from essence (repetition). Carried by the past, the principles exist only by grace of alteration and perpetually restarting creation. Could yet another (non-baroque) version of Leibniz be possible, just like the *New Essays* are a second version of Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* and the *New System of Nature* folds over Aristotle's *Physics*? If Leibniz is a baroque mannerist, what exactly are his mannerist traits?

Unlike Spinoza, Leibniz was not a radical enlightener but a revisionist who always defended theological, political, and natural order. But precisely to ground this order he delivers himself to an exuberantly fragmented and prolific creativity that is at work across diverse materials and practices. He repeatedly identifies himself with the conceptual persona of Pacidius, peacemaker in the tradition of Hermes, the agent of rapprochement who deployed networks to eliminate war and contradiction, not heterogeneity and multiplicity. In the resonance of versions, there is no such thing as a commonplace. Instead, things and concepts never cease to emerge out of chaos in a grinding, non-linear fashion. Philosophy functions as a part of referential system for universal communication and circulation, in which a model or an axiom, whether in art or mathematics, is never an original, let alone an aim in itself, but a further problematization of the common world. This is why Leibniz needs a much thicker language than Spinoza, a language that operates between the intelligible and the sensible. The system itself only exists as the cumulative effect of its various philosophical and mostly non-philosophical problems. In each of its versions, the monadology describes a virtual world of machinic interactivity of which the flywheels are the individuating but not always well-adapted manners, each spontaneously constituting a perfect world on its own, yet simultaneously expressing all the others in a labyrinthine polyphony. Consequences revise principles.

Following Deleuze's suggestion, we can understand principles as monads, reigning by unfolding themselves in a zone of clarity where they apply to a particular genre of cases, all the while already or still existing as folded in what precedes and what follows.[35] Leibniz adopts the concept of the monad from Neoplatonism in order to describe that state of unity that sequentially develops a multiplicity according to its 'law of the series',[36] thus grounding causality in its own way. Whereas Bruno understood 'the Soul of the world' as universal complication and Spinoza defended a monistic concept of substance, Leibniz upheld both the auto-inclusive nature of finite individual soul-substances and their infinite comprehension against the danger of pantheism.[37] As a *pars totalis*, a monad is not itself part of any series that might be included in other monads but expresses the world by drawing exclusively from its own depths. This, according to Deleuze, is 'the entire formula of the mannerism of substances':[38] 'All is born to them [the monads] out of their own depths, through a perfect spontaneity.'[39] Each monad desires and produces existence in its unique manner, while the world has no reality outside of its many individuating expressions. As a consequence, the baroque world is a world not of hypostases but of metastases, each of which is univocally perfect. Immanence is not the hypostatic immanence of the explicatory emanations *to* the complicating One, but the common limit *of* all heterogeneous series of explications, and by implication their resonance in a way that is transversal to, although inextricably bound up with, the evolution of the (material) world.

Leibniz of course compromises immanence by reintroducing a strict hierarchy of monadic substances based on divine analogy. Monads set the fixed and sedentary limits of the infinite flux of the baroque world. But perhaps it is of all things his theism that makes Leibniz more 'radical' than Spinoza in one crucial respect: the ontological decentering of agency in the expressive character of particular individuals.[40] For while God is the architect and creator who selects the best of all possible worlds, he is not the agent of all action but relies on the participation of others. Having preprogrammed the other monads in such a way that they harmonize with one another on a collective plane of composition, he eternally plays the second fiddle. The world is neither given once and for all nor does it die and get reborn at every instant in a constantly renewed *creatio continua*, the theological and Cartesian interpretations of divine creation. Rather, created substances 'originate, so to speak, through continual fulgurations of the divinity from moment to moment'.[41] The energetic being of potential is assumed by every existing creature. God 'acts in the most perfect manner',[42] but he is just one monad among others, each of which is a 'little God' that actualizes a version

of the world independently. Although windowless and doorless, each monad is thus the double of all others in an infinite play of repetitions, radiations, correspondences, deformations—in short, 'modifications': 'Every substance is like a complete world and a mirror of God or of the whole universe.'[43]

This baroque pluralism of creatures—Whitehead, quoting James, speaks of the 'shifting character of creativity' that makes for a 'buzzing world'[44]—provides a first indication of why it is possible to develop the concept of mannerism through Leibniz. Continuing the Christian tradition in Neoplatonism, Leibniz exempts all the resources modal philosophy has to offer from the pantheist danger attaching to it. At the same time, he salvages Aristotelian substances while implicating them in the reality of the virtual, the varying combinations of non-essential modes of existence within the given world. For what else is the 'striving' (*exigentia*, *praetensio*) of 'possibles', if not a play of manners that are perfect in their existential tendencies, but lacking in determined reality? Perfection lies in the richest and simplest condensation of manners of existence: 'Everything that is possible desires existence and hence exists, as long as nothing that also desires existence impedes it, because it is incompossible with the first.'[45] Once we start from the intrinsic creativity of reality, it is no longer the possible that resembles the real but the real that resembles the possible.[46] Leibniz describes a world in which, as D. H. Lawrence once wrote, 'even the mind of God can only imagine those things that have become themselves.'[47]

As Souriau points out, Leibniz is 'interesting' because of his swaying between an ontic pluralism (posing the multiplicity of separate essences or ultimate realities and redefining Aristotelian substance through the Neoplatonist concept of the monad), and an existential pluralism based on modal individuation (posing the multiplicity of interrelated modes of existence).[48] Agamben, too, finds in Leibniz a similar 'bipolar gesture'[49] that characterizes a modal ontology that escapes from the clear-cut division between essence and existence, just as for Deleuze, this wavering between the possible and the virtual makes Leibniz indispensable. 'No one has gone further than Leibniz in the exploration of sufficient reason . . . [and] the element of difference', since, as we could say with Tarde and Bergson, to reconstruct a sufficient reason for existence means to differentiate the actual into distinct modal tendencies that, as their demands for existence diverge and converge, constitute not only the sufficient reason of the actual but also the real potentials that are retained and continue to transform the possible at the very moment they are integrated into the real.[50] Having initially dismissed Leibniz's hesitation between the classical and the modern as an 'error' or a compromise with 'theological exigencies'[51] from the point of

view of philosophy, whose 'prince' is Spinoza, Deleuze in *The Fold. Leibniz and the Baroque* will eventually affirm it precisely as the very non-philosophical manner which the philosopher shares with artists and scientists of his time in their attempts to navigate the often contradictory demands of their time: folding unto infinity. Could folding be precisely what in *Difference and Repetition* is called the 'differenciator of the difference', 'a mobile, immanent principle of auto-unification through a nomadic distribution, radically distinct from fixed and sedentary distributions'?[52] In practice, doesn't the distinction between monadic and nomadic distribution (being or becoming) turn out to be less rigid and more duplicitous than it seemed?

In *The Fold* Deleuze hints at a 'secret school' of mannerist philosophy, which runs from a Stoic mannerism via Leibniz's baroque mannerism to the modern mannerism of Alfred North Whitehead.[53] Perhaps we should say that it is less a school than an undercurrent, less a history than a becoming. Instead of a major sequence of instantiations and ruptures, it is the instauration of a minor mode of thinking that relies on novelty in order to transmute the past.[54]

> For with Leibniz the question surges forth in philosophy that will continue to haunt Whitehead and Bergson: not how to attain eternity, but in what conditions does the objective world allow for a subjective production of novelty, that is, of creation? . . . The best of all worlds is not the one that reproduces the eternal, but the one in which new creations are produced, the one endowed with a capacity for innovation or creativity: a teleological conversion of philosophy.[55]

This problem definition of mannerism also contains its practical essence: instead of a detraction of being, its enrichment. Leibniz styled himself as 'the author of the system of pre-established harmony',[56] which he regarded as the 'simplest, most beautiful, and most intelligible' explanation of how contrasting points of view 'interexpress' one another. The word 'harmony' is of course associated with images of composition and agreement (*symphonie*[57]), but it derives from the Greek *harmos*, which stands for the word 'joint' in the anatomical sense. The fold is this dynamical-structural element that, when considered in itself, may well appear as just another meaningless 'manner', a means without an end. But as genetic element of the baroque, it is the schema of an *ars inveniendi* aimed at a global peace and a superior understanding.

The etymology of the Latin word 'diplomacy' leads back to the ancient Greek *díplōma* (folded paper, license) as well as *diplóos* (double). Diplomacy as a manipulative craft is immune to the generality of theoretical truth. It is an art of working with relations of power, which cannot do without artificial conventions

and seemingly disjointed manners and gestures that allow each party present to keep their own version of the situation. As a courtier, Leibniz both represents and betrays. He discusses everything with visitors and correspondents and is sensitive to their different points of view, but at the same time he approves of the arguments of others only by disarming them as so many representatives (modal aspects or partial mirrors rather than imperfect representations) of his philosophical system.[58] Combining continuity with individuality, the fold everywhere and infinitely 'mediates' a multiplicity and 'reconstructs' unity within it. Folding is the procedure by which otherwise conflicting positions in the world can be turned into the means of a system that has the richest possible harmony for its finality. In this way, Leibniz did not shrink away from the modern—that is, pragmatist—implications of mannerism, but embraced them precisely in order to save traditional metaphysics.

Modal individuation constitutes a loss of identity because in it world, God, and individual become indiscernible in immediate mutual expression, but the demand for the general differentiation of existence and being, or manner and matter, guarantees the stability of each. In a similar compositionist sense Dewey, following the saving gestures of James and Whitehead, would later draw a monadological parallel between art and diplomacy to the extent that they both aim for nondecomposable effects while safeguarding the singularity of each of the positions involved.

> In a work of art, different acts, episodes, occurrences melt and fuse into unity, and yet do not disappear and lose their own character as they do so—just as in a genial conversation there is a continuous exchange and blending, and yet each speaker not only retains his own character but manifests it more clearly than is his wont.[59]

## The Fluidity and Spontaneity of Manners

'Essentialism makes a classic of Descartes, while Leibniz's thought appears to be a profound mannerism. Classicism needs a solid and constant attribute for substance, but mannerism is fluid, and the spontaneity of manners replaces the essentiality of the attribute.'[60] The core of Deleuze's distinction lies in their respective understandings of what it means to define substance and their grammatical ramifications. In the understanding of the concept, a substance is defined by an adjective according to the propositional scheme of subject-

predicate. Descartes keeps to an essentialist grammar which holds that between the terms there must be a reciprocal or necessary inclusion. In the proposition 'I think', 'I' is inseparable from the attribute of thinking and inversely thinking is what essentially defines the substance of 'I' as *res cogitans*. However, since reciprocal inclusion only functions in nominal definitions, individual existence is subordinate to the possibility of its logical determination. The same was already the case in Aristotle, who subjected individual existence to the general categories that distribute and divide existence into essences or sets: man is the rational animal. Leibniz, by contrast, demands a real definition of individual entities. As we saw with Souriau, 'to think' is indeed a predicate that can be said of the really existing 'I', yet it is hardly sufficient to define its concept or necessitate its reality. Descartes is inconsistent with his principle of subjectivism, precisely when from the perception of an attribute he concludes the existence of a substance that must necessarily be present.[61] This also explains Gassendi's ironical riposte to Descartes's paralogism: 'I am taking a stroll therefore I am a stroll (*ambulo ergo sum*).' Far from proving individuality, the invertibility of the propositional scheme puts existence into question. In Aristotle the predicate is already a substitute substance and in Descartes the individual is at risk of becoming a mode of the attribute as it generally is.[62] Either way, individual reality, individuation, is lost.

As would be the case for Souriau, Leibniz's solution is to situate substance and attribute, subject and predicate on different ontological levels. Deleuze puts it succinctly: 'The predicate's not an attribute, it's an event, and the subject isn't a subject, it's an envelope.'[63] It is true that Leibniz sticks to the Aristotelian demand that only analytic definitions are true, such that the predicate must be included in the subject and not simply added to it from the outside. But whereas nominal definitions (A = A, 'a triangle has three angles') are based on the necessary implication between subject and predicate (principles of identity and non-contradiction), such that truth is easily demonstrated, real definitions are contingent and their analysis is infinite or 'virtual'.[64] That is to say, whereas the laws of mathematics and logic are necessary, metaphysical possibility does not involve contradiction. After all, the proposition 'Adam does not sin' is not necessarily false; other possible worlds are conceivable in which a different Adam refrains from eating the apple. Outside the individual existence of substances, the paradisiacal predicate of non-sinning subsists and insists as a possible mode of existence without contradiction. It therefore obeys a different logic or reason than that of attribution.

In order to prove that the mode of non-sinning is not enveloped by the really existing Adam, it must be shown to be incompossible with the other predicates

included in his subject—including his 'primary predicates' such as to sin, to have a wife created from one's rib, to live in a garden—as well as those included in all other subjects that populate his world. From the infinite chain of causes to the singular effect (and back), all of the world's becoming must be contained in the 'complete notion' of Adam, if only in the form of 'traces' and 'marks'. Ultimately, the reality of each individual substance is defined by the infinite but convergent series of predicates that makes up the whole universe (but that only God knows how to read and decipher): 'every individual substance expresses the whole universe in its own manner [*manière*] and . . . in its full concept is included all its experiences together with all the attendant circumstances and the whole series of exterior events.'[65]

What Descartes fails to prove is that the notion of 'cogito' forms an immanent expression of the real world, in other words, that the logical essence of a 'thinking I' also involves existence. This is a constant theme in Leibniz's correspondence with the Cartesian philosopher Antoine Arnauld, where the world is said to 'inhere'[66] in the subject. The world does not exist outside the individual substances in which it is expressed, but it is not their individual property. Rather, it remains fluid or non-localizable, which means that the reason for its inclusion, and hence for the existence of the very individuals that continuously enact it, cannot be found in the subjects themselves. One world exists rather than another (principle of sufficient reason) because God first chooses the best of all possible worlds, the one composed of a maximum compossibility, before he creates the beings that actualize it. Existence precedes essence.[67] Predicates such as 'to sin', 'to think', and 'to stroll' must therefore not be understood propositionally, like adjectives. As indeterminate and infinitive verbs, they are what Souriau calls morphemes: ontological 'movements', 'events', 'passages', or 'states' of the world in common— pre-individual relations and pre-predicative becomings, in other words, whose sense continues to change as they are combined and inflected according to their compossibilities and incompossibilities (their 'complications').[68]

But if the world as a whole constitutes the essence of each individual substance, then how exactly are we to conceive of individuality (principle of indiscernibility)? Since one individual does not differ from another in its logical attribute, infinite analysis does not suffice. The pluralism of modes means that what is common cannot unite individuals in essence but scatters them in existence.[69] This is another way of saying that existence is not a property. Whereas reality is a question of individual substance alone, existence is not included in the individual beings in which it is actualized and invested, but rather contained in multiple manners. The verb 'to exist' is itself multiple and

individuated in an infinite variety of ways. For this reason, Leibniz resorts to the notion of haecceity,[70] that is, the singular manner of being of a substance. A thing is individuated not by virtue of a principle or essence, but through the ultimacy and spontaneity of the modality in which it is immediately given and can be held up to display. *Ecce homo*: haecceity is not something different from essence, but its ultimate reality or sufficient reason. Or as Nietzsche would later reorder Descartes: *vivo, ergo cogito*. Moreover, haecceity is never itself individual but individuating. Contrary to Aristotle and Descartes, Leibniz therefore conceives of substance as both through the other and through itself. 'It is not enough that I sense myself (*je me sente*) to be a substance that thinks; I must distinctively conceive what distinguishes me from all other minds, and I have only a confused experience of this.'[71] A thing differs neither in essence nor in accident from any other, but in the modality in which it relates to other things and lays out its plane of existence. Like a spider moving across its web, a substance is an interwoven entirety made concrete in the image of the fibrous thread. Its form is constituted by the unique manner in which it processes the world as a process of the world, that is, by a certain confusion or deformation of the world that prioritizes existence over essence. Or in Leibniz's own imagery:

> since the ultimate reason of things is unique, and contains by itself the aggregate of all the requisites of all things, it is evident that the requisites of all things are the same. So also is their essence. . . . Therefore the essence of all things is the same, and things differ only modally, just as a town seen from a high point differs from the town seen from a plain.[72]

How to solve this paradox of manners that are said to be at the same fluid and spontaneous, and thereby reconcile the unity of the individual with the totality of the world? On the one hand, a real definition leads from the world to the subject and not vice versa. You cannot take in isolation what cannot be separated. All individuation is extrinsic and this accounts for contingency. God did not conceive of an Adam whose notion is 'vague and incomplete', and whose vagabond individuality is not yet 'fixed',[73] but neither did he create a sinning Adam exactly. The name 'Adam' does not function as a rigid designator of individuality, since Adam himself does not remain constant when different worlds are considered. An Adam who would not sin implies not just another individual, but first and foremost another possible world in the making.[74] Like the power that the possibility of drinking has over us even when we are not drunk, 'to sin' is a relational power of existence that belongs inextricably to both substantial unity and the world in such a way that the world in its entirety must

be understood as the being of the individual—the world taken under the aspect of the desire to sin to actualize itself in a dynamic relation to other modes of existence.[75] Yet even if the concept of the individual in the mind of God precedes the individual in creation, on the other hand, the world has no reality outside the individual substances that unify and actualize it. If, despite the fluidity of their manners, monads are spontaneous, that is because the inclusion of predicates is not reciprocal but unilateral. This means that the definition of individuality is itself indistinguishable from a combinatorial procedure. Instead of infinite analysis in reverse, the synthesis of modes is finite and auto-catalytic. Modality contains the immanent cause by which an individual co-produces both itself and its world. The monad is a subject that 'implicates' a virtual world of compossibilities and incompossibilities and 'explicates' a particular distribution of events *sua sponte*, that is, in and by its dynamic 'form'.[76]

It is in this open-ended and irreducible dynamism, this combinatorial art of manners, that potentiality and actuality, relation and entity crystallize. With one side facing the pure event and the other facing individual being, manner constitutes the limit-membrane uniting the finite region of being or point of view of the monad with the infinite world it co-actualizes. The mannerist world is a cluttered world of partial graspings and spontaneous patterns. Instead of adhering to part-whole relations, it is composed of proliferating vibrations. This is why, for Leibniz no less than for Souriau, aseity and abaleity interact. Manners (*habitudines* or 'virtualities'[77] such as innate ideas) are *fluid*, because instead of general categories or individual mannerisms, both of which presuppose a solid and constant essence that remains the same in all possible worlds, they are infinite movements that are included in the subject only in the form of a contraction of surexistential dispositions. Yet they are *spontaneous*, because each combination or variation of manners is itself an irreducible mode of inhabiting the world. The combination of structure and genesis is what makes habit or manner a key concept in the ontology of individuation. Classical philosophy makes a strict distinction between subject and predicate or substance and property, whereas mannerism puts both terms in variation, such that predication becomes a matter of folding. 'The real definition of the individual is concentration, accumulation, coincidence of a certain number of converging preindividual singularities.'[78]

To concretize what this means, let us return to our three examples:

1)  If a mannerist grammar knows no attributes, only verbs, individuation moves from the verb to the adverb. When I stroll, it doesn't follow that I am a stroll. Rather, I come into being by my particular way of strolling.

A predicate must be understood in terms of the middle voice as analyzed by Spinoza and Émile Benveniste. As with the archaic Spanish and Portuguese reflexive active verb *pasearse* (to take oneself for a stroll) discussed in Spinoza's Hebrew Grammar, the subject is both the agent and the place of action, but not the action itself.[79] I am the sedimentation of the act of walking, not in an emanative but in the immanent way of a self-positing. This is why Leibniz conceives of substance as a principle of action—a substancing—that is both transitive and intransitive. Both agent and patient, both subject and object, the monad is the transfinite subject of an infinite movement of self-constitution and self-manifestation of being.

2) In the same way, I am a thinking being, even though thinking is not my property but a disposition (*virtus*) that belongs to the world. I never think in general but actualize the power of thought in my own way. To think means something very different in the case of Descartes than in the case of Leibniz. It is the modality of thought, the specific way it is colored by other modes and sequentially cut out (*découpe*, as Bergson would say) from an infinite and continuous thought-flow that defines the individual existence. *Varia a me cogitantur* ('I have diverse thoughts'):[80] In its mannerist conception, the *cogito* is not identified with the self-experience of the individual thinker but understood as the index of a ductile unity interior to a 'spiritual automaton', 'following', or 'travelling', sometimes actively or consciously and mostly passively or unconsciously, a 'continual linkage' from one thought to the next, the specific sequence of which constitutes an individual posture in thought.[81]

3) Finally, the same goes for the spontaneous combination of primary predicates that distinguishes the habitus of Adam from the other subjects that populate his habitat. The extension of his concept remains one (Adam's individuality is defined tautologically by its self-inclusivity or one-ness (*monas*)) and its analytical comprehension remains infinite (it envelops the movement of the world at large), yet its intension (Adam's mode of existence) is not an essence that contains a specific quantum of generality, but a synaptic or syneidetic sequence of impersonal manners or gestures that together express his existential 'point of view',[82] his region or borough in the city of God.

Even if Leibniz separates the world of events (the possible) and the existence of individuals (the real) on different levels, then, what holds them together is manner.

Precisely to the extent that it mediates and distorts Aristotelian dichotomies without entirely breaking with them, modality is the plastic 'entelechy' that operates midway between the inflection of a possible world in its aggregate state and its ultimate envelopment in real subjects, turning the one into the possession of the other. In fact, if the world is what passes through the individual, and what individuates the individual existence is the mode of the world it expresses, then the question arises: Why does Leibniz need substance at all? Why does individuation need to be restricted to a single world and why does the singularity of a manner need to be enclosed in the individual that actualizes it, if what limits the modes is only the virtual relations of (in)compossibility among themselves?

The classical answer would be that as long as the reciprocity between being and unity pertains and can be reconstructed, the world's borders, and thereby God's selection, are guaranteed. Thus Leibniz simultaneously needs the possible to safeguard individual freedom and never ceases to contain it in essentializing the real. But the mannerist answer would be that individuality prevents the universal Spirit or world soul from swallowing up individual hypostases, as was the case in Neoplatonism. Each monad is the result of God's choice and therefore 'mirrors' the world in its infinite flux, but at the cost of a torsion through which it comes to occupy its own finite, anamorphic variation. The fold is the implication of the finite in the infinite through which the infinite puts itself into vibration. It allows the world to begin over and over again with each individual and thus for manners not to exhaust themselves.

In its monadological conception, the world is unique and everywhere the same (the principle of uniformity), but at the same time the modalities or combinations in which it appears are infinitely varied (the principle of indiscernibility). Moreover, every variation itself refers only to other variations and varies from other variations. This mannerist osmosis leads to an extreme tension between classical and modern philosophy. As Leibniz formulates it in the *New Essays on Human Understanding*:

> The kinds [*manières*] and degrees of perfection vary up to infinity, but . . . the foundations [*le fond*] are everywhere the same; this is a fundamental maxim for me, which governs my whole philosophy. But if this philosophy is the simplest in resources it is also the richest in kinds [*la plus riche dans les manières*], because nature can vary these infinitely . . . with the greatest imaginable abundance, order and adornment.[83]

Although obscured by the translation, the aesthetic analogy should not be ignored. With mannerism, things directly participate in the ground and, in a

differentiated sense, they are the ground: 'a pluralism of free, wild, or untamed differences.'[84] Whether Leibniz talks about obscurity in painting, dissonance in music, or evil acts in morality, the principle is always the same: the bigger the contrast between the parts, the greater our appreciation of the whole. And while Leibniz relies on quantitative comparison in the distinction of parts, taking each as an 'amount of essence',[85] in a less classical sense the parts are in no way less than the whole, since richness is measured by manners and not by degrees.

In classicism, a degree of perfection is conceived as a combination of perfection and limitation. But in mannerism, it is defined intensively rather than extensionally. A degree is itself a manner of perfection: an art of existence, not an imperfection. When you sign a car rental contract, you are promised 'the same or a similar one' as the model advertised, with similarity being subject to varying degrees of perfection. But according to Leibniz's principle of indiscernibles (things that have all their predicates in common cannot be distinguished among each other), manners are not lesser identities but exemplars, complete distinctions in themselves. While it is true that all cars are similar to the one advertised, it is also true that no car is similar to any other. Every car must be defined incomparatively, through the unique manner in which it is a car. Just as the circle loses its ideal character and becomes the limit in a whole series of deformations from ellipse to parabola and hyperbole, 'the best' or 'most perfect' implies a relativization and perversion of the Platonic good. As elective participation (*metachein*, to possess after), it means at best to be ranked second. Yet rather than coming second to a first, more true renaissance, mannerism is the measureless superlative or overabundance of the renaissance itself. Its more-than-one-ness is precisely what constitutes its peculiar irreducibility. Its power of variation dissolves the classical perfection of essence into a hyperbolism of degrees that resists paraphrase and requires multiple shifting perspectives.

The best is the mannerism of the good, that is, its forever ongoing individuation: the more variation, the greater the number of possibilities combined, the better. In a world without equilibrium, everything is an exaggeration, *copia*. As envelope of the world, the subject is a *superiectio* (which derives from *hyperbole*, overshooting[86]), namely what goes beyond the given and the apparently foundational in becoming subject to its transindividual consequences. While the world is inseparable from monadic substances, the latter seems to be separable from the ground, like angels in their perpetual flight, propelled by the manners they contain. A monad is, after all, not just the active unity implied by its modes but also an inexhaustible source of change, that is, an excess more than a reserve.

If modal individuation constitutes a break with classical mereology insofar as we now have multiple individuals offering as many irreducible versions of the world, then how can Leibniz guarantee that the identity of individuals is never put at stake by their surexistential ways of existence, and that the totality of the world as created by God remains within the limits of converging manners? Could the monads, in their fluidity and spontaneity, not possess a power of repetition that exceeds their individuality, the world they inhabit, and the God they bow down to? If the multiple manners no longer concern individuating being but the becoming of individuation, then doesn't it follow that they put us in touch not only with this world but also with other possible worlds?[87] Does not each manner, each variation, each degree of perfection, each spontaneity generate its own surplus event over that which it repeats, at the risk of accident assimilating essence? Does the mannerist logic of versions not imply a liquefied Leibnizianism, pushing it over its limit and toward its reversal: a 'nomadology' in which monads reach the state of transmonadic excess and become complicated in the eternal return of common and immanent becomings, where essence can only be said of difference itself?

# Speculative Pragmatism

## How Matter Comes to Matter

Toward the end of the *Monadology*, Leibniz writes: 'In this system bodies act as if there were no souls (to assume an impossibility), and souls act as if there were no bodies, and both act as if each influenced the other.'[1] The soul and the body belonging to the individual each acts according to its own laws—final causes (the principles of grace) and efficient causes (the laws of nature) respectively—while agreeing perfectly with the actions of the other. Yet the 'as if' is precisely what distinguishes pre-established harmony from Malebranche's occasionalism and Spinoza's parallelism. Whereas the latter doctrines merely replace the problem of the union of body and soul, Leibniz puts it at the center of his metaphysics of substance and makes it all the more urgent: there are bodily mechanisms and there are spiritual automata, but if they cannot act on one another directly, what makes them run and how are they attuned? How to conjoin liberty with inner, complete, and pre-established determination? There is activity everywhere, but how is it distributed if its centers of gravity are not localized in the souls of individual actors alone? If the baroque is like a total theater staging machines and marionettes, each of which incarnates the play according to its specific technical capacity and aesthetic expressivity, then what guides the hand of the puppeteer who makes puppets do what they do?[2] For Leibniz, the harmony of the 'as if' is a matter of faith. But the general indirection of forces also demands a systematic program for the communication of points of view. Grace, after all, is a schizophrenic machine producing inclusive disjunctions: an infinite movement that feeds on distance and must be passed on through a concatenation of gestures and postures allotted in such a way that it no longer matters who is the subject and what is the object.

By revoking the Cartesian dualism of two equal substances into a hierarchy of uncountable individual substances, Leibniz transforms the relation of soul and

body into relations between monads and composites of monads respectively. Their difference is not between two kinds of substances, but between two ways of distributing the world. Souls are taken distributively and constitute eternal individual unities (each, every). Bodies are taken collectively and are composed as continuously varying multiplicities (one, some). Leibniz derives his concept of substantial form from Aquinas, who argued that only form has the power to individuate, not matter. But he also generalizes Aquinas's notion of the mode of existence of angels, that of forms without matter, all the way to the souls of the lowest beings (*infima species*). Following Descartes, moreover, he makes experience—feeling as constant activity concerning all modes of subjectivity—the principle of substantiality. For this reason it seems that extension exists only as a sequence of representations of the mind. 'There is nothing in the world except simple substances and, in them, perception and appetite'[3] by which we move from one perception to the next. Or again, since 'that what is not truly *one* being is not truly one *being* either',[4] it follows that the body is not real. Rather, it belongs to the domain of the possible: 'there is an infinity of possible modes [*façons*] that all matter could have received, instead of the sequence of variations it actually received.'[5] If the subject becomes a superject decentered by its point of view, the object becomes a series of aspects, an ensemble of images. Each distinct body is an aggregation of aggregations ad infinitum, like a wave in an ocean of matter conceived abstractly or incompletely. As a mode, it is an 'accidental unity'[6] among several monads, each of which possesses an essence that is not a mode. In Whitehead's terms, a body is a society of monads that has a duration but not necessarily actuality.[7] Instead of the romantic conception of society as an organism, the baroque conceived of the body itself as a society.[8] Leibniz compares it to Theseus's ship, a structural object which has some ontological stability over time despite undergoing constant alteration, repair, and renovation.[9] Like a dynamic system that is permanently far from equilibrium, the body has no essence but only a manner of composition: 'what constitutes the essence of a being by aggregation is only a mode of being [*manière d'être*] of the things of which it is composed.'[10]

Notwithstanding the inessentiality of bodies, Leibniz rarely subscribes to the idealist or phenomenalist conviction that the extended world exists only in monadic perception. And when he does, this happens from a strictly theoretical point of view, where demand for universal harmony among monadic essences is concerned. In practice, he argues, no soul except God's can exist without a body that connects it with the rest of the world. The body is precisely the 'point of

view'[11] of the soul, the soul expresses its own body more clearly than the rest of the world because it expresses the world through its body:

> Each distinct simple substance or monad, which makes up the center of a composite substance (an animal, for example) and is the principle of its unity, is surrounded by a *mass* composed of an infinity of other monads, which constitute the *body belonging to* this central monad, through whose affections the monad represents the things outside it.[12]

Hence in order for a phenomenon to be 'well founded', it must not only be in harmony with the perceptions of other monads, there must also correspond to each of the soul's clear and distinct perceptions a composite organ, such that a perfect 'resemblance' between internal perception and external bodies is guaranteed.[13] The 'clear zone of expression' of each monad remains insurmountably bound to an order of existence outside of itself but in which perceptual subjectivity is objectively realized. Perceptive power merges with the expressive power of bodies. One of the central questions of all of Leibniz's metaphysical texts therefore concerns this Gordian knot by which each monad perceives the world 'with a perfect *spontaneity* as regards itself, and yet with a perfect *conformity* to things outside it'.[14]

The knot is further complicated by the claims that God chose a certain world expressed by the individual souls that populate it and that each monad nonetheless freely draws its perceptions from the folds of its own infinite, obscure background. For it implies that, if a soul is free to hallucinate about other possible worlds, it must have access to other perceptions—than those chosen by God—that also strive to exist. On the level of the actualization of the world, the level of divine justice or grace, Leibniz is compelled to exclude the reality of the possible, since what is at stake is precisely God's choice to bring this world into existence as it is expressed by individual souls. It is only on the level of realization in nature, where harmony depends on organic perspective, that Leibniz allows, either within the organic body or at least open to it, more reality than the soul can express by itself. Here the potential composition of the infinitely divisible mass of monads is not restricted by God's choice for the actual world and encompasses all subsisting possible worlds. Aggregates such as clouds, rainbows, herds, crowds, and armies are hallucinations, yet they do not exist any less because of that, even if they may be said to have a lesser degree of unity. Since the process of realization does not bear on essence but on modality, a material composition always expresses the potential of a monstrous multiplicity and enfolds other possible worlds within the present world.

It is because the actual does not constitute the real, which must itself be realized in intermonadic relations which, quite unlike monadic essences, encompass all possible worlds, that Leibniz reverts to the artificial detour of pre-established harmony in the composition of the world. There is a universal harmony between monads, the 'mutual connection or accommodation of all created things to each other and of each to the rest [which] causes each simple substance to have relations which express all the others and consequently to be a perpetual living mirror of the universe'.[15] But this level of resonance prevails only among souls and does not suffice to guarantee that the order of souls and the order of bodies share the same universe. On the contrary, it is because harmony is already in place that monads cannot act on one another, and by implication on their bodies. Instead of the privacy of the soul, which is *intime praesens*, the body is always public, composed of *partes extra partes*. Since our body involves other individual monads, the question is rather how the soul can be immediately present in the body, instead of the other way around. It is a question that concerns the nature and unity of composite or corporeal substances considered in themselves. Pre-established harmony demands that each material composite conforms to some principle of indirect mediation of the many by the one. It takes us from the internal connection of perceptions within the soul to external relations of belonging or dominance between substances, or, as we already saw in Leibniz's mannerist reinvention of subject-predicate logic, from being to having as 'universal fact'.[16] The core problem of metaphysics no less than of theology, from Leibniz to Tarde and Whitehead, is how it is possible to say 'my body', or more generally, how things can be present in one another without losing their unity of composition.[17] If God let only the best of all possible worlds come into existence, not only must there be a public composite belonging to each private soul but also a private soul to each public composite. We are in fact dealing with two modes of belonging: the body as collective means and the soul as individual end. So what founds the appurtenance of a single organism to each monad, despite the real distinction between actualization and realization? How can global harmony materialize in local union? When does having a body become being a body?

According to Leibniz, the external world is made up of what the Scholastics called 'secondary matter (*materia secunda*)' or what Leibniz takes to be an infinitely divisible *masse brute*. It consists of an unformed flux of monads chaotically traversing all kinds of interactions and aggregations, its indistinct collectivities corresponding to the variability of the unconscious flux of perception within each monad.[18] If the individual soul is nonetheless capable

of extracting distinct perceptions from this insensible flux of perceptions, in the case of humans even self-conscious apperceptions, this is because it is the owner of a 'primary matter [*prima materia*]', a kind of 'passive power' (elasticity or 'antitipy' (impenetrability)) capable of uniting disparate individuals into the organism corresponding to its point of view. For Leibniz the soul is the 'active power' or 'form' that dominates the composite substance, whereas the subordinate monads that participate in it are merely the 'requisites without which a thing cannot exist',[19] that is, its subordinate 'material'. However, it is important to remember that in Leibniz, since monads are emphatically incapable of influencing each other or exerting a force on one another, saying that one monad dominates others does not mean that the perceptions of the latter change under the influence of the former. This would only imply a phenomenal change and moreover conflict with the autarchy of the monad in itself. Rather it means that the dominant monad determines a collective situation or concerted action in which the clear zones of expression of separate monads come to stand in such a relation to each other, that their common 'reason' is expressed most clearly by the dominant monad. The difference between an organic aggregate and an anorganic aggregate is therefore that the former is made *unum per se* by a dominant soul that acts as 'foundation [*fundamentum*]' of the body, whereas the latter remains *unum per accidens* and therefore cannot be regarded a substance.[20] In fact, since secondary matter knows no intrinsic unity, it is not something real in itself. Matter is present only through the organic body that constitutes the perceptual apparatus of a dominant monad in which the well-founded phenomenon is concretized and otherwise remains fully abstract. At the same time, souls no longer appear as centers of material activity but more like eddies of affectivity. For what is the transindividual composed of if not acephalous animalities, that is, a-mereological multiplicities?

If the harmony between individuals is reproduced at the level of the body, then, this can only be on condition of the strictest possible hierarchy of substances. For Leibniz, reasonable monads can never be dominated since they are exempted from the mechanical laws of the lower level and coincide with the moral laws. But all other souls, especially animal souls, are only dominant to a certain degree. This is because rather than substance being a placeholder for forces in which they inhere, for Leibniz the relational concept of force constitutes substance.[21] A reasonable monad relates to its body only as the 'primitive force [*vis primitive agendi*]' that corresponds to its primary matter. Animal monads, by contrast, are primitive forces only insofar as they are considered individually. Once they are taken en masse (something which

according to Leibniz cannot happen with reasonable souls), they form clusters that imply a loss of individuality among their components. Secondary matter is therefore traversed by 'derivative forces [*vires derivativae*]' that modify primitive forces and constitute the relative unity and activity of different kinds of non-individual multiplicities.[22] Plugged into an infinity of material parts that do not form any part of its primary matter, each body is a power of metamorphosis. Both active and passive, it is a composite of primary and secondary forces, and as such remains open to an impersonal power of life beyond the solitude of the soul. As long as a distinction can be drawn between primitive forces and derivative forces, all forces can be said to reciprocally determine each other, but without the accumulation of derivative forces of the bodies belonging to each of the subordinate substances (the means) ever acting in a way that would be counternatural to primitive force (the end). What Leibniz aims at with his theory of pre-established harmony is the stabilization and moralization of forces, just like he also aims at the neutralization of possession.

But how can I draw the line between my own body and that of others, when my body is a hybrid non-identity composed of infinities of autonomous individual monads, including animal, vegetal, and mineral ones, which in turn animate their own bodies different from my organic body of which they are only the '*pro tempore* requisites'?[23] In *The Fold*, Deleuze makes a distinction between 'non-symmetric and inverted appurtenances' of organization (my monad dominates a body, but each of the monads composing my body possesses its own composite of other monads) and 'constant or temporary appurtenances' in flux (my body is of primary or limitation-matter, but it is composed of secondary or flux-matter).[24] Given the infinite divisibility of matter, however, such a distinction is never fully determinable.

In the oscillation between the ontological order of souls and the phenomenal order of composition, sometimes the multiple become one and sometimes the individuals become many. In fact, every individual is primary or secondary somewhere along the line of the development of co-catalytic, virtual conditions it expresses. Between the modes of existence and the corresponding material passages, we find a dynamic zone of indiscernibility as to what belongs to me and what doesn't. Hence the images of dizziness, stupefaction, and vertigo (*l'étourdissement*) frequently employed by Leibniz—or sleep in Spinoza, when he states that we do not yet know what a body can do—to describe what occurs in perception when derivative forces no longer act in subordination to primary forces. The well foundedness of the phenomenon is constantly put under pressure: What is merely a psychotic dream or fantasy and what is 'real'? Should

I see a psychologist or a physiologist? Am I in control of my body or are my belongings dispersed over conflicting property relations? Am I immediately present in my car and in control of its extended relations of production and exploitation, or am I estranged by modes of production and consumption far beyond my control? Am I a cyborg or a pig?

It is in the immediately practical manner of these questions that abstract matter becomes concrete. While there is a whole casuistry to distinguishing property relations, it is imperative that real union can be proven, as the consequences of their confusion are dreadful: schizophrenia, slavery, self-immolation, war, cannibalism, incest, necrophilia. Insofar as dominated monads conserve their individuality in respect to their own body, the dominant monad that appropriates them inversely relates to the bodies that belong to the monads it dominates. The natural order that is in no way individual is inseparable from the moral requirement to possess a body. If to each clear and distinct perception there corresponds some organic movement, this implies that phenomena must somehow be 'realized' or 'reified' in the tentacular relations of a material kinship that is irreducible to the genesis of the perceptions of the soul. The soul is the foundation of the body, but the body is the (abysmal) ground of the soul. Here, in the eternal recurrence of the problem to restore unity in dispersion, the provisional and dialectical—indeed, secondary or derivative—character of Leibniz's system—his 'new' materialism—reveals itself most fully. The ship of Theseus is a ship without a helmsman. Or as he himself puts it: 'After I established these things, I thought I was entering the port; but when I began to meditate about the union of soul and body, I felt as if I were thrown again into the open sea.'[25]

## Collective Effervescence

This signature restlessness contains the essence of Leibniz's mannerism. Every time we are confronted with moments of undecidability, the integrity of our bodies and souls is at stake. At the same time, there opens up the possibility for transindividual experiences and surexistential transformations. After all, only what remains indeterminate in us enables us to communicate with otherness. Instability puts us in mutual implication in becoming. It is precisely in the indifference between one's own body and that of another that another type of relation beyond monads comes into view, one not based on domination but on a minor use—a non-instrumental use of the body as a means without end,

in which the potentiality of the body is not exhausted in the actuality of the soul and other consistencies become possible. Both Deleuze and Agamben give the example of masochism, the neutralization of the juridical order through parodical exaggerations.[26] Of course, it matters still whether one is a master or a slave, but what changes is that masters and slaves now become integral parts of something that exceeds them and potentially modifies their composition according to a new, inappropriable capacity to affect and be affected.

This becomes clear in the extreme case of the liturgy of the Eucharist, which concerns a substantial transformation that is both modal and real. If there is neither metempsychosis from one body to another nor phenomenal change of the body in the internal perception of souls, then what guarantees that the soul of Christ is really present in the wafer or the wine? In his correspondence with the Jesuit theologian Bartholomew Des Bosses, which lasted from 1706 until his death and encompassed over 130 letters, Leibniz proposes one of his most controversial concepts: the *vinculum substantiale monadum*, that is, the chain, bond, or relation of monads which is in itself 'like a substance' or rather 'substantifying'. Of course, the kind of immediate incorporeal change that occurs in transubstantiation is impossible in nature and therefore due to an unnatural act. God 'superadds'[27] a bond, which means that it remains exterior to the aggregate of which it guarantees the metaphysical unity, just like God remains exterior to the phenomenal series of the world. Rather than its virtual relations to the world as a whole being inherent to a monad, Leibniz writes that this external bond is only 'adherent',[28] that is, external to its terms. It is a kind of viscous elastic by which the requisites of the bread are disconnected from the dominant soul of the bread or wine and reattached to the soul of Christ. The bread or wine still look the same phenomenally and their former requisite monads still find the source of their perceptions in themselves. But they now form part of a new mutual belonging of which the common cause is expressed most clearly by the monad of Christ. The compositions of the bread or the wine have been contaminated with a new essence: the Word becomes flesh.[29]

Doesn't this introduction of the substantial bond violate Leibniz's most important principle, which says that there are only monads, the only genuine entities, and the aggregate 'phenomena, abstractions, or relations'[30] which owe their existence to the mind only? Yet how could the world stay phenomenal in such an important matter? 'I believe that unless there are corporeal substances, bodies are transformed into phenomena.'[31] What does Leibniz believe? And is it really a question of belief or rather one of efficacious being or operativity?

To make things worse, on February 15, 1712, Leibniz suddenly tells Des Bosses that he sees the presence of Christ in the bread and wine as only a subspecies of the more general metaphysical problem of the union of mind and body, and changes the focus of his letters accordingly.

> If that substantial bond of monads were absent, then all bodies with all their qualities would be only well-founded phenomena, like a rainbow or an image in a mirror—in a word, continuous dreams that agree perfectly with one another; and in this alone would consist the reality of those phenomena. . . . Therefore, if a body is a substance, it is the realization of phenomena going beyond their agreement.[32]

From aggregation to congregation: if there is a selection of possible worlds at the level of souls, there must also be a selection of possibles at the level of bodies. No incarnation is possible without 'real bonds', which means that the reality or force of a bonding is determined gradually as a function of the distance from the dominated monad to the monads that it is dominating. Since substantiation is not coordinated from the outside by the monad that dominates an organic assemblage, however, inorganic assemblages are also possible. As in Bruno's magic or in law, bonds are not things but agencies that (dis)tort the terms they relate, insofar as these already include other thing-like relations. The operative function of bonds is to 'thicken' or 'stiffen' an organic whole within the flux of inorganic matter. Phenomena or extension must be 'substantiated [*substantiatum*]', instead of transubstantiated.[33] If incarnation implies that my body is not an emanation of substantial form but real—constructed in the sense of being made to believe in, not made up—this also obliges us to conceive of a derivative sociality or 'new substantiality' beyond monads.[34]

But if the vinculum is 'substance-like', then shouldn't we also conceive of substances as bond-like? The reality of a corporeal substance, the irreducible thisness of the phenomenal, is constituted by an exterior relation that accounts for the local cohesion of disparate substances:

> over and above these real relations [i.e., the global relations of duration, position, interaction internal to the intellect of God], a more perfect relation can be conceived through which a single new substance arises from many substances. And this will not be a simple result, that is, it will not consist in true or real relations alone; but, moreover, it will add some new substantiality, or substantial bond.[35]

Again, this means that we must understand substance modally: I am thus, but so is my body. Composite substantiality is not a noun but a gerund, a substantializing

that does not persist outside a certain mode: 'Whatever exists besides monads and the modifications of monads is a consequence of making phenomena real.'[36] This is, moreover, what things look like when the medial structure of demand replaces substance as central concept of ontology. A mode is neither a modification of substance nor a reality in itself but a resultant that modifies the forces from whence it comes through its demand for a new composite to be realized. Whether at the level of the individual or the transindividual, to be is not to possess an essence but a pre-individual summoning of the requisites necessary for its own individuation. There is no matter but only a mattering in a certain manner, unified by a bond that 'demands [*exigit*]' but does not necessarily 'imply [*involvit*]', or essentially depend on, existence.[37]

We should emphasize the absolute yet medial nature of this process of making phenomena real.[38] Being is a demand of modes just as modes are the demand of being. But this also means that we move from the problem of having a body to that of having a soul. How to substantialize the virtual? In demanding or desiring existence, the body that desires modifies itself, and thus constitutes its own being disposed in a certain way. Just like I am not the stroll itself but become constituted as a finite subject of a specific kind by going for a stroll, a finite individual body does not realize itself but is realized or rendered effective through a self-differing aptitude to inform matter in a certain way. Composition does not relate directly to individual bodies, but concerns their incorporeal modes of becoming, and the creative instaurative force that wants to appropriate these bodies.

> Contrary to the idea of a corporeal (and, in the last instance, spiritual), natural, fixed and unchangeable substance, to which we can attribute gestural or postural accidents (Vitruvian Man, Christ on the Cross)—or in other words contrary to a resolutely substantialist form of thought, *gestus* obliges us to think a 'body (*corps*)' that could not exist without its manners of being [used -svt], which could not consist except through its gestural and postural events: a *corpus*.[39]

Manner always precedes matter. There is no generic human body modeled on the unity of the soul, but only individual bodies constituted through various more or less human habits.

The more classical equivalent term for this plastic power of the body is of course 'habit' (*hexis*, *habitus*), which comes from the verb 'to have' or 'to bind' and describes how we have a hold (*manere*) on our existence in the form of modal dispositions or powers of behavior (virtues such as being knowledgeable, being an architect, being a flute player).[40] Modes transform being into having,

as if the former first of all signifies to have a certain way of being, to be disposed in a certain way. Nevertheless, what appears as innate disposition from the monadological point of view is acquired from the composite point of view. It is through contracting collective habits, the networks of our multiple attachments in which it is impossible to say who is the master, that our bodies get into shape and we are carried into being. Through experience and the passage of time, habit stabilizes the body like a second skin, and thereby turns it into the possession of the soul that contemplates it. Habit is 'second nature', as Aristotle says, and thus defies the boundaries between the natural and the counternatural. Manner and existence, soul and body, cause and effect remain distinct, but at the level of their operativity they are articulated at their threshold of indiscernibility.

But while the habitual bond adequately explains the metaphysical mystery of the conjunction of body and soul, this is no longer the case in the mystery of transubstantiation. Here we are dealing with, on the one hand, accidents without substance (the bodies of the bread and the wine) and, on the other hand, a substance without accident (the soul of Christ). As Agamben points out, their disjunction destitutes the socio-juridical ownership of bodies among the constituent souls.[41] The adequate word is no longer 'being' or 'having', but the simple disjunctive synthesis of 'and'. What replaces the normal mediation of dominance and slavery through ownership is a more direct contact articulating a new corporeal potential. The inoperativity of habit activates a use of bodies that is no longer private or public but common. From the hiatus between the subject and its possessions there emerges a mode of shared presence that is both active and passive, and that can only be articulated in the middle voice.

It is here that we must localize the magical efficacy of the Catholic priest, whose role is that of 'animate instrument' in the office he carries out. In using his own body to be used by others in an operation whose principal agent is Christ, the celebrant is both cause and effect. He conducts a work and attests that something meaningful is happening, but as someone whose 'state' must be resisted and transformed by further proofs of celebration in order to be effective. As singular possibility or real potentiality, the work is not the subject but a shared sensible immediacy that functions as a principle of conservation and that demands our fidelity.[42] In persevering in existence, it becomes the *suppositum* of a composite individuating itself, even when this is not a classical substantial form but an impersonal mode of affectability, anexact yet rigorous, that remains inextricably interwoven with all the things that relay it in their own way.[43] The repetition of change, the putting to work of the sacrament in a self-conditioning ritual that produces a change in perception, is the sole consistency or reason for

what exists only in the mode of collective effervescence and otherwise remains, neither ill founded nor well founded, but unfounded (contingent).[44] In grace, when passion becomes unblocked collective action, as Michel Guérin writes, our gestures become a 'physical version of belief'.[45]

This staying with the joy and trouble of a differential and distributed repetition is further elaborated in Leibniz's last letter to Des Bosses, when he passes, following Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, from the narcissistic register of optics to the more psychotic register of acoustics. While individual monads are conceived as anamorphic mirrors that immediately (at the speed of light) agree in their reflection of the world as a whole, composite bodies are crowds unified by an 'originary [*originaria*] echo'.[46] Since the binding of substances is acknowledged as a mode of creativity that does not result from a substance, both individual monads and the corporeal mixtures can be a 'source of modifications' (*fons modificationium*) in the sense of active potential, as long as each is allocated its own level or domain.[47] Mirrors offer a strictly private image of the public world, but echoes are irreducibly transindividual and travel at the much slower speed of sound. Instead of creating a new perception or representation, which presupposes a relation internal to the soul, an originary echo consists as the social reproduction or recursivity of the phenomenal, that is, its redoubling propagation in relation to other souls and their attendant circumstances over a lapse of time.[48] This is what we have called mannerist secondness: a kind of relational buffering that allows for attunement, constantly reconnecting what it separates. What appears to be a loss of individuality is really a gain in communion, an intimacy that acts as new mode of entailment beyond the degree zero of (sufficient) reason that is efficient causality (necessity). To be is to be part of a sensuous correspondence, to be grounded in a communism of modes, to undergo the ordeal of becoming-other without leaving oneself behind. An echo of a global harmony, a corporeal manner is its finite exemplification and material incarnation.

Leibniz reassures Des Bosses, to whom he also apologizes for writing 'in fits and starts',[49] the principles of freedom are Protestant, but 'the law of nature is the Catholic religion'.[50] What better way is there to say that Leibniz's philosophy not only proceeds through conjunctions but also includes disjunctions?[51] Following Deleuze, we could say that, contrary to the Neoplatonic world consisting of 'an infinite number of floors, with a stairway that descends and ascends', and despite the infinite hierarchy of modes, the Leibnizian world has two floors, 'the pleats of matter, and the folds of the soul',[52] and is compelled to constantly oscillate between them. What passes between them and genetically accounts for both are the manners, which modify under two aspects of expression: perceptions

and appetitions, on the one hand, and bodies, on the other hand. They are virtualities that do not exist outside of their actualization in individual action, just as they are possibles that do not exist outside of their realization in material reaction. Under both aspects, essence and existence, ideality and texture become indiscernible in the event as ensemble of operations. Dewey will later affirm that mind and matter are primarily verbs.[53] What differentiates them is their inflection. Reminiscent of Souriau's distinction between existence and being, the real or genetic distinction between souls and bodies is that between manner and matter, between the power of activating something (presence) and the power of being affected by something (realization): collective assemblages (*agençements collectifs*) and machinic bodies.

There is nothing idealist about the presence of a manner, since it does not refer to an ideal substance but to a non-specific ensemble, an open multiplicity. Like a conatus, manner is intransitive and generic, a force yet aimless and without object.[54] It becomes directed only in an encounter, when it gets modified. With Deleuze, we can relate Leibniz's mannerism to the Stoic theory of incorporeals. Like the speech act 'this is my body', an immaterial gesture through which language makes the material world crystallize according to a purely virtual sense, we must conceive of manner as immaterial transformation of a body, an occasion that never stops happening and never ceases to await being incarnated by all individuals (hence the technical meaning of the *credo*: 'I second . . .') that participate in it. With Souriau, we can also describe the Eucharist as an instaurative occurrence in which the monads of the bread or the wine, the call of the priest, and all other souls present begin to resonate in 'a response from one to the other, forming a couple'. What replaces the resemblance in the mirror is a decentering clamor of affirmations: 'a real passion' that is simultaneously a 'reason (in the sense that the reason is the relation)' or 'law of response' to an appeal 'that is higher and more real, and perhaps more spiritual and moral, while also being psychical and corporeal'.[55] It is an experience of conversion that does not need proof but that demands to be heard and amplified through so many asymmetric becomings that only in their ensemble can lead to the moment wherein the spiritual unity of existence conferred upon Christ becomes second (i.e., socially reflected and publicly incarnated) nature.[56] In secondness, the reality of the social is the sociality of the real.

What mannerism reveals is a structural analogy between bodies and language, in which a body language replaces the classic distribution of words and things.[57] When we say 'I love you', this is not a judgment either of myself or of you. I do not represent a private emotion but gesture into being a communal state of

affairs divided over *n* becomings. As a speech act, it may have the form of a bond, but it has no other content than the and production of this bond itself. Instead of acting directly on you over whom I claim ownership, I create an intermediate zone of belonging. Here too incarnation does not mean incorporation but a surexistential eventuality that each corresponding body is involved in according to its own requirements for participation: Is it sayable? Does the other accept this possible promise or obligation? Does it enable a belonging in becoming?

More generally, this is why, just as we shouldn't confuse the ontic and the existential, it is necessary to distinguish between totalities and surexistence.[58] Composites between soul and body, word and flesh, subject and object are of the latter type. A discourse is not a consistent embodiment or enactment, but an activation of a mode of bodying or com-positioning of which the coherence is constantly put to the test: Does it (still) hold or not? Does it effectively come to pass? Does it make sense? Tarde explains how the mimetic diffusing of an invention such as a word is always a question of mutual possession (i.e., of desire and belief—categories that, in turn, correspond to what Leibniz calls appetition and perception). At once substantive and originary, thing and relation, force and structure, an echo works in two directions at once, from the possessor to the possessed and from the possessed to the possessor (or from the original to the copy and vice versa).[59] The same goes for knowledge. In the double movement of manner and matter, there is no general standpoint, only situated modes of knowing, and the non-innocence of their effects. The speech act binds in the form of what Simondon calls a transduction: an internal structuration of the tensions of a system without any loss of information.[60] Neither top-down nor bottom-up, it is the activation of a potential relation that is immediately divided in its circular concretization, insofar as each body envelops and individuates the intensities of being differently.

## Philosophy in a Minor Key

In seeking an essentially logical foundation for Leibniz's metaphysics founded on *a priori* truths and the theory of substance that follows from it (1680–4), all the while declaring the rest of Leibniz's work as 'hopelessly confused', Bertrand Russell aimed to explain the 'fantastic fairytale' of the Monadology and why such a sound mathematician as Leibniz came up with such a bizarre system. He argued that Leibniz had a good philosophy which after Arnauld's criticisms he kept to himself and a bad philosophy which he published with a view to

fame, money, and the admiration of princes and (even more) of princesses. The correspondence with Des Bosses, too, could thus be interpreted as 'more the concession of a diplomatist than the creed of a philosopher'.[61] This judgment is repeated, if more elaborately, by Brandon Look, who concludes that 'the idea of the *vinculum* is such that Leibniz certainly should not have held it'.[62] But what if the vinculum is precisely the substantializer without which the monadology, indeed philosophy itself, would indeed have remained a fantastic fairytale?

For his analytical interpreters, to read Leibniz is to become an insider, whereas in a dialectical approach, it is to become an outsider. If contemporary philosophers are drawn to the late Leibniz, it is not just because here they find the most pointed and crystallized formulation of some of his primary principles and derivative maxims but also because these principles and maxims are immediately betrayed in, or perverted by, their consequences. Leibniz's mode of writing is centrifugal in the sense that it resists reductive syntheses. But it also has a centripetal force that is passed on in its supplementary reverberations. In this sense, both Deleuze and Agamben rely heavily on the commentary by Christiane Frémont, who argues that, far from being a marginal superaddition, the substantial bond forms a crucial element in the Leibnizian doctrine of the communication of substances. For whereas global harmony may offer moral certitude, it provides no metaphysical certitude regarding our perceptions. It accounts for the most general but also least obliging type of communication, the interexpression of monads, but cannot account for local harmony at the level of this or that composite body.[63] From this Frémont concludes that global harmony is nothing more than the 'horizon (or driving force)'[64] of all communication, whereas the problem of real union is its enabling constraint and the Eucharist the model of all the other possible forms of communication. Proceeding in a piecemeal manner, embodied in constantly shifting couplings and ever renewed consistencies (in music, 'to modify (*modificare*)' means to harmonize), real union is therefore richer, more varied, and hence more substantial than mere harmony. And in the end, it is only in this secondary way that everything comes back to substance—even relationships.

Perhaps the substantializing bond is not only a problem for the history of philosophy, but instead something that has to remain historically undecidable and suspends judgment: a singularity or speculative problem.[65] The real union of soul and body or the incarnation is a paradoxical element in Leibniz's philosophical system: it is both a faithful inspiration and an impious betrayal. It is true that the major texts written around or after 1710, such as the *Theodicy*, *Monadology* and *Principles of Nature and of Grace*, do not use the result of the

letters in their account of the body. But maybe this is because it would have implied rethinking the system in its entirety? In following the work, we must distinguish its modalities. Who does Leibniz address and why? Are we sure that we have acquired the right interpretative key to respond to his call?[66] Does the vinculum not establish a different manner of echo between theory and practice?

The least we can say is that there is no necessary reason to assume that Leibniz, even if he accepts the theory of monads as an adequate philosophical theory, also held this theory as his final metaphysics. In his preface to Frémont's edition of Leibniz's correspondence with Des Bosses, Michel Serres therefore hints at a 'second monadology', which differs from the first because it is no longer atomistic but relational.[67] Yet secondness is in no way at odds with firstness but a sign of increasing reflexivity and positive contamination.[68] This is because matter only comes to matter (i.e., to be felt as a becoming) in a certain manner, when we become aware that there is more to it than we are already familiar with. As Whitehead says, between the immediately given and relevant future, '"becoming" is the transformation of incoherence into coherence'[69] and proceeds through 'comparative relevance and of comparative vagueness'.[70] Since the body is real for Des Bosses, it offers Leibniz a new mode of looking back at his own doctrine of substances. In making explicit what it implies from the other's point of view, Leibniz establishes a synthesis where previously there was none and thereby does justice to reality more fully. *Vivificat*: How to connect Christ to the body in a living memory of the past, and thus see the material world differently? This is done not just by speaking of Christ but by demonstratively keeping his mission alive. Between matter and manner, the communication of content and the expressive gesture, there must be a continuous circuit of reciprocal potentialization. The work to-be-done for Leibniz is precisely to contribute to the realization of phenomena through discourse. It is a question of making see and feel. As Souriau says: 'the word can gain in grandeur by becoming flesh, since such work requires flesh',[71] but only as long as it is understood that transcendence is not first, but acquired: 'a sort of harmony, a sort of sufficient analogy'[72] without a preexisting model of perfection.

Secondness is the playful practice of perfection. It is to render more perfect, more harmonious, to ground diversity by increasing the ratio of (secondary) identity to diversity: 'similarity in variety, that is, diversity compensated by identity'.[73] Leibniz always compensates for difference but never reduces it. We shouldn't think that the Leibnizian corpus is no longer itself an oeuvre still to-be-done. What do we 'make of' Leibniz?[74] Frémont proposes a 'pluralist reading'[75] of Leibniz and of the problem of embodiment in particular. Accordingly, the

vinculum is not just a key element in any metaphysical account of how harmony is realized but also exemplary for the mannerist praxis of philosophy. The Leibnizian system is a theory of communication in matter-flows 'to which the union of natures in Christ is analogous'.[76] If God is the necessity of analysis, Christ is the possibility of synthesis: this, here, now, is in the mode of X.[77] Considered in this sense of a general Christology, Christ is less a model than the single and singularizing demand that peace is possible, always on its way to further concretization in the form of a materialization of harmony, that is, the instauration of real compossibility where there appeared to be only incompossibility.[78]

As the dynamic modernization of substantial forms as principles of effort and demand indicates, Leibniz is not a substantialist but a mannerist who sees an immediate relation between form and force. One should therefore not read modal metaphysics as theoretical philosophy. Rather, to rationalize is to put in relation: *theoria cum praxi*. Forces do not exist in the mode of unities for themselves but only in interaction with other forces that resist them, and in conjunction with which they become oriented and compose bodies. At the basis of mannerist spirituality lies *enargeia* or *evidentia*, understood as a subspecies of the broader *energeia*: the participatory experience generated by poets, writers, orators, and artists that awakens the passion of Christ.[79] Through Des Bosses Leibniz inherits the sixteenth-century debate about the role of images and art in religious experience. We should read their entire correspondence as the piecemeal convergence of the demands of Catholic mystery, Aristotelianism, sense experience, and metaphysics in a system, not of deductions and judgments, but of beliefs and effects. Since the proof of reality lies in manner, not matter, the operative reinvention of substantial form as mode of actualization constitutes precisely what Agamben calls 'a threshold of indifference between ontology and ethics'.[80] We should take Leibniz, the hubristic inventor of artful principles that exclude nothing, as the diplomatic philosopher par excellence. Leibniz is a speculative pragmatist avant la lettre, that is, someone who cares about the production of reality more than the reality of production, who always argues 'from the outcome',[81] who consistently activates what he cannot enact on his own, and for whom metaphysics itself is a form of politeness aimed at increasing the coherence of the world.

It is this pragmatism that distinguishes classical modernism from mannerism in philosophy. Whereas it is easy to discover in Descartes or Spinoza major key thinkers, who share an optimistic conception of the power of truth and rationality that is generally claimed by principled contemporary enlighteners from all over

the political and scientific spectrum, Leibniz's so-called optimism is in fact more nuanced, no doubt due to all the killing in the name of Truth that took place in his time. Perhaps it was the sophisticated pessimism typical of someone torn between the roles of renaissance mage and baroque court intellectual that led to the demand that philosophy should never be opposed to the past but always prove to be its worthy inheritor. While this demand clearly runs the risk of a much too clever lack of resistance, it is also, in the words of Stengers, a specific constraint that forbids the philosopher from judging over what doesn't meet the model's standard and that enables us to take responsibility for the different modes of existence and becoming we belong to. Doesn't what Souriau writes about the shipwrecked sailor who wonders 'am I?' describe the characteristic asceticism of Leibnizian thought? The task is 'to answer for the world, instead of the world answering for him'.[82] Leibniz does not merely mirror himself in all his contemporaries, he puts himself before them in the mode of an echo. This anti-narcissistic co-becoming is the constitutive relationship of philosophy with nonphilosophy.[83] A minor key rationality has no pre-established model, but only another possible world that is appropriate to it.

Leibniz's irenicism harks back to humanist theologians such as Erasmus and Melanchthon, but the artificiality and esotericism of the *Monadology* were equally inspired by the great discourses on social comportment of Castiglione and Gracián, or a seventeenth-century figure like Torquato Accetto, author of a book on conformity and hypocrisy titled *Della dissimulazione onesta* (1641). On the one hand, the brutal reality in Europe—of class struggle, religious wars, and Ottoman invasions—stood in grave contrast to the development of a trade bourgeoisie, the scientific revolution, new techniques of government, and an elitist culture of extraordinariness and excellence. On the other hand, the mannerist world itself emerged out of a desire to civilize the harsh contradictions of the time. Just as the Council of Trent set the terms for the liturgical discipline of priestly etiquette and protocols that effectuate the real presence of Christ in the sacrament, there appeared a whole civil culture of social presence, of being moved by, and moving with, others. The court became an artificial world organized around the idea that the impersonality of form—convention, mask, manner, and quotation—provides protection against the chaotic flux of the world and enables composition of different interests and potentials. Conflict itself acquired an aesthetic destiny, becoming a question of the art and technique.[84] If, in warfare, the available options are to attack or defend, at the institutions of the court and in daily life it is to associate or separate yourself. As in animal play, nobody and no position gets reduced to what they are 'by nature'. Here artificiality or willful

inscrutability is not a flaw but an expression of the ability to endure alterity, that is—a second nature, but not a naturalization.

Just as contemporary communication technologies arose out of the First and Second World Wars, moreover, the Thirty Years' War had impelled new ways of articulating the common. With Latin on the retreat as the pan-European language, Leibniz, like Athanasius Kircher before him, hoped to repotentialize our capacity for thought by constructing a new universal language of permutations, variations, and combinations. Rather than referring experience to a model serving as a normative benchmark, his many inventions of the *characteristica universalis*, combinatory algebra, the binary system and even music are inclusive languages that come flush with a feeling for singularity. That is, they do not deny what other languages say but enhance them with new implications (without supposing themselves already implied by these other languages). Instead of replacing vernacular languages with a pure, Adamitic metalanguage of unambiguous meaning, they remain imbricated in the vernacular's infinite and continuous variation, augmenting it by realizing the virtual structure of common sense in an exemplary manner.

For the same reason, Leibniz was interested in the operative languages of hermeticism and magic. Just as the courtly rules of decorum have a projective and conjectural function, signs and images work as transformative gestures, not consolidating ones. Like myths, they seek to ritualize into being what they are about. Aimed at practical rather than theoretical problems, their end is in their means. In turning the world into a belief experiment, they serve not to claim the truth and expose things to the natural light of human reason—the archetypal gesture of the Enlightenment—but to decenter them in the scintillating swerve of obscure intuitions that constitute their different modes of futurity. Between signifier and signified, after all, there are all sorts of corporeal exchanges and incorporeal transformations.

Instead of a simple, even protomythological opposition between noise and information, or between sensibility and thinking, the hermetic philosopher knows that there is a reversibility between the two. There is a layering of the clear and the obscure and of the confused and the distinct. Too much of the same becomes noise, whereas what is really new information falls on deaf ears if context and criteria of pertinence are lacking. On the one hand, to articulate is to give a body to the noise that precedes and surrounds meaning. It is to produce mutually implicative and reciprocal bonds between disparate energies in a language that communicates with what otherwise remains mute. On the other hand, noise is also the redundancy of good sense. Only by staying close

to the multiplicitous conditions of emergence of sense can we extend the scope of relatively clear knowledge without a totalizing claim. For Leibniz, every text is only a pretext and every communication an initiation: 'Those who know me only by my published works, do not know me.'[85] By moving in and out of the shadow, we protect what we communicate against the risk of overgeneralization. For the same reason, the very improbability and self-referentiality of formal languages are warrants against the seemingly natural claims of established, and therefore exclusive, ways of thinking. They disarm the situated as saturated by what has already been said and endow it with the possibility of new translations and inner variations.

For Leibniz, the *ars combinatoria* is not a necessary logic but a procedural code of civility at the interface of mind and technology. Where the vernacular hinders the imagination, his project is the construction of new forms of communication in the noise to which we are exposed and that allows for a cunning revirtualization or 'per-version' of world as it is. How to convince the Holy See to withdraw its damnation of Copernican astronomy? By proposing that there is no absolute space, such that it is equally possible that the earth circles around the sun and vice versa. If Bruno did not recant before the Inquisition, despite being given repeated chances to do so, the beauty of Leibniz's gentleness, the decentered presence of the philosopher, is perhaps more true to the hermetic tradition. Another combination is always possible. Whenever we find ourselves among double binds, our aim should not be to get to the truth as quickly as possible but to invent a new language—perhaps we could say, a queer language, although not necessarily in the German sense of *quer*—that maximizes friction in such a way that the various parties at war slow down and effective aggregation in affective learning processes becomes necessary.

As expressed by his elementary mannerism, folding, Leibniz always speaks in the name of a well-tempered 'truth of the relative',[86] or what Stengers calls a 'humor of truth (*humour de la verité*, a variation on *amour de la verité*)'.[87] There is certainly more humor in tact than in truth. Whereas the ironist never puts himself at stake, the humorist sets aside any prior distinctions between himself and the other. The aim of inside jokes, for example, is not to affiliate oneself with a single organization but to expose oneself to a common perception of the situation. As Bergson already put it, 'laughter appears to stand in need of an echo'.[88] In this sense of a constant mutual attuning such that no voice drowns out the other and thereby impoverishes the whole, Leibniz is a radical opportunist. Arguing 'from the outcome'[89] rather than from truth, he multiplies principles in

such a way that self-definitions, normative ideals, the sense of manifest destiny (aka modernity), or other delusions of grandeur no longer impede the slow process of composition by which we acquire a sense of what might be commonly possible.

Perhaps we should say that philosophy for Leibniz was essentially a form of what Stengers refers to as *cosmopolitesse*. From the earth to the brain, we inhabit a plastic continuum of interdependencies. On each of its levels, networks, or planes, consistency isn't just a matter of subjective attitude or objective structures. Rather, it is produced in and through gestures and acts, the performative coherence of which is aesthetic as much as it is technical. Contrary to a deduction of the world from first principles, but following the calculus of minima and maxima, this performance can only be succesful as a disciplined attempt 'to minimize requirements and maximize obligations'.[90] Or in Leibniz's more aesthetically inclined words, to perfect a system that is 'the simplest in hypotheses and the richest in appearances'.[91]

Finally, what Leibniz teaches us is that perfection does not know an economy, but only an ecology. For what is harmony if not correspondence in diversity with no transcending principle or ground? The minimization of requirements (e.g., making do with a few letters or numbers) is achieved through a radical decentering of the theoretical point of view with respect to the diverging interests of the world. It is an operation associated with the empiricist constraint of always beginning from the middle rather than from our habitual selves. The maximization of obligations (never losing sight of the possibility of peace) is achieved through the all-inclusive ambition of rationalism. Everything given in our habitats must have a reason, the principle of sufficient reason says, even if this means turning reason into an artificial protocol.[92] What is at stake is the rationalization of belief, that is, not its detraction but its justification.

The cosmos is not created ex nihilo but comes about by being articulated as a body of virtual reciprocity. If, for the ancient Greek, the polis was based on the civic mimicry of a cosmic order at the cost of an exclusion of nature which remained arcane and neutral, then public life in the Anthropocene depends on new artifices through which we can increase our response-ability. Nature or the earth itself should be regarded as mannered. Just as artfulness does not by itself make works vain, our ecological crisis is not simply a consequence of the total artificial mediation of nature through technology. In order to adequately represent his constituency and lure the other into a less adverse version of himself, the diplomat cannot do without seemingly empty rituals and affected

phrases. In reality, if something appears natural instead of mannered, the primacy of the possible is quickly forgotten. Maybe a diplomat is by definition without law and faith, or indeed without principles. Yet in the end all Leibniz's mannerist elusiveness and (self-)betrayal serve only one purpose: the systematic composition of inessential forces under the sign of eventual love.

# Disegno

## Disegno and Mimesis

If there is a relevance of mannerism for contemporary art, perhaps even a return of mannerism in contemporary design, we must stop looking back to mannerism in terms of the nineteenth-century dialectics between the degradation of the operative into automated modes of production and the subsequent longing for pre-industrial handicrafts.[1] At first, this enterprise may well seem paradoxical. Mannerism marks the achievement of the equality between the mechanical arts and the liberal arts in defiance of the trade guilds. It is the moment when the *hommes de l'art*—engineers, sculptors, potters—emancipate themselves from mere craftsmanship by providing their practice with a reflection on principles and method. Yet this emancipation comes at the price of a new division. In one and the same move, Vasari sanctioned the distinction between art and craft or between the major and minor arts in order to save the aristocracy of the three *arti del disegno*—painting, sculpture, and architecture—and constituted art as a field of intellectual knowledge, thus also providing the self-legitimation of art as a coherent and recognizable order of historical progression.[2] In the mannerist arts of design, everything seems to depend on the strict division of labor between genius and work, conception and execution.

Whereas Alberti warned artists against placing too much trust in their genius, advising them to confine themselves to the great model that is divinely created nature, Michelangelo relied on his *ingegno*, the power of his artistic mind to improve nature instead of merely imitating it. Nature for him was no more than an occasional cause calling forth the ideas virtually contained in the intellect. Famously, Michelangelo seems to argue that while the marble already encloses the idea of the work of art, it would be the task of the intellect to actively recognize the form of this content and of the obeying hand merely to free it from the surrounding mass. 'The best artist has no concept [*concetto*] which some

single marble does not potentially enclose within its mass, but only the hand which obeys the intellect [*intelletto*] can accomplish it.'[3] Of course, the ancient and medieval traditions also knew this distinction between two successive stages in artistic creation, conception and execution. But even in the renaissance, rules had been developed only for the second stage. With mannerism, by contrast, the new intellectual dignity of the liberal arts demanded reflection on the conception or design—meaning drawing but also trained judgment and mental synthesis—and on the coordination of the two stages. Following the Neoplatonic tradition, the eye judges and the hand executes, but each under its own conditions. As Federico Zuccaro put it in a well-known passage from *Idea of the Sculptors, Painters and Architects* (1607): 'For the thought [of the artist] has to be not only clear, but also free, and his spirit has to be released from and not limited by a mechanical dependence on such rules [of execution provided by the "mathematical sciences"].'[4]

According to classical humanist interpretations inspired by Burckhardt and ratified by Panofsky, what unites the eye of the artistic genius and the hand of the skilled craftsperson is the conjunction of idea and mimesis. For Vasari, each of the three arts of design still relied unequivocally on the mimesis of the visible perfection of nature. Subsequent theorists such as Vincenzo Danti, Gian Paolo Lomazzo, and Zuccaro, by contrast, sought the freedom of art in the imitation of the *concetto* or idea, which becomes the sufficient reason for the work of art. For example, Danti in his *Trattato delle perfette proporzioni* (1567) writes that 'an artist should not simply copy [*ritrarre*] visible nature but should imitate it [*imitare*] in its purposes; that is to say, he should imitate the perfected intentional form of nature'.[5] Whereas men such as Alberti and Leonardo were anxious to curb the latent artificiality of the idea by insisting on natural depiction, the conflict between realistic imitation and artificial improvement, objective matter and subjective manner now made its full appearance. With the doctrine of *disegno interno* or internal design (Zuccaro)—the drawing after an internal design guiding the hand that replaces the *disegno esterno* of external models that dominated renaissance formalism—the idea emerged as an aesthetically autonomous standard of perfection, eventually becoming a preexistent concept independent of nature and execution. Art no longer relies on knowledge of reality but competes with it through its self-conscious *sapere dell'artifice*. It begins to develop its own, strictly artistic knowledge that is to be taught in special academies, for example, the Florentine Academy of the *arti del disegno* which transformed art from studio craft into philosophical study, accompanied by critical literature on aesthetic problems. For the first time,

concepts of art, criticism, and art history are articulated as such and form a kind of closed circuit—a discourse—in which artists inspire critics and historians who write for well-trained practitioners. Mannerist painting, art historians tell us, is *gemalte Theorie* (painted theory).

In a paradoxical way, then, the mannerist apology for artistic freedom tends to go together with an unequaled emphasis on the academic training and rational systematization of creativity. Whereas in the Kantian aesthetic, the faculty to know nature would be strictly distinguished from the faculty to judge art, rendering the aesthetic Idea transcendent to all rational argument, mannerism sought to unite idea and conceptual rule in terms of an 'imitation taken to the limit'.[6] At the limit of imitation, we discover the aporetic tension between the subjective abhorrence of rules and the fascination with objective know-how, between irrational but creative genius and rational but pedantic craftsmanship. This tension may always have been at the core of Western art but is now made productive in a self-reflexive fashion. Panofsky therefore argues that in mannerism the idea ceases to be merely a model, as it was in renaissance classicism, and becomes properly 'plastic': from Vasari onward, we witness not only the birth of art theory and art history but first of all the beginning of reflection on the conditions of possibility of artistic creativity in general.[7] Henceforth, the history of art is able to define itself as the auto-mobility of a strictly artistic idea of perfection and its imitation by degrees, the *imitazione fantastica*.[8]

Now there are at least two problems, one historical and the other aesthetic, with this account of the mannerist idea. The first, obvious one is that Michelangelo's reference to the intellect should not be understood in anachronistic subjectivist terms but in a much more distributed fashion. On the one hand, artists cannot be abstracted from the 'spark of divinity' (*scintilla di dio*) or divine sign (*segno di dio*, Zuccaro's quasi-anagram of *disegno*) that inspires them. The new status of the plastic arts relies on an argument from design: 'Disegno is nothing other than divine speculation, which produces an excellent art; you cannot execute anything in sculpture or painting without the guide of this speculation and design.'[9] On the other hand, just as originality was not a value in itself and replication was an everyday practice in the artist's workshop (if he or she had one), the notion of *ingegno*, like that of perfection and *maniera*, was first of all used as a compliment that referred either to the divine contribution to the artist's hand and/or the artist's social status.[10]

The second problem is that the alleged rationalism of leading mannerist theorists—although a direct and necessary extension of their discipline—hardly

gives an adequate description of what actually goes on in mannerist art, or indeed in any creative practice. The question is even whether their focus on the imitation or representation of the idea is fundamentally misguided.

It is true that mannerist discourse aims for conceptual knowledge about art. It constitutes art as an intellectual object and thus provides a self-legitimation of art as a coherent and recognizable order of historical progression. Already in Cennino Cennini's *Libro dell'Arte*, drawing distinguishes itself from the grinding of pigments, the preparation of wood panels, or the making of pens and brushes in that it involves something more than mechanical practice, namely phantasy.[11] In Vasari this becomes the power of the mind to form purely mental pictures, which is the fundamental faculty of judgment that relates the arts to all rational activities. For this reason, historians tend to focus on the epistemological purport of *disegno* and, as a consequence, take it as a figurative form of rational thought, even a metaphysical system of representation within the horizon of imitation as the final aim of art no less than of other, more explicitly knowledge-oriented practices.[12]

Yet, as Kant already saw, this epistemological conjunction of idea and imitation hardly enables us to cross the gap between theory and practice. Art becomes philosophical, yet philosophy forgets art. Hence Georges Didi-Huberman's warning: 'Imitation in the Renaissance is a *credo*, but it is not for all that a unifying principle.'[13] But neither is the quasi-theological notion of the genius, in whom nature gives the rule to art without the artist himself being intellectually aware of it. For the point is not that the speculative idea of art lies outside of knowledge, but rather that knowledge of rules is only one technology of creativity, albeit an increasingly important one. In reality, there is always a circuit between knowing and acting. 'Ideas have to be treated like potentials already *engaged* in one mode of expression or another and inseparable from the mode of expression, such that I cannot say that I have an idea in general.'[14] Neither in artistic design nor elsewhere do we find the purely theoretical opposition between speculation and practice, conceptualization and execution, genius and work. Creativity is not achieved at a single stroke but involves a whole series of translations and transpositions from sketch to *pentimento* to painting or from *bozzetto* to sculpture or building. This means that, as Dewey puts it, 'wherever continuity is possible, the burden of proof rests upon those who assert opposition and dualism'.[15] We could add that, inversely, whenever such theoretical oppositions nonetheless persist, or even arise out of practical problems as so many necessary illusions, the task of philosophy is to demonstrate real continuity. It is the construction of the problem that counts, not only the guarantees required by the Platonic spirit of the age.

This challenge pertains especially to mannerism, where the blockage in the classical circuit of (implicit) theory and practice heralds a speculative regime of art. After all, only that which appears to lack essence or reason becomes the object of speculation. The problem of creativity only becomes abstract and gains in aesthetic expressivity if its practical embedding in some wider milieu is disrupted. We do not speculate at will, as if speculation were some non-binding intellectual pastime. Rather, speculation answers to an isolated and passionate cry that makes it both impossible and necessary to continue, a 'rage of disposition[s]' that leads to 'the contingency of form in relation to the intelligible character of the work'.[16] In fact, the clearest sign of some crisis of belief in the established schemata of the world is this treacherous tension between reason and passion. 'They despaired of speculative thought, and at the same time clung to it; they had no high hopes of reason but remained passionate reasoners.'[17] Situated between the renaissance and the Enlightenment, what is lacking in mannerism is a belief in the world. Instead of 'the age of criticism',[18] the mannerist crisis was the age of speculation proper.

The key here is that, as Bergson argues, speculation or metaphysical intuition is entirely active.[19] As we have seen, mannerism feeds on a procedural excess that frees the idea, in the form of a difference in mimesis, from the objective restrictions and standards of identity. What is at stake, Vasari tells us, is manner rather than natural imitation (*più di maniera che di imitazione naturale*). This 'more of manner' implies the modalization of what is imitated. Imitation is not based on knowledge but on an operation that shifts perfection from the things imitated to the process of imitation itself. Thus, if art comes to need a theoretical legitimation, perhaps even *sub specie divinitatis* as is the case in the gnoseology of Lomazzo (which is based on Neoplatonism and hermeticism) and Zuccaro (which is more Aristotelian), we should not mislead ourselves by saying that pre-Kantian aesthetics was somehow 'rationalist' whereas almost no twentieth-century philosopher would consider having an idea in art as an intellectual affair, let alone a problem of imitation. Instead of an epistemological interpretation, we should rather reintegrate metaphysical speculation with its 'application'. As Zuccaro stresses, the concept of internal design makes no sense when disconnected from practical work and sense experience. There is no *intellectus speculativus* without *intellectus practicus*, least of all in art.[20]

Thus while it is true that with mannerism, art also begins to think indirectly, that is, through concepts, these concepts did not arise out of epistemology or philosophy, but out of art. As a consequence, whereas art is rooted in a

speculative ability to visualize things that are not there and therefore must have a clear idea of what they are doing (whereas cognitive knowledge follows post facto), it does not follow that this idea must be detailed or distinct or complete. The artistic idea is not just an intellectual intuition but also an aesthetic intuition, even as it becomes the object of conceptual knowledge. It is closer to a confused passion or affective transition than to a distinct seeing. As a power, affect is the point where perception turns into action and vice versa. As a consequence, the idea is not distributed in whole-parts relationships (clear light as synthesis analyzable in distinct, but homogeneous parts), but among heterogeneous and indivisible intensities, that is, in a-mereological multiplicities. As Leibniz observed, artists' ideas are dynamic. They are usually clear but confused and thus easily perturbed by the distinct but obscure intuitions (the *petites perceptions*) that populate the ground of their practice: 'painters and other artists correctly know what is done properly and what is done poorly, though they are often unable to explain their judgments and reply to questioning by saying that the things that displease them lack an unknown something.'[21] Artists are visionaries or seers of ideas, provided that thought and action, eye and hand, *aisthesis* and *genesis* are only the extremes of a continuum of experience and expression.

Whether in art or philosophy, reason is a seeking–groping experimentation with its material ground. Ideas are pragmatic, just as their eventual speculative conceptualization always has a practical orientation. Despite some art historians' predilections for written sources over images, we should not limit ourselves to theoretical subjectivity independent of the objective execution of the work of art. What matters is not the intellectualism of the mannerists, but the forces that are relayed by it. Once applied to the history of art, we can effectively reverse Zuccaro's speculative etymology of design from the theological metamorphosis of the physical world into a material metamorphosis of the idea—another reversal of Platonism, since while the true has an essential form or norm (*eidos*), the false (*eidolon*) frees form from its subordination to the concept of truth. The real problem of mannerism, the intuition that led it into conceptual speculation, is not that it is devoid of genius or the artistic idea, but rather that the idea does not exist outside, and has to be found within, its sensible expressions and its changing material conditions. The whole is not the same at the end as at the beginning. It is in terms of this strict parallelism of theory and practice, eye and hand that a reinterpretation becomes necessary of the concept of mannerist *disegno* as a purely operational mode of knowing: a psychic relaying of, and sympathy with, a material-existential catalysis.

## The Possible and the Virtual

If both genius and its ideas do not exist outside their material expressions, then it is no longer possible to interpret the mannerist theory of mimesis in hylomorphic terms as saying that the content lies waiting within the marble for its cognitive form to be hewn out. Of course, the authority of mannerist texts on art has led to precisely such idealist interpretation. It was precisely in these Aristotelian terms that Benedetto Varchi, a pupil of Michelangelo's, described the task of the sculptor as an inducing of 'form' into 'matter', as a drawing forth of 'real' from 'potential' existence. Yet when he complimented his master, 'Signor Buonarroti, you have the brain of a Jove', Michelangelo responded, 'but Vulcan's hammer is required to make something come out of it.'[22] The passage from the intellectual *concetto* to the hand that realizes it entails much more than just a hylomorphic passage from matter to predetermined form, because the idea of the whole composition must constantly be rehearsed in a painstaking process of experimental construction. In the words of Charles de Tolnay describing Michelangelo's *Day* and *Night* (1526–31):

> In a very real way the primitive form of the block had a decisive influence on Michelangelo's imagination. As he became absorbed in it, the inner image awoke in him; one can actually see how in his sculptures and reliefs he always allowed himself to be guided by the primitive form of the block, and in his frescoes by the dimension and shape of the surfaces at his disposal.[23]

More philosophically speaking, if the material work of art is not simply conceived in the image of its concept or idea but a veritable 'work', this means that mannerist imitation can no longer be interpreted in the classical terms of the real and the possible, the latter somehow resembling and limiting the former. In reality, as Bergson argues, possibility means only an 'absence of hindrance', which the human intellect retrospectively turns into 'pre-existence under the form of the idea':[24] 'For the possible is only the real with the addition of an act of mind which throws its image back into the past, once it has been enacted.'[25] Only when the past no longer has an immediate interest can it appear as divided from the present, as if we are dealing with two immobile positions outside time. But this is a projection post factum, since in fact, the present endures in continuity with a virtual past that preserves itself in the indivisible movement of the creative act: 'It is the real which makes itself possible, and not the possible which becomes real.'[26]

Aristotle himself does not define matter in nature as formless passivity but as a privation (*stēresis*) of form. Nor does he speak of the existence of form as

unchanging. Rich in texture, matter is a presence that is late with respect to form, a sort of past present that exists in the moment of arrival of the future but is not yet past.[27] As soon as it is actualized in a form, this co-originality of act and power is lost. However, form is itself the product of a material movement and does not exist outside of matter. *Energeia* is prior to *dynamis;* the form-taking activity is prior to the potential. To produce something is merely to test or sound the power of nature, relaunching, amplifying, and sustaining this movement that is already at work. Matter is the substratum that guarantees a continuity in movement, dividing the mobile according to an infinite mutability.[28] In order to understand the conditions for the creative act, we therefore need an alternative to classical aesthetics in which thought precedes expression, and by implication also to its scientific representative, art history or the rationalized study of creative processes.

It is striking that Bergson consistently illustrates his critique of possibility with examples from art before extrapolating his argument to the universe understood as global and continuous creation of unforeseeable novelty:

> When a musician composes a symphony was his work possible before being real? Yes, if by this we mean that there was no insurmountable barrier to its realization. But from this completely negative sense of the word we pass, inadvertently, to a positive sense: we imagine that everything which occurs could have been foreseen by any sufficiently informed mind, and that, in the form of an idea, it was thus preexistent to its realization: an absurd conception in the case of a work of art, for from the moment that the musician has the precise and complete idea of the symphony he means to compose, his symphony is done.[29]

It is absurd to imagine that a composer would know beforehand what the work will be, because in reality, creativity knows no retrograde movement, only intelligence does.[30] Indeed, the more general an idea is, that is, the more possibility it contains, the emptier it is.[31] Only in the most platitudinous classicism is the possible given alongside the real. Yet even here we do not pass from the possible to the real according to an increase in degree of perfection, since the possible is itself only 'the mirage of the present in the past'. This is why, whereas 'the technique of his art' and 'the demands of the material' pertain to the artisan's knowledge, about the artist's creativity—echoing Kant—'we know very little'.[32] Poetic acts cannot be submitted to the reversible historical rationality of general conditions of possibility. No zeitgeist, psychosocial or economic milieu, or technical development enables us to foresee how an act of generation will make use of all the past's potential.

In reality and hence in art, by contrast, the possible is not less but more than the real. It is virtual and this means that it requires creative thought. While we may never know an author's intentions, we don't need to be stricken by the modernist taboo on intentionality either. Bergson distinguishes human intelligence, as the faculty of a posteriori remembrance, from the mind or spiritual life, which is the faculty of intuition and which is historically more closely related to the Neoplatonist *intelletto*. To see something is not just to know it, but to unite the duration of an individual thing with that of a perceptive consciousness that contracts the interior mobility of the thing according to its own rhythm. While the eye takes its legitimacy from the general idea and grasps something by solidifying it, the mind takes its legitimacy directly from the singular and unforeseeable becoming of the visible itself: 'the materials we have to work with, words and images for the poet, forms and colors for the painter, rhythms and harmonies for the musician, range themselves spontaneously under the idea which they express, drawn, as it were, by the charm of a superior ideality.'[33] Intuitive ideas are generated in the *fantasia*, the subrational faculty of seeing hidden intensive relationships between things that lack the generality of extended models.[34] Yet this does not mean that they are also less real. If things exist in time as much as in space, then we also see in time as much as in space. Every intuition is a difference of tension between multiple abstract durations or tendencies, as well as their integration in a concrete vision; it enables the mind to recapitulate the forces individuated in a determinate quality in 'a simple thought *equivalent* to all the indefinite richness of form and color'.[35]

Along with philosophy, Bergson assigns it the task of art to help us pass from intellection to vision.[36] Art educates the senses and directs our attention to 'the things themselves' by dilating our perception of the present, extending it with the presence of things in the making. It is not a matter of rising above sense experience but of deepening it. Painting especially gives us 'a brilliant and vanishing vision' of alien durations within and outside ourselves, that is, beyond the bleak colors of habitual human perception.[37] Now, is it not precisely in this sense that Lomazzo defined painting as the *perfezionatrice dell'intelletto*? As Robert Bresson says, to have an idea is not to see what you are already thinking, but to think about what you see and to be the first to see what you see, the way you see it.[38]

Accordingly, a new interpretation of *disegno interno* and the aesthetic idea opens up. In his essay on 'The Life and Work of Ravaisson', a painter-philosopher, Bergson distinguishes the intuition of an idea in the mind from sensory intuition:

> But perhaps there is another course open. This would be to extend the vision of the eye by a vision of the mind: without leaving the domain of intuition, that is, the intuition of things real, individual and concrete, to seek an intellectual intuition beneath the sensible intuition. To do that would be to pierce by a powerful effort of mental vision the material wrapping of things and to read the formula, invisible to the eye, which their materiality unrolls and manifests.[39]

Himself deeply influenced by Neoplatonism, Bergson claims that the 'idea' as mental vision is simultaneously material and spiritual. It is no longer an ideal condition of possibility, but rather a material condition of reality, that is, a matter-function or tendency to action. To have an idea is to move into, or adhere to, the poetic ground of reality itself. It is to work back 'from the intellectual and social plane to a point in the soul from which there springs an imperative demand for creation . . . an impulse, an impetus received from the very depth of things'.[40] The vision of such an imperative presence is the speculative vision par excellence, since it is an intuition of subjective genesis and not of objective fact. While this appears to confirm the received image of art as something absentminded, however, Bergson emphasizes that to break away from practical life is not to turn one's back on it but to enrich it.[41] It is also the ultimate practical vision to the extent that all pre-constituted subjectivity disappears in the buzzing activity of things. 'The more we accustom ourselves to think and to perceive all things *sub specie durationis*, the more we plunge into real duration.'[42] To perceive is to participate in spirit in the act of making, that is, in the uninterrupted continuity of unforeseeable novelty. An aesthetic vision is therefore not the suspension of all action, but the drawing in of other activity into the eye of an event that exhausts all means to discern the actual from the virtual, or subject from object.

So what exactly is this ideal or virtual point in the soul that is intuitively present in the density of the real itself, that is, in the depths of sensation-matter—or in the words of Michelangelo, 'still clothed in flesh' (*della carne ancor vestita*)[43]? Long before Bergson, Leibniz invoked the analogy of veins in marble both to describe how pleats of matter surround living beings held in mass and how innate ideas are present in the soul. This analogy substitutes that of the perfectly homogeneous and even surface of the *tabula rasa* of Locke, who held that all truths originate in the senses. But it also replaces the Cartesian opposition between the soul populated by innate ideas and the piece of wax as model for matter that is indifferent to motion and shape. Instead, it provides a new image of thought in the act:

> For if the soul were like an empty page, then truths would be in us in the way that the shape of Hercules is in an uncarved piece of marble that is entirely neutral as to whether it takes Hercules' shape or some other. Contrast that piece of marble with one that is veined in a way that marks out the shape of Hercules rather than other shapes. This latter block would be more inclined to take that shape than the former would, and Hercules would be in a way innate in it, even though it would take a lot of work to expose the veins and to polish them into clarity, removing everything that prevents their being seen. This is how ideas and truths are innate in us—as inclinations, dispositions, tendencies, or natural virtualities [*virtualités*], and not as actions; although these virtualities are always accompanied by certain actions, often insensible ones, which correspond to them.[44]

Again, we must be wary of idealist interpretations. Ideas are not transcendental but virtual forces, since they are no more general than the multiplicity which they actualize.[45] Leibniz was inspired by the silver miners of the Harz mountains, specialists of the veins and fossils in the body of the earth, in regular exchange with whom he designed wind machines and wrote his treatise on geology and natural history, the *Protogea* (1691–3). Some physical interaction always 'corresponds' to each little glimmering in the dark depths of each soul, such that soul and body are only different aspects or functions—functions of form and functions of matter—immanent to a single and same psychophysical continuum. This continuum is like the moving depth of chiaroscuro, a background noise structured by distinct but obscure signs that subsist when the clear but confused images change.[46] The signs constitute the propensity of things, their disposition to be (un)folded in a certain way, as if they were already independently accomplishing what the artist wants and for which the latter requires only minimal force. At the same time, it does not follow that these signs resemble or signify their actualization in the end product. If they did, they would be possibles separate from their creative activation. They would not be inclinations and dispositions, but fully developed models. In truth, marble, like every composite substance, is 'incomplete'.[47] Its inchoate forms always tend toward realization in material processes themselves and are therefore always between minimum and maximum states. Their essence itself does not appear at the outset but only over the course of their development, when its strength is assured. We do not intuit our ideas as readymade and neither is there anything 'natural' or 'concrete' about them. To invent is to find, *erfinden*, but perfecting nature means to find in it what has never been found. In other words, generative ideas—as opposed to general ideas—are the 'seeds of eternity' that do not exist

outside of an infinite and continuous movement of development and variation.[48] We arrive at form rather than starting with it.

Combining structure and genesis, memory and variation, Deleuze writes that the development of ideas is essentially a problem-solving process, not a process of modeling. Ideas are not constructions of intellectual thought but affective encounters that make us think: 'The virtual possesses the reality of a task to be done or a problem to be solved: it is the problem which orientates, conditions and engenders solutions, but these do not resemble the conditions of the problem.'[49] This is a clear reference to the problem of the distance between 'a lump of clay on the sculptor's bench' and the mode of existence of the virtual 'work to-be-made' as set up by Souriau: 'The virtual is a conditioned conditioning, dependent upon a fragment of reality, which is foreign to its own being, and which is like its evocatory formula.'[50] Every concretely existing material, no matter how 'poor in modes of existence,'[51] contains the signs of a spiritual power of existence that urges its making as an instaurative actualization. But whereas the classicist imagines himself to be completely in control of his technique and materials, immediately making the work pass from power to action, the mannerist finds himself carried away by the work to be done into a surexistential state. He is more like an existential 'mechanologist'[52] who, between the initial material and final form, knows himself to be implicated among the forces that condition the work's realization but without knowing what is required of him, except that these forces must be put in relation to one another. In fact, the responsibility for the composition, and thus for the correspondence between material and statue is all the more anxiety-inducing when the original idea loses its authority, because everything then depends on what you will do next. The work to be done presents itself in the sobering mode of a riddle of which the solution is entirely immanent to the manner in which it is solved here and now. 'Work it out, or thou shalt be devoured!'[53]

What is at stake in theories of disegno is precisely this drama of the imagination, in which an obscure intuition gets clarified in a percept or a concept. Or as Deleuze and Guattari formulate it, there is an auto-positing of the work as a resemblance or bloc of sensations independent of the implied subjectivities of artist, spectator and model, such that 'it is difficult to say where in fact the material ends and sensation begins.'[54] All art is participatory art, since the work and its public are co-originary instants of a possible world that contaminates everything associated with it. Artists do not just create effects 'in their work', they give them to 'use', making us become with them as we get drawn 'into the compound'.[55] At the same time, instauration is not just a question of art

but of the material reality of sensation in general. Souriau's aesthetic paradigm is irreducible to artworks and concerns the work of existence itself: the experiment with and experience of a situation which we do not have a choice of refusing or accepting. *Dasein* is design, all design is co-design. Design is less a subjective decision than the ensemble of variably conditioned processes that populate a plane of composition relative to which the presence and autonomy of existence conferred upon a certain being become incontestable. Moreover, it is less an intellectual process than the active-passive mode of engagement with the fervor required of what is always *this* work. As a verb, the thinking of the intellect (*inter-legere*, to read/connect between/together) is involved in the felt process of drawing together and tighter. What non-classical art merely brings to the fore is the indeterminate and oscillatory nature of this work, that is, its secondary or epiphenomenal threshold condition which prevents us from saying 'This is art.' If all of existence is an art, mannerism is an art in the second degree as it exposes the disparate virtual conditions that co-catalyze in its own coming about.

## The Unfinished

If Leibniz's account of substantiation (realization) provides such an adequate procedural account of art, this is because it is untainted by the classical production/ reception dichotomy. The construction of a scientific fact, the effective presence of Christ, or the ceasefire between warring parties all raise the question of how we are involved in their modes of existence. In the mutual reference between modes, harmony is not a given (Souriau mentions the parallelism of Spinoza's attributes as an example of a pre-established agreement) nor an emergence that is totalizing or exhaustive. Rather, it remains multiplicitous. Subjects and objects become moments in nebulous occasions of experience in which 'we must settle for a sort of harmony, a sort of sufficient analogy, a sort of evident and stable reflection, in the work made, of what the work to-be-made was. . . . In the end, this sufficient proximity defines the completion.'[56]

Souriau describes instauration as a drama of presence with at least three characters, each with their own existential claim, poignancy, and duration: the actual material, the virtual work to-be-made, and the artist who hears the appeal of the work to-be-made.[57] The accomplishment of a work is defined by the progressive invention of 'a coinciding, double modality in the unity of a single being', that is, the moment 'when the physical reality of the material thing meets the spiritual reality of the work to-be-made', such that one mode of

existence is 'the lucid mirror of the other'.[58] The problem is of course that instead of a question of faithful imitation, this mirroring is distorted by intermittent experiences: the late is the new. Only the copy can cause the original to exist. This primacy of practice is the reason why perfection is a matter of degree, but not of analogy. 'There is no ideal existence', for it is not the idea but its reality that is in question:

> For it [perfection] is not a matter of a simple, harmonic correspondence of each being with itself, such that it is either fully present or else deficient across those various planes . . . We must realize, rather, that there are not only correspondences, echoes, but also actions and events through which these correspondences are made or unmade, are intensified as in the resonance of a harmony with many parts, or are undone and unmade.[59]

In other words, the realization of a work is not a creation out of nothing but a vibratory event, a 'mutual approach' or reciprocal use (*branchement*, *abouchement*) of the three modes of matter (what), idea (why), and artist (who) in a surexistential mode of substantial union (how). Matter and idea meet in the manner in which the soul of the artist (traditionally also the art critic, and more recently the spectator-participant) responds to them, but the emergent process is not defined exclusively in relation to this involvement. It is certainly the case that some things only exist due to a maker. Nevertheless, the soul is merely the locus of the idea, not in the mode of its owner but in the manner of a vertiginous sensation of the material itself.[60] The potter possesses the clay no less than (s)he is possessed by it. This raises the question of what Souriau calls the work of 'spiritual completion': How do we pass from thing-like (*réique*) mode of existence to an aesthetic mode of existence?[61]

Usually, instauration is a matter of habit. While it does not have a mode of existence itself, habit institutionalizes the modes while simultaneously hiding itself. For this reason, Latour quips that it is not Being/essence that we have forgotten but beings, practices.[62] Due to its self-generalizing character, habit is the mode of existence of essence. In hiding itself, it also hides the virtualities (what James calls prepositions) that it actualizes and preserves. Essences are effectively 'continuities that appear to be durable and stable because breaks in continuity are omitted even though they remain "highlightable" and "retrievable" at every moment'.[63] Mannerism, by contrast, is the re-dramatization of essence, which reveals the difference between substance (the habitual forgetting of discontinuities that constitutes being-as-being) and subsistence (the repetition through alterity that constitutes being-as-other). Essential to mannerism is

therefore a certain intensity, a tremor of the things themselves that articulates as unease of the soul. Habits do not deceive in the sense of hiding something underneath appearances, but in the sense that the virtual is always more and ahead of the given. In bringing in pre-artistic and non-artistic materials and technologies that normally remain implicit, mannerism reveals that what appears to be a stable design is still an assemblage, functioning smoothly at times, at other times in fits and starts, of multitudinous agencies and discontinuous associations.

Whereas classicism relies on habit to both stabilize and cover over the difference between form and matter, mannerism confronts us with a double expression of manner and matter, as when we do several things at once. Sometimes formal manners endure for themselves, like gestures disconnected from the organicity of bodies. Diderot describes Georges de la Tour as the 'machinist' of painting, as his work contains 'too much hand' and too little idea, giving us only cold, mannequin-like portraits.[64] Sometimes, by contrast, a material thickness asserts itself. Michelangelo dreamed of extracting from the 'alpine and living stone' of a Carrara mountain top the giant that is hermetically confined in it, a dream that cannot but remain stuck between stone and form, as we also see in Giovanni da Bologna's *Apennine Colossus* (1580).[65] Either way, the immediate correspondence between the passages and leaps of an artistic practice and the extended material network through which they pass is lost.

Without a doubt, such a hypermediatic redoubling of manner and matter also occasioned the sixteenth-century genre of the *paragone*: which medium expresses a figure best, painting or sculpture? As a reminder of the non-identity of matter and form, mannerism does not convey the memory of something foundational, an ideal or model, but a crisis of content and the practical necessity for new and diverse modes of instauration. As Bergson anticipates Souriau, 'to picture is not to remember [*imaginer n'est pas se souvenir*]', since recollection is already a participation in this memorial ground or past that is contemporaneous with the present it has been, and that can always emancipate itself like a mirror image that turns the present itself into a 'moving mirror' of the past.[66] And as Deleuze concludes, 'The problem of art, the correlative problem of creation' is a 'problem of *perception* and not memory',[67] on the condition that we understand perception itself to be first of all a matter of a participatory presence (as with Bergson's attentive perception) and not just of sight. Even a classical notion such as that of the influence exerted by a past master is really a matter of sharing a momentary vision. To perceive the work already out there is to become implicated in a point of view that does not belong to the author but to a possible world in the making.

The novelty of the conceptual or *non-finito* state of such works of Michelangelo's as the Pitti *Tondo* (1503–4) or the *Prisoners* (1513–34) is not that their complete execution is no longer indispensable, as if they would still be completed by reference to a pre-fabricated idea. (Souriau contrasts the 'instaurative journey' due to the existential incompleteness of things to the notion of the unfinished as a 'project', that is, to Eugène Delacroix's interpretation of Michelangelo's non-finito.[68]) Rather, what appears to be an imperfect union of form and matter, both to our natural perception and when compared to classicist art, is a sign of spiritual accomplishment that bestows a new sense on things.[69] It is the idea itself that is incomplete, whereas the marble becomes saturated with a new perspective. This is how Vasari appreciates the perfect control of Michelangelo's hand in *San Matteo* (1506): 'in its sketched state it reveals the perfection to which it aspires and teaches all sculptors the manner (*maniera*) in which one carves figures from stone without harm.'[70] The point of carving is that it articulates something that already exists in the block, something that, crucially, may never be entirely freed from its matrix. Whereas modeling is based on the projection of primary penmanship, in filing or chiseling the figure itself is only the medium for the material to come alive. As Adrian Stokes says of Agostino di Duccio: 'The true carver's power to draw . . . is a secondary power: for it is inspired by his attitude to stone.'[71]

Even if carving is traditionally opposed to disegno, from the perspective of the creative act their distinction is only a difference of degree. Do we not experience secondness in Michelangelo's many drawings (*disegni*) used as studies for his paintings and sculptures? Every attempt stimulates a next one, such that the fragmented work can only be reconstructed serially. The idea is never fully present and does not exist outside the constantly rehearsed manner in which it is worked out and worked through. To have an aesthetic vision means being immersed in this non-linear process of composition:

> To instaure, to build, to construct . . . is not simply the gradual intensification of an initially weak existence. . . . To create a work of thought is to give birth to a thousand ideas and to submit them to relations, to proportions; it is to invent great, dominant themes and to impose their control over the ideas, those monstrous rebels that need to be subdued time and again.[72]

In the aspiration to perfection, there is no premodeling and no finality, just metamorphosis. What we have called intuitions are not transcendent ideas but immanent feedback and feedforward loops. They are not the product of our thought but what make us think. They depend on sensitive and sensory

evaluations that pose more problems than they solve, as they demand the very invention of what they are about: making is thinking and seeing, and what I cannot create I do not know.

We discover this autonomy of the work, unfinished in principle rather than in fact, in the hallucinatory yet efficient quality of mannerist figures. Every experience of the possible is hallucinatory to the extent that it is creative while still being part of the past. If there is an optical resemblance between the strained postures of Michelangelo's figures on the one hand and natural images on the other, this is no longer preformed by a model, past or present, that is then deformed by some temporal gap, but the futural effect of a repetition of plastic forces. It is an absolutely new merging of past and future. Wylie Sypher describes it well when he situates Michelangelo's sculptural technique between Donatello's method of cutting away from the block and Bernini's expanding of volumes around an armature that is already in place: 'The paradox of Michelangelo's statuary is that the vigorous carving creates, strangely, an effect of modeled volumes.'[73] Never full-born, always monstrous: between carving and modeling, we can only follow the inner vitality of the work as it struggles out of its adamantine block through the unmolded shapes of foreign durations that resist completion. The unfinishedness of dominant themes is inseparable from their infinitization in perception 'where matter and manner meld'.[74]

Perhaps the ultimate implication of a truly mannerist spirituality is this paradox of a Neoplatonist overturning of Platonism based not on resemblances, but on manners of resembling. Artistic ideas are neither Platonic ideas nor Aristotelian essences, but entirely operative thoughts that remain coextensive to, and undergo qualitative transformations with, the materials in which they are expressed. Becoming is more than an imitation, not less. Before resemblance becomes representational, it is what we have called an analogical expression, a resemblance produced with accidental and non-resembling means. Instead of an economy of originals imitable in space we discover a dynamic of immanent deviation that subsumes all content and renders the work of art a monument of time itself. Such a work is the work of the artist par excellence, the forger. For it is with the forger that the critical form of the true gives way to the powers of the false. To have an idea is to be done with judgment and to manipulate 'forces, nothing but forces'[75] (those relations of time which Deleuze also calls 'the powers of the future').[76] Unlike form, force has no stable essence: it has no 'what', but only a 'who', a 'how' and a 'that'. This has two further important implications.

First, the disconnection between the stages of conception and execution— or force and resistance—is not at all a mannerist idea, but precisely a classical

one. It is precisely non-artistic signs that transcend their development insofar as they retain a natural (subjective or objective) signification, whereas in art the signs stay fully immanent to the style of their development. Matter, manner, and idea are not three successive movements in an evolution but three modes participating in each work. Sometimes it proceeds from the heart, sometimes it proceeds from the hand, sometimes it proceeds from the head. Mannerism makes these genetic moments simultaneous and remixes them in a transformed way of seeing things that is irreducible to any one of them taken separately. 'The work of art is artistic in the degree in which the two functions of transformation [conception and execution] are effected by a single operation.'[77] Why do we do what we do? There are causes and there are ends. But more fundamental is the way in which we do things. As Bergson puts it, the what is always more abstract than the how: the rhythm, course, or fluence while still incorporating causes and ends.[78] In doing something well, the cause, the end, and the way coincide. Here there is no aim for perfection, since in its constant dealing with obstacles the work could never take form in a purified state. Indeed, reflecting Bellori's late mannerist equation of manner and fantastic idea insofar as the idea is the object of a practice that exceeds mere mimesis (*la maniera, o vogliamo dire fantastica idea, appoggiata alla pratica, e non all'imitazione*[79]), art is based on the perfect unity of idea and style, the latter being the formal unity of composition of a work insofar as it does not refer to anything else.[80]

Second, this approximation of idea and matter means that art and craft can no longer be neatly distinguished. An idea, prescription, motor schema, digital code, or genetic script can inform matter, but at the same time they are tested and transformed by their material's opaque residues.[81] The applied arts constitute an 'implied art', always already germinating and assiduously actualizing relations between objects (e.g., of proportion or beauty) that are not predetermined by their current function.[82] Although it takes a continual practical effort to develop and sustain an intuition, this development is purely a matter of cultivation as opposed to a method. And it is speculative, since it is a risky matter of stubborn perseverance and self-certainty about what one wants to do without knowing how to get there. This is why contemporary designers and theorists like to compare their work to applied arts such as cooking or gardening or growing a beard. In both art and nature things come into existence by variation, internal movement, and distributed agency. Instead of the realization of an original, there is only transduction, a transmission constantly falling out of phase with itself. Design becomes a matter of skill and sentience, of learning to pay attention to, and experiment and collaborate with materials, which present themselves as riddles, as clusters of tendencies one first needs to learn how to read.[83]

# Diagrammatics

Mannerism is not conceptual art. It is more an art of spirituality than of ideas. If the idea stands in opposition to material practice, spirituality sympathizes with it. Instead of residing outside of the medium, it inheres within it. Any dematerialization is only apparent, a trap. Being neither models nor rules, we never meet the ideas as such. We live through them or enact them in art. With Deleuze, we can say of ideas that they are the conditions coextensive with the work without the work resembling its conditions. Ideal intuitions do not act on a material from outside, but coexist with it and pass through intensive movements within it. 'They are not interruptions of the process, but breaks that form part of it, like an eternity that can only be revealed in a becoming, or a landscape that only appears in movement.'[84] If artistic ideas are incorporeal, this does not mean that they transcend the corporeal process of their realization, but that they constitute the virtual potential of a material, its immanent becoming. Ideas are not exterior to practical matters, but rather form the outside *of* matter-flows, their interstices and intervals. Mannerism simply no longer ignores or represses the artificiality or constructive aspect of the ideas that are already present in the nameless interstices of classicism, but affirms them as the speculative passages of life within it. For Leibniz, these passages make up the continuum of the universe in its impersonal and pre-individual state, a transfinite structure of disharmonious possibility; for Bergson they constitute the Open Whole of the past, the spectrum of interpenetrating tendencies that is virtually passing through each actuality. Either way, to have an intuition or vision of these labyrinthine passages is already to re-relate them, to make a practical selection and touch base with the groundless ground of the future itself.

What is the timing of mannerism? The immanence of matter, manner, and idea appears as such only at moments of crisis. Ideas rise to the surface as cracks in a material process, in other words, as problems of action, not as theoretical solutions. We then pass from the *Logologie* to the *Texturologie*.[85] The key notion in this transition is Deleuze and Guattari's transformation of the Kantian schematism, the 'diagram' as immanent cause.[86]

As Kant mentions, echoing Leibniz, in the living depths of our souls something mediates between sensibility and thought but that belongs to neither. This is the hidden art of an image that cannot be seen or known but that nonetheless acts 'like an image'.[87] Its activity (*Schematismus*) consists of the production of *schemata*, which do not appear in themselves precisely because they are structures of experience as such. Since the schemata are the products 'of

the imagination intermediary between an image and a concept', they cannot be seen or known just as their 'logic' necessarily remains implicit and dissolves the moment the understanding seeks to grasp it in concepts. In fact, Kant's emphasis on 'depth' indicates that it is not just a mental activity. It does not occur 'in your head' but rather in a real drama in which one is always already beyond oneself. It is the anonymous drama of a gradual convergence: form and matter, the spontaneity of the understanding and the receptivity of the intuition, do not meet in the immanence of the subject but in the non-tautological way of an unconscious activity of sensible presentation. The soul itself derives its unity from this drama only in the form of a torsion, an original orienting inflection. Hence Kant's understanding of the schematism as providing the innate silhouette or outline (*monogramma*) of subjectivity.[88] The schematism is the dynamic but sketchy ground of the subject, its singular manner or formal cause rather than the efficient cause that Aristotle identified with the intentionality of the artisan.

Despite this non-intentional activity at the heart of our subjectivity, however, in the First Critique the schematism only features in an unalienated way. It is the habitual manner in which the imagination synthesizes the temporal manifold of sensory intuitions into the purposeful unity of a particular spatial whole (say, a tree, which thus acquires a properly 'second nature' insofar as it possesses a new kind of completeness not given in the immediacy of experience itself) that makes itself objectively recognized under the general profile of a concept.[89] While preceding actual representation, the drama of the schematism thus operates in a strictly figurative mode. It is a spatial abstraction of the internal sense of time, an assimilation of the differences between particular images in service of *a priori* concepts, which thereby appear to resemble sensation all by themselves. Schelling would later call it 'the intuition of the rule according to which a particular object can be produced'. In this sense of following the rule of the understanding, design would move from image to concept and back so that the sensible and the intelligible, beauty and truth converge in the production of stable objects as controlled by the subject.[90] Or as Vasari puts it: *disegno* 'proceeds from the intellect, drawing from many things a universal judgment'.[91]

While the schematism is the ground of all cognition, however, it is not reducible to this figurative function. The Third Critique explores how, between presence and representation, the imagination has an autonomy of its own. While thought is inseparable from images, it is not necessarily signified by them as the conceptually determined content that they might represent. Without concepts the generative process of reciprocal affectivity between the faculties already constitutes much more than mere raw sensory material. There are pre-conceptual

ways of sense-making, in which the different faculties spontaneously agree with, and produce each other, in a way that characterizes the intrinsic teleological structure of life rather than the external rules of cognition. In the experience of the beautiful, a feeling without a concept, the image has a power of abstraction all by itself and subjugates natural pose and movement to aesthetic ideas that free the imagination from the determinate judgments of the understanding, although they still need a schema for their execution.[92] In the experience of the sublime, the imagination gets fascinated by abstract ideas that cannot be comprehended through the senses at all. While the sublime is often reduced to the mere content of a symbolic representation, it is first of all this experience of uneasiness at the limits of our sensory body and imaginative capacity—an experience that takes us beyond automated cognition and puts us in contact with forces that cannot be integrated in organic unity of the faculties.

While generally restricted by the kind of discipline that we have called habit and that Kant would eventually associate with the 'good taste' of classicism, the schematism is in principle capable of producing a whole non-visual cartography of a fluid or suspended space. Wilhelm Worringer revaluated artistic volition (Riegl's concept of *Kunstwollen*) vis-à-vis common sense along these lines. He argued that art begins with abstract ornament, which in turn originates in an 'immense spiritual dread of space' and the need for 'self-alienation'.[93] This pertains especially to mannerism, which brings about an infrasensory break with the restful contemplation and formal harmony of beauty. Mannerist art is a sublime art not because of its content, which could still fit a beautiful form, but because of its obsession with composition. Under the pressure of a 'surplus of ideas', it fractures or disjoints spatiotemporal experience in a way that cannot fit in a single image.[94] Although still aimed at synthesis, images, sounds, and sometimes words become characters in a drama that is not reducible to the classical unity of time and place.

Perhaps this is the general lesson of mannerist aesthetics: it is only in a time disconnected from space that thinking and intuition meet. The components of artificiality, suspension, dissonance, contingency, and transgressive materiality are precisely what make the beauty of a Delacroix, a Soutine or a Fautrier real, as opposed to something limited to perception where they would still be related to the form of the true, like an art product in a museum. Aesthetic vision is by definition drawn beyond the pleasant feeling of life that characterizes the beautiful toward the order of intransigent and unruly resonances internal to the sensible. This is why the problem of art is closer to that of incarnation than that of embodiment. Unbeholden to any external finality, composition is not a

problem of animating the body but of materializing what has not yet occurred, of giving a body its highest degree of nonorganic or animal life.[95] To have an intuition (*idea*) is to be involved in the production of a schema (*maniera*) of time itself as transversal ground between multiple material becomings.

This takes us back to Deleuze and Guattari's non-epistemological and non-psychological concept of the diagram. While Kant primarily conceives of the schema as a rule for producing identity, the diagram synthesizes difference. It is a logic of material relations, a tool in an ongoing process full of aleatory encounters. Diagrammatic instauration is no longer the act of forming objects with identity and meaning but a process of delivering things that allows for a multiplicity of creative remodulations. It turns us into the 'larvae' of our own designs. Both unformed chaos and a condition of the new, a diagram is the set of abstract traces left by the creative advance of the world. It consists of asignifying and nonrepresentational features that, instead of pointing backward in time from the vantage point of the present, gesture forward and are productive, like an active mapping of the immanent becomings of the work. The diagram thus constitutes both the limit of imitation and its threshold, that is, the agitated zone where 'the imitation of a primal model' constantly passes into 'a mimesis that is itself primary and without a model'.[96]

When interpreted as diagrammatic practice, *disegno* is no longer a matter of going back and forth between part and whole, as in the traditional method of the sketch. Rather than the act of forming objects with identity and meaning, it is the processing of abstract forces as information, in which the parts and the whole interact in an expressive–constructive gambling upon the real. Instead of drawing folded pillows with heads, Albrecht Dürer drew pillows in which one can see heads, thus playing with the projective fantasy that guides the act of perception in the folds.[97] Similarly, when the veins in marble are allowed to rise to the surface, or when toolmarks are left visible on the stone, the perceptual whole is not pre-set but gets determined in a piecemeal fashion, in which craft and design, matter and manner begin to echo or re-mediate one another. It is an open whole, non-local and structured by confusion, of which the parts are selected through their relations instead of the relations through their terms.

The concept of the diagram overcomes the classical polemic between *disegno* and *colorito*. Like Michaux's mescaline drawings, Beccafumi's *disegni* present us with blots of ink and short open marks in the form of points and comma lines, little curls, and hooks, often connected through fine zigzag lines, embedded in cross hatchings of varying texture. The effect is a chiaroscuro of flickering unrest. Emil Maurer calls them 'figures of corrosion [*Korrosionsfiguren*]', since

their precarious existence in *statu nascendi* bears consonances with Buontalenti's *rusticas* and grottos. 'Of decisive impact is that the streaks and dashes do not adumbrate, connect and separate like a ductus. It does not need to rely on academic intellectual regulations and knows no disegno-formulas. The drawer rather lets the light agitate.'[98] The overall result is an indistinct composition of figure and clothing that replaces musculature and anatomy with humps, scabs, and holes—the result, in Deleuze's words, of 'manipulated chance, as opposed to conceived or seen possibilities'.[99]

Never entirely detached from the material flux, a diagram is sheer determinability, always in determination. Strictly speaking, it is not even an agent of design, but rather of material breakthrough, a map of the future operating outside of the standing reserve of signification and imagination. It is not what the artist is the author of, but the drama of abstract signs which he puts to work and on which he relies. It does not specify the properties of the component parts of a concrete material assemblage, but only the original relations by which free marks and traits of expression could combine in an operational solidarity and functional unity. When does the brute act of drawing generate a contour line, or describe a surface? The function of drawing, Dewey says, is no longer just to outline a form but also to draw out and be drawn into the informal.

> Drawing is to draw *out*; it is extraction of what the subject matter has to say in particular to the painter in his integrated experience. Because the painting is a unity of interrelated parts, every designation of a particular figure has, moreover, to be drawn *into* a relation of mutual reinforcement with all other plastic means—color, light, the spatial planes and the placing of other parts. This integration may, and in fact does, involve what is, from the standpoint of the shape of the real thing, a physical distortion.[100]

In Parmigianino's *baigneuses*, there is a disjunction of contour and color that makes the figures individuate in an ornamental mode. A flux of weak, constantly interrupted, and recommenced lines flood the bodies regardless of anatomy or pose. The differentiated pen and ink lines do not delineate models but guide a tender stream of floating half-figures, like parallel waves in a flow of action. In short, the lines have a self-generating use and rhythmical circularity that is in virtual excess over every figurative stoppage. 'Connect, conjugate, continue: a whole "diagram," as opposed to still signifying and subjective programs.'[101] Secondness is this non-a-priori mode of using a diagram that affirms the material excess *qua* sensation to semiotic coding and *a priori* forms of sensibility.

It should be possible to write a diagrammatic art history, that is, a history of aberrant movements in which the matter-flow deterritorializes habitual schemata and conditions the rise of new styles, which, as we know, always accomplish themselves in a style without style, in an unachieved style. In their programmatic discussion of aesthetic breakthrough, Deleuze and Guattari turn to the Venetian School in painting (Bellini, Giorgione, Titian, but especially Tintoretto), which attained its genius when Venetian commodity capitalism, largely based on intensive trade with Constantinople, began to decline toward the middle of the fifteenth century. There occurred not only a decline of the Byzantine art of mosaic as a vertical path by which viewers could transcend their bodies and gain access to the luminous realm of the divine spirit. The shift from fresco or wood panel to canvas and, more importantly, the introduction of oil painting to Northern Italy also introduced new possibilities of expression in art, such as a much freer brushwork and the layering of glazes of complementary colors that liberated the play of light and shadow from the systematic addition of white and black, which in turn was a consequence of the classical valuing of line over color. One need only think of Giorgione's *Tempest* (1508), in which the landscape rises up from the background and, like an eclipse, determines the atmosphere of the entire painting, or of the earthen air and glowing colors of Titian's *Equestrian Portrait of Holy Emperor Charles V* (1548). Combined with the Byzantine modulation of light, this early capitalist drama results in a veritable Copernican revolution in the work of Tintoretto (*Creation of the Animals*, 1551–2) that seems to directly antedate the work of Turner and Cézanne three centuries later, in the sense that what appears as technical poverty or lack of finish (the speed, *prestezza*) of the rough brushstrokes that drove Vasari to dismay, is in fact the expression of diagrammatic breakthrough.[102] 'Painting's eternal object is this: to paint forces, like Tintoretto.'[103]

Of course it is not enough to say that the nineteenth century is already there during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, since the same could be said about the liberated flows of matter that were already present when the Byzantine code was still firmly in charge. Furthermore, these mannerist lines of flight are constantly reduced to old codes or introduced into new codes such as linear perspective, imported from the regime of classical aesthetics of central Italy. A change of technique is never enough to bring about an aesthetic revolution. In fact, even if Venetian painting replaced or transfigured the classicism of the line, such that the material properties of oil paint need to be 'reworked' (*repenti*) in a manner that makes the colors resonate, it ultimately remained within a spatial regime that did not allow for significant processes of deformation.[104]

Yet these reservations don't alter the fact that the Venetian mannerists invented a new painting machine that directly anticipates the abstract diagram of modern colorism in which 'the *semiotic* components are inseparable from *material* components and are in exceptionally close contact with molecular levels'.[105] Hence what Deleuze and Guattari say about Turner, whose late land- and seascapes are sometimes considered incomplete but find their unity in their singular 'style' and non-localizable 'genius', applies no less to Tintoretto as a prototypical modern artist:

> from the moment there is genius, there is something that belongs to no school, no period, something that achieves a breakthrough—art as a *process* without goal, but that attains completion as such. . . . It is here that art accedes to its authentic modernity, which simply consists in liberating what was present in art from its beginnings, but was hidden underneath aims and objects, even if aesthetic, and underneath recodings or axiomatics: the pure process that fulfills itself, and that never ceases to reach fulfillment as it proceeds—art as 'experimentation'.[106]

Venetian painting is thus exemplary of art as *an* experience, a dramatic haecceity that cannot be reproduced, that is simultaneously precisely dated and timeless, and therefore not historical or artistic but cosmic: 'the genius is someone who knows how to make the whole world a becoming.'[107]

Even if modernism distinguishes itself from mannerism through a more energetic than idealist interpretation of the diagram, the case of Venetian painting indicates that the artistic diagram has always been pure *idée-force*, 'the generative force from which issue the multiple compossible worlds that make up the real'.[108] In this dramatic sense, modernism could well be defined as a repetition of mannerism. This does not mean, to be sure, that it can be reduced to a copy of mannerism, a reproduction of its actual procedures and ideas. Rather, modernism re-effectuates mannerism as a virtual event, sharing with its own means in a mannerist intensity or constellation of forces, and by this very act also counter-actualizes the image of historical mannerism we already have. Mannerism, we said, is not a period but rather an intensified art of instauration. There should be no difficulty in taking into account that non-mannerists worked during the sixteenth century, even if the mannerist tendency was at its most intense, while there are many mannerist tendencies to be discovered throughout other periods in art history, especially in our own.

# The Cosmic Artisan

## Contemporary Practice

In contemporary culture, handicraft is everywhere. Architects have rediscovered the values of craft in post-iconic times while artists have developed a renewed interest in the material process of making things. As activists have reverted to craft graffiti or craftivism, hipsters are meeting in specialized knitting cafés. Television spills over with cooking shows. Internet theorists celebrate the culture of craft in anything from open-source software to web 2.0 to the Fab Lab. In the slipstream of the Slow movements, social philosophers implement the ethos of the craftsperson in city renovation projects. With predictable regularity, new exhibitions about the current state of craft open their doors to enthusiastic crowds. The 'artisanal turn' is not just a symptom of postmodern nostalgia, that is, past 'options' or 'instances' allowed to make a second appearance. Rather, it is our very experience of time that has changed. What seemed old can appear authentically new again. Capital does not just undo old ties, it also remakes them on its own terms. The 'art of the contemporary' that comes after postmodernism involves 'a kind of internal retreat of the modern to the present'.[1] Instead of the modernist 'new', the avant-gardist 'tomorrow', and the postmodern 'end of history', contemporary practice inhabits an a-synchronous present that we can call metamodern, where *meta* is understood in its etymological sense of 'among' a heterogeneity of (material, technical, social, political, digital) practices which, in their disjunctive togetherness, express and construct the contemporary.[2]

The metamodern interest in craft and craftsmanship thus has less to do with the idolization of pre-industrial handicrafts by John Ruskin or the anti-industrial Arts and Crafts movement founded by William Morris than with the Bauhaus. For Ruskin and Morris, the basic idea had been that craftsmanship guarantees workers control over the means and relations of production and thus enables them to retain their traditional form of life. Bauhaus, by contrast, was

probably the first major attempt to combine specialized craft workshops with industrial manufacturing and capital investments and, hence, conceptualize modern craft, vis-à-vis the historically specific social situation of labor. It raised questions that are still relevant for post-industrial times and that any investigation and reconsideration of the meaning(s) and value(s) of craft for the twenty-first century has to answer: Is the revival of the crafts solely a moment of nostalgia or a movement with a future? What is the relationship between art, craft, and design? What is the relation between manual labor and computer-aided assemblage? How do values of craft—such as spirituality, authenticity, responsibility, purity, intimacy, customization, care, assiduity, mindfulness, truthfulness, inventiveness, localness, spontaneity, skill, sustainability, health, conviviality, virtue, passion—pertain to communities of human and nonhuman actors? In what sense could craftsmanship, making things ourselves or 'doing a job well for its own sake',[3] be an alternative to consumerism in times of austerity?

In order to explore at least some of these questions, as well as raise new ones, they must be situated within recent developments in contemporary art and design. After the militant mediation of taste (the avantgardes) in the early twentieth century followed by decades of conceptual art, today there is a renewed fascination with raw materials. While artists are exploring the experimental rhythm of problem solving and problem finding that makes the ancient potter and the modern programmer members of the same tribe, design theorists are rereading Diderot's Encyclopedia, in which artisanal occupations and mental labor, physical activity and processes of reflection and feeling are treated on a par. After romantic production aesthetics, modernist work aesthetics, and postmodern reception aesthetics, it seems that our understanding of art and design takes the form of a pure pragmatics. If the ontology of the work of art has transformed from the modern, craft-based ontology of media to a post-conceptual, transcategorical ontology of 'materializations', this transformation marks less the disappearance of craftsmanship at the end of art than art's further development into media literacy. The renewed interest in crafts and craftsmanship answers to the need for a new, practice-based and object-oriented knowledge. Given a certain material, what are its possible and virtual functions? Already in the 1970s, the prefixes 'artist' and 'designer' began to be added to domains that used to be part of the applied arts (e.g., interior design, of old the heartland of craft). At the same time, decolonization processes revealed the global significance of the applied arts. Ever since, craft has been emancipating itself from the intimacy of the studio and the corresponding closed guild mind that values only the specifics of its métier, its abilities, skills, customs, and recipes.

Instead of a concern with labor, whether that particular form of labor that goes by the name of 'art' or any other modern form of life and its skills, the question of craft now seems to be synonymous with our engagement with matter and everyday life.

It is in this metamodern sense that we can return to the concept of the modern artist as 'cosmic artisan', proposed by Deleuze and Guattari. Creativity, the new, is not an absolute beginning, but a problem of consistency and duration, of assembling heterogeneous elements into a synergetically functioning aggregate. 'It is no longer a matter of imposing a form upon a matter but of elaborating an increasingly rich and consistent material, the better to tap increasingly intense forces. What makes a material increasingly rich is the same as what holds heterogeneities together without their ceasing to be heterogeneities.'[4] Crucially, this procedure of enrichment has nothing to do with any sociopolitical or other pre-established division of labor. The cosmic artisan does not oppose art in favor of life, but art as a form of life, as an already sociopolitical project. She is the Revolutionary Knitter who understands skill and technologies as free actions directly wedded to a material movement that exceeds her on all sides: 'The modern figure is not the child or the lunatic, still less the artist, but the cosmic artisan: a homemade atomic bomb. To be an artisan and no longer an artist, creator or founder, is the only way to become cosmic, to leave the milieus and the earth behind.'[5]

From the perspective of the cosmic artisan, we can also retroactively reinterpret and reevaluate modern tendencies that were already present in premodern arts and crafts, albeit in a latent and dissociated state. If the contemporary is a disjunctive synthesis of heterochronic periods, it constitutes a drama in which all of the past emerges as our contemporary potential. We have already seen that the cosmic artisan finds a precursor in the untimely becoming of the mannerist craftsperson. Deleuze and Guattari's example is Tintoretto, the 'little dyer' who materialized the human in relation to nonhuman forces and whose materialist absence of self-absorption Jean-Paul Sartre liked to oppose to the grand-seigneurial Titian.[6] They thus partake of a speculative art history: the attempt to re-narrate multiple art histories according to their anachronistic logic and diffractive perspectivism. 'All history is really the history of perception, and what we make history with is the matter of a becoming, not the subject matter of a story.'[7] In the aggregate state that is the contemporary, can we envisage a mannerist genealogy for metamodern crafts and craftsmanship? No longer a professional but a transdisciplinary maker and researcher, today's artisan's gentle unruliness and experimentations tend toward a new unity of the arts.

Given the tensions brought about in matter-form relationships by contemporary digital design practices, this involves a retrospective problematization of the division of labor between design and craft at the very moment it first appeared. What emerges is an informal and cosmic dimension in both mannerist and metamodern craftsmanship, characterized by an infinite and continuous variation of manners rather than forms.

## Alchemy

If mannerism elevated mechanics into the sphere of the formative idea, today different and new machines are capable of acting as formatting forces. With every new medium or technology, there is a reciprocal deterritorialization between hand and material. Documenting in breathtaking detail the very history of their creation and transformation, Davide Quayola's *Captives #B8-6-0* (2014) offer a contemporary interpretation of Michelangelo's *non-finito*. They shift the focus from the all-too-familiar sculptures to how technologies introduce new tensions and manners in the formal articulation of matter. Ultimately it is not ideas that inhabit matter, but other materials. They always do so, though, in an unpredictable and differentiating manner. This is what makes it interesting today to speak of new crossovers such as digital handmade, digital gothic, or digital grotesque.

The operational use of algorithms and computer-controlled robots is not simply a means to an end, that is, a means that allows us to produce forms that were impossible in the past, but a means to a means, a means that generates unpredictable ends and endlessly evolving forms. Due to their operational use of generative code, digital technologies allow for infinite and continuous variation. While canonical distinctions impose the theoretical opposition of form and matter and assign art and craft as their own respective media (synthetic materials such as canvas, paper, and oil versus natural materials such as wood, clay, fiber, but also blood, ear-wax, and elbow-grease), these oppositions are therefore always already bypassed in practice by an intermediary dimension that is energetic and molecular, something Deleuze and Guattari describe as 'an objective zone of fluctuation that is coextensive with reality itself'.[8] In this zone of indetermination, fine art and applied art, design and craft converge in an abstract and machinic constructivism. They converge with life itself—that is, life understood not as mysterious self-subsistence but as something always modally outside itself, as the open movement of formative-ideational forces inherent to matter. Or again, life not as property of organic creatures but as something that

erupts in-between the creations in which it is implicated and explicated, across many modes.

More than with Michelangelo's *non-finito*, Florentine lines, or Venetian colorism, this informal but vital dimension of craftsmanship already became clear with mannerist sculptors such as Bernard Palissy or Benvenuto Cellini, the latter generally, from Goethe to Richard Sennett, being regarded the quintessential craftsperson.[9] Both Palissy and Cellini were marginalized due to sculpture's lower classification in the *paragone* debate and traditionally count as examples of decorative art.[10] In reality, they were all the more ambitious. Adopting the old idea that alchemy and the arts are the same, current in both Paracelsus and Dürer, they engaged in manipulating and operating on nature itself. Like many scholars, glassblowers, ceramists, and enamelers of their time, they sought a fusion of their own flesh with the material of their creation—the word 'creation' being understood in its double meaning as both the act of creating and the result of this act, such that it is never an instant conception but rather an ongoing operation, an open-ended, metamorphic series. In fact, while many historians of science have taken account of the significance of metalworking and the artisan's bodily encounter with matter to the development of modern, experimental chemistry, it is not certain that this significance has been grasped to its full extent. For what is truly modern about alchemy is perhaps not the scarce truths it produced about chemical processes based on metalwork, but its practical efficacy as an itinerant or minor science.[11]

The task of art, Cellini said, is to 'test the earth' (*provare la terra*), to isolate, capture, and harness its form-taking forces by means of the liquefaction of its metals.[12] As a smith, he knew that form is never separable from matter, but that it comes to the fore as a flow, being as much artificially constructed as it is natural. His bronze *Perseus* (1545) is therefore not carved, but cast. On the one hand, he could not think of the Perseus as a matter of recognizing the form to be extracted from a single piece of stone. But the act of metallic fusion offered him a way to emulate the accomplishment of a monumental piece without using joints. The demand for material unity is maintained in managing a single pour, rather than casting the Perseus in sections. In this way, on the other hand, Cellini also discovered something no stonecutter could explain, namely how to 'animate' his sculptures and 'resuscitate' his figures from the dead. According to both ancient and alchemical belief, liquefied metals are the lifeblood of the earth, trapped and congealed in it. Thus liquefaction was the very method of freeing the soul that infuses the clay of the earth and of bringing bronze to life.[13] As a conjoining of movement, liquidity, heat, and life, artistic instauration is a spiritual experience.

It becomes one single metallurgic performance sustained by variation itself, animating its material not with souls inhabiting bodies, but with an unlocalizable and omnipresent flexibility. The cast is rigid, but the procedure of casting obeys a practical logic of affordances and remains subordinate to the channeling of the pour ('What does the brick want?', Louis Kahn would later ask).

In 'Art of the Earth', an essay included in the *Discours admirables* (1580), Palissy similarly explained how he seeks to channel life itself into clay. A geologist, author, and potter, he brought together making, knowing, and sensing and regarded ceramics as a new medium for philosophical inquiry into terrestrial and organic processes by which minerals, plants, and animals are born, die, and fuse their immortal traces into rock. In his procedure of casting teeming pond scenes, experiential knowledge converges with material practice.[14] It goes without saying, however, that the knowledge thus acquired is not reproducible knowledge 'about' the world, but, as Patricia Falguières calls it, a strictly 'speculative knowledge'.[15] Art, in the Palissy workshop, is a mode of operation that seeks perfection not in the things imitated, but in the virtuoso imitation itself. Iterability becomes a power of the false that is turned against the eternity of the model, such that the difference between products of art and natural objects can henceforth only be made from the perspective of their construction, in a kind of second eternity. In his study of Palissy, Ernst Kris—a true minor art historian in the Deleuzo–Guattarian sense of a historian of practices—points out that Palissy regarded nature itself as an infinitely reproducible prototype and art as not made by human hands, but occurring through a natural mode of production that the craftsperson could nonetheless imitate.[16] As a consequence, no doctrine of ideas, general knowledge, or pre-established model could authorize the work to-be-done. The molding operation seems to be an immediate expression of the breakdown of sense inherent to the clay's fragmentary and aleatory disposition. But simultaneous with the appearance of the *Wunderkammer*, the casts of vibrant ponds mark a 'triumph of assemblage'.[17] Like living fossils, the ceramic glaze makes everything—stupefying aggregates of fish, serpents, lizards, arabesques, interlacings, angels, volutes, and masks—detach from its material and enter into strange, unnatural churnings. Image and material coincide in a system of opaque signs, traces of cosmic themes, that can be combined in endless variation.

Alchemy has had a lasting influence on modern art, from surrealism to Anselm Kiefer and from Sigmar Polke's art of separation and fusion to Yves Klein's interest in the alchemical roots of oil paint (with pigment and dyes as *materia prima* and the sponge as a zone of immaterial pictorial sensibility where matter and spirit interpenetrate). In the late 1960s, the old concept of the artist–alchemist

itself resurfaced with Germano Celant's interest in *arte povera*, as the recycling of garbage and its transformation into art opened the work to both social and natural processes. It is taken up in Gordon Matta-Clark (a 2009–10 retrospective of his work at the Pulitzer Foundation was entitled *Urban Alchemy*) and more recently in Wilhelm Mundt's trashstones, a series of abstract and amorphous lumps (*Klumpen*) beginning in 1989 with *Stone 001* and running well into the 700 stones at the time of writing. Composed of the hybrid production waste from the artist's studio but coated in colored, fiberglass-reinforced plastics, they conjure up visions of serial production processes as well as an enigmatic and magical presence. Shiny and reflective at first, their surfaces quickly reveal their multi-layered composition as they are wrapped around an inner core of wood, duct tape, discarded sculptures but also broken electronics and personal items which are all compacted together and preserved like the fossils of our time.

If contemporary alchemy is a secret knowledge of nature, this is because it seeks to know its material conditions from within; it is to intuit how to pass from one mode of existence to another. Working directly from the bowels of the earth, Cellini and Palissy too are geo-artists who do not reproduce or reiterate preexisting forms in varying materials. Rather, forms are open on either end, both toward the pragmatic depth of the soil from which they are nourished and toward the aesthetic heights of the cosmos. Speaking with Deleuze and Guattari, they channel and 'follow' the earth along trajectories of 'itinerant creation'.[18] To itinerate is to make the material itself 'work' rather than oneself working at the surface of matter.[19] Instead of the concatenation of carefully distinguished operations typical of the rational organization of labor, we are dealing with uninterrupted gestures that are contrapuntally related to the complex and variable behavior of materials themselves.[20] As in metallurgy, there is no division of labor between conceiving and working, because cognition itself is a surveying and following of material inferences. The artisan's design is a serial movement of which we can say only retrospectively that the first term of the series is the subject of the work and the point of arrival the object of the work. Only when the movement is stopped, when the matter-flow is submitted to rigid stratification, does the artisan cease to be a designer and become a mere worker or laborer.

Writing for the biotechnical individuals of our own age, the alchemist–philosopher Simondon argues that a moving-matter or material is detached from the matter-form model at the same time that the technological operation is detached from the labor model. Life is not only concerned with technology but co-emerges with it. As a consequence, technicity is not reducible to automated work, the imposing of stable form on passive and indeterminate matter to

be worked. It is the milieu of informal compromises by which life's material processes are integrated from one metastable state to the next.[21]

A key term for understanding artisanry in Simondon's concept for these processes is 'modulation'. Just as, for Palissy, ceramics is a practice that resists all ontological determination, and, for Cellini, the superiority of working directly *in terra* is that his material is always subject to deformation, to modulate is about molding in a continuous and variable manner instead of working with a pre-established mold. Rather than imposing a form by way of a command, it teases it out in collaboration with the complex and variable behavior of materials themselves. To express their morphogenetic potential is to pair their existing patterning into abstract plastic tendencies or forces. These tendencies are like accidental and implicit forms within a vectorial field where they are inseparable from topological operations of deformation. Thus by means of folding, stretching, twisting, bending, shifting, delaminating, curling, bulging, rotating, merging, splitting, heating, hammering, mixing, or any combination of these movements of repetition and variation, the singularities of metal, for example, are made to converge upon traits of expression in the non-definitive mode: toughness, rigidity, elasticity, plasticity, brittleness, porosity, redness, and so forth.

Modulation is thus a prospective or visionary technique. It is the activitation of a non-cognitive schema of concretization immanent to a material's becoming. By operating a more or less developed material, the artisan discovers that materials not only have their own lively existence but also depend increasingly on the informational assemblages through which they circulate. All sorts of external forces get expressed in novel forms that can be produced only through this very material. To speak of modulation instead of molding, in other words, is to see things in terms of interaction and interpenetration. Cellini's metallurgic performance—the work of metal to-be-done—brings into play at least three disparate energies or forces which act on a new plane of composition: the strong energy of an amorphous metal; the weak energy borne by the mold, which now functions as continuous force and acts as information that guides and follows the transformation of the material; and, decisively, the coupling energy that brings about the taking form between material and form, achieved only by the artisan. If we forget the third energy, we end up applying a sociological model based on class blindness to a technical context. The individuation is initiated by someone or something who brings together material and form, not as a synthesis of two distinct states of matter, but in the form of a transduction that maintains the productive asymmetry (potential) of the different durations

while pulling them forward over a threshold to a new level of resonance. Every mold, in other words, is an invention, not something given but a demand for instauration.

While matter is composed of a fixed distribution of thresholds of molar aggregates or well-formed genera and species, such that each form can be the content for another form ad infinitum, metal reveals matter as a material flow, a strictly machinic *phylum* that forms the outside of all phylogenesis.[22] This has to do with the conditions under which our intuition is capable of grasping matter as a material flow. While in everyday life, our intuition is subordinate to organic action and matter is perceived as formed content, it needs non-equilibrium conditions to become manifest. These conditions are found in the confrontation with metal, the fluidity of which resists external forces and generates its own effects, keeping a historical record of its past in a way that most fluids cannot. Because of this material productivity or expressivity, it is not the metallurgist who has consciousness of the specific qualities of metal, it's the sympathy or antipathy with metals that brings matter to consciousness.[23]

The machinic phylum constitutes the great solidarity between metallurgists of all ages. As Ruskin puts it in his lyrical essay 'The Work of Iron', iron is the ductile and tenacious 'ground we feed from' and, as a combination of earth and air, body and soul, its oxide is the very stuff with which 'nature paints'.[24] For both Palissy and Cellini, metals are full of local transformation and instability; they are more fluid than fluids. At the same time, they flow more slowly and more profoundly and more irreversibly than other fluids. The metallurgist expects metals to behave idiosyncratically and each particular case to make a practical difference. In other words, metals somehow resist external forces and engender their own effects. They generate relations just as much as relations generate metals. Metals contain historical records of their past, paths of deviation and translation, in a way that most fluids cannot. This gives them a metastable existence. By means of informational enrichment, they can be made to solve specific problems that multiply their forms of existence.[25] In his glazes Palissy fused generative salt and congelative water into strange aquatic and amphibic syntheses. Salt, he held, is 'an unknown and invisible body, like a spirit and yet occupying space and sustaining that in which it is enclosed'.[26] In turn, Cellini's *Saliera* (saltcellar) renders visible the composition of salt as metallic synthesis of the two flows of earth and sea, all the while exposing the transmutation of salt into a commodity due to its convergence with the flows of coinage (salt functioned as tax currency) and Francois I's expansionist trade policy. It thus anticipates the omnipresence of metals in our technical and cultural forms

of life, from microprocessors to solar panels, and the bionic embodiments of metallurgic technologies that we cyborgs have become.

Based on this special, primary relation of deterritorialization between the artisan and the metallurgist, perhaps we can understand the subjectivity of the metamodern artist as an alchemical process rather than as a stable function. If between ideas and their materialization there are only iterative processes and stepwise methodologies, then modernism is an active, evolutionary materialism—something Guattari, following Marx's definition of the relation of human labor with nature, called a 'metabolism of the infinite'.[27] Like all mannerists, Palissy and Cellini are of course extremely self-aware artisans, but they do not transcend their planes of consistency populated with the flows of ore, the vicissitudes of the market, and other sociopolitical forces. At best, they intervene in what eludes them. They deterritorialize the distribution of flows from the inside out, working inside the mold, that is, in metallic assemblages of various speeds. Their starting point is always the relatively unformed and indeterminate flux of materials.

Similarly Gottfried Semper's old *Stoffwechseltheorie*, according to which buildings are not made of textiles but textile has been transmaterialized into stone and steel, is rediscovered by some designers today. After metallurgy, Semper's is perhaps the first general theory of the transformation of materials in design that replaces hylomorphism with morphogenesis. The development of form is not a linear, progressive relationship, since its principle of individuation is itself serial and processual. Since textile weavings and bundles are carved from the stone and molded in steel, there is a shift from one technique to another. Yet textile, stone, and steel as relatively formed matter are only intermediary states in an infinite series of transformations. Since one technique does not make sense without the other, the architect has to follow their continuous development straddling the various disciplines. Beyond simple technique, what makes the thought of art and the chaos of forms intersect in the work is an abstract, spiritual zone between material states that is best called style. As Spuybroek comments: 'All the material is animated, not by souls inhabiting matter but by flexibility living within rigid matter, textile inhabiting stone, weaving inhabiting carving, carving inhabiting drawing. Again, work is not located—not in a class, or a pair of hands, or even in human beings; work is continuously displaced, and boundaries blur; it is omnipresent, and therefore spiritual.'[28] While various techniques can inform a manner, the latter has to be conceived as the abstract and operative—as opposed to structural—unity of composition of media. This is the very essence of mannerism: manner is the

leading edge of becoming, of deterritorialization; it is the excess of expression or practice over content.

This absorption of matter by a manner that amends rather than imitates it means that we pass from a reductive to a generative notion of modeling, or what Guattari has called 'meta-modeling'. Meta-modeling refers not to a schematic representation, but on the contrary to the spontaneous remingling of acquired regularities of materials with the emergence-level chance and indeterminacy from which they evolve. Carl De Smet, for example, replaces form with formation by working with a foam that retains a memory of its past (e.g., in *Memories of the Future*, 2012). Aranda\Lasch work with crystallographic structure as an organizing force (as in *Grotto*, 2005). And with the *Mycelium Chair* (2013) Eric Klarenbeek combined growing material derived from protocells with 3D printing. After metallurgy, then, contemporary designers use new materials to blur the gap between the nonliving and the living. Besides engaging the right materials, however, they also need syntactical or plastic methods, tools, technologies, and concepts to accelerate matter or slow it down. These tools of configurability can be of varying levels of abstraction, from an algebraic alphabet (compare with alchemy's *mathesis* in which material articulation and mathematical calculation are mutually implicative) for probabilities and possibilities to CNC systems and simulation software. But what is crucial is that, being both instrumental and constitutive, they are not representational, but constructive; they mediate and effectuate what they are about. As Luciana Parisi says, there is a continual adaptation or 'contagion' between algorithms, mechanical arts, and real-time physical movement.[29] Design itself becomes technical when coding becomes media literate or reflective and when meta-modeling becomes the integral speculative practice that returns its process to the field of its own emergence, from which it regenerates itself just as it constructs new figures and forms.

## Renewed Materialism

Perhaps the metaphysical core of mannerist design can be summed up as follows: there is creation everywhere, but not everything is created or designed. Is this betting on the alchemy or metabolism of informal creative processes the ideology of today's hackerspaces, in which the post-fordist economy feeds on sharing and tinkering? Is it just the goodwill of pathological progressives, or even of the creative class in general, from Silicon Valley employees to the new artistic researchers? Or does it also offer a way of reclaiming creativity from

professionals and established institutions, that is, from everybody who profits from the way it is currently conditioned?

Today, after decades of postmodern idealism or culturalism, we are witnessing a new materialism. To be a cultural materialist means to refrain from explaining things by, and thus reducing them to, what they are not.[30] Instead of explaining works of art by reducing them to a mirror of socio-cultural norms, economic interests, linguistic conventions, or religious convictions, we turn to the works themselves in their tangible, sensual, nonconceptual and non-anthropocentric reality. We do not learn about things by interpreting them in anthropocentric terms, rather we learn about ourselves by learning from things. Ideally, this is what fieldwork (as opposed to laboratory experimentation) in science or practice-based research (as opposed to 'doing theory') in art means. The new importance attached to tinkering in design—'a matter of fooling with things, with the street, the city, the society, life itself'[31]—is matched by the renewed interest in metallurgy and the science of materials in science and technology studies. A material such as metal is a relation with a milieu and for this reason, it cannot be idealized in terms of general microscopic models such as quarks, the Higgs boson, or black holes, nor can it be exhaustively understood in terms of the macroscopic phase diagrams of liquids, crystals, or other bodies with general qualities. Rather, it is always this or that aggregate. Not a matter of theory or fact but a matter of practical concern, it exists in a 'mesoscopic field' of varying scale in which it is no longer possible to distinguish between the human and nonhuman elements, but in which we move back and forth between quantum physics, thermodynamics, corrosion chemistry, crystallography, and management strategy.

Of course, if cultural materialism is to become a real movement and not just remain an idea, it has to go beyond the goodwill of some pre-established subjective attitude. As Manuel DeLanda has repeatedly argued, whereas hylomorphism is always mind-dependent, material entities are mind-independent.[32] Only what is mind-independent must be produced in the slowness and unpredictability of historical, evolutionary, embryological, and physico-chemical processes. Besides practice-based, we therefore also become object-oriented. What Graham Harman has called 'tool-being'[33] is the epiphany of the craftsperson: the disconcerting experience that his tools and materials exert their own reality and possess a vitality far beyond the subject–object correlation. Is this not what we have previously described as matter rising up to sensation in a kind of tingling or quiver? When things appear in the mode of being of readiness-to-hand (*zuhanden*, as Heidegger

says) as opposed to present-to-hand (*vorhanden*), we can only use them by allying ourselves with their autonomous propensity. And while they generally vanish and lose their singularity in the general equipmental effect, they regain their precognitive allure at the moment they break. This is why the proponents of OOO see object-orientedness as a relation that is neither theoretical nor practical but aesthetic—with Harman and Steven Shaviro approaching this presence from the side of beauty and Timothy Morton approaching it from the side of the sublime. But as we have seen, the opposition between beautiful and sublime itself really only persists from the perspective of the intellect. Either way, aesthetics is the sensibility or feeling of an object for its 'sheer sincerity of existence'.[34]

Perhaps the necessity of breaking down the traditional theory-practice schema is also where the contemporary rupture with alchemy and metallurgy takes place, and a breakthrough becomes possible that is not just aesthetic but first of all technical. Alchemy is an art of combinations that precipitates the event in non-generalizable experiments in which both the subject and the object are at stake. But it still puts its trust in a vital, perhaps we can call it romantic, liaison between humans and their world. Today more than in the past, the hylomorphic division of labor implies a scission of action and a kind of alienation, such as becomes clear from the fear of robots taking over work.

As Simondon has argued, even the domination of humans over humans derives from this more fundamental domination of humans over nature rather than vice versa. The original coming-into-being of the alienation between man and nature is due to a phase shift away from magical unity or 'friendship' between figure (individuals) and ground (the pre-individual potential of nature) toward a 'distinction . . . capable of modifying itself' in secondary individuations.[35] The new distinction consists of a divergence of technicity and religion. Modern technology is a 'machine [that] no longer prolongs the corporeal schema' (of work) and replaces it with a 'technical schematism'.[36] In pre-industrial artisanal production, the use-value of technical objects prevails in the confrontation between the coherence of the technical work and the needs of utility, whereas in industrial production the object's own operational functioning becomes dominant and its instrumentalization becomes secondary: 'there is a convergence of economic constraints (diminished quantity of raw material, of work and of energy consumption before use) and technical requirements'.[37] Today there is no nature outside of technology, just as technology is no longer merely prosthetic but itself becomes the ground in contradistinction to the figure. Every nature, too, is a second nature.

However, Simondon stresses that the problem is not the annihilation of use-value. The technical object is in an even deeper state of alienation than economic or social alienation in that it becomes opaque to its users and is treated merely as a functional object or slave. It would therefore be a mistake to think that a collectivization of property relations could relieve us. These relations may be intrinsic to the work paradigm but they are 'incomplete' with respect to the technical object: 'Labor and capital are both late with respect to the technical individual that is a depository of technicity.'[38] The source of alienation does not lie outside work but in work itself, because it is the functioning of technology as such that is obscured.[39] The work paradigm is hylomorphic in that it 'masks the relation in favor of the terms [of form and matter]', thus installing a knowledge gap between manufacturer and user. The point of view of technological knowledge, by contrast, consists 'in starting from what happens inside the mold'.[40] As a correction to Bergson's strict division between intellect and intuition, and its related understanding of technology as unidirectional imposition of ideas on matter,[41] Simondon speaks of technical objects in the same genetic mode as we talk about living beings, aesthetic objects, and physico-chemical systems. This enables him to show that the technical schematism involves not only intellect but also intuition. Just as there is novelty even in the correlate of the intellect, matter, engineers must be sentient. Their knowledge is an active knowledge that combines invention and production with ongoing adjustment and organization in use. Where construction and use converge, the hierarchies between the manual and the intellectual, or science and technology disappear.

The work to-be-done for Simondon is the ever-further integration of technology and culture.[42] Instead of returning to a magical unity, but also instead of relying on art (as in romanticism), it is only through technics that we may come to construct a new modality of the relation of humans to things, and in this way also of new transindividual relations among ourselves. For labor to become a collective activity again it must take on a position in the technical network that binds human and nonhuman actors alike: 'It would have to be possible to discover a social and economic mode whereby the user of the technical object would not only be the owner of this machine, but also the man who chooses it and who maintains it.' In other words, the responsibility, delicacy, and care of an intuition that transports us into the interior of things themselves must be based on a continuity of operation across various thresholds of technical functioning. Just as the operative knowledge of metals belongs as much to the doctor and the armorer as to the sculptor, miner, or watchmaker, technical knowledge must

learn how to enter into the spontaneous interplay of construction and alterations of its objects. The technical object is

> a stable mix of the human and the natural . . . it gives its human content a structure similar to that of natural objects, and allows the insertion in the world of causes and natural effects of this human reality. . . . A convertibility of the human into the natural and the natural into the human is instituted through the technical schematism,[43]

which thus replaces work as the fundamental metabolic function and conditions a 'new materialism' that takes the form of a 'new transcendental philosophy'.[44]

This means, first, that today's fascination with handwork should not be confused with the nostalgia for the transparency of the crafted product with respect to its production. After all, Marx had already pointed out that production cannot be rendered visible or absorbed in the product. Representation always comes too late, since the product of production is the plane of representation as such. As Sebastian Egenhofer argues, a contemporary production aesthetics therefore does not imply a preference for handwork or the unicity of a work in the age of serial reproduction. Rather, it starts from the fissure between representation and becoming, having to deal with the having become of the real as well as its means of reproduction and representation.[45] The notion of the vibrancy of matter is perhaps only the sublime cipher of this disparity, whereas metamodern craftsmanship expresses an impatience with the paralysis (as for example in climate change skepticism) caused by our inability to imagine the coming about of integrated world capitalism (euphemistically known as globalization).

A second lesson is that artisanal imagination does not develop freely and that its efficacy depends on the resistance and ambiguity it meets. Its generic processual character only really loses its descriptive generality and acquires force when aberrant movements deform our habitual schemata. The artisan is interesting to the extent that she is engaged in a bodily combat with reality, deciding in split-seconds, not by measuring and talking but by learning from contingency and constraint. This is why the mannerists valued virtuosity (*virtuosità*) and the speed of execution (*prestezza*) above all. This love of speed must be understood in conjunction with the equally mannerist will to difficulty (*difficoltà*)—the intense exploration of the liminal zone between raw material and pure form. We need to get rid of the classical conflict between necessity and freedom. Bergson stresses that intuition is averse to facility, since it involves a tense dialectic between many possible durations.[46] To intuit something is more

a decrease than an increase of control. Life, for Palissy, is not just swift, elegant movement, but also the slow fermenting process of a swamp. There is no grace without potential violence, since it means to be caught in the constituent acts of others, full of contrasts. If you would own grace instead of passing it on, it would degrade into slickness or virtuosity. Mannerist *sprezzatura* or 'ease' does not sprout from easiness, but from difficulty. 'Everyone knows the difficulty of things that are exquisite and well done—so to have the facility in such things gives rise to the greatest wonder.'[47] In a culture of rapid change, likewise, slow movement does not equal a lack of speed. In fact, there is neither virtuosity nor difficulty in microsecond calculation on Wall Street. Rather, slowing down is a particular assemblage of speed, an a-synchronization of the present. Speed exists in direct connection with the contingency and roughness of material flux, such that there can be no authority of skill without an intrusion of indeterminacy and otherness that slows down the question of failure and success.[48]

Hence the oscillation between the two irreducible moments of aesthetics, the sublime and the beautiful, or between the sense of intrusion and the feeling of sympathy. Only when our relation to the world is problematized by the disparity of materials can we profit from affordances and befriend resistance with only minimal force. Vice versa, we cannot immediately relate to the infinite and must attune with vital processes through finite composition. This was already Ruskin's aesthetic and non-ideological critique of capitalism. Perhaps this demand for proportionality also implies that we finally have to rid ourselves of the concept of design if we want to understand what is revolutionary about craftsmanship. If design is about problem solving and operativity, craftsmanship is about problem finding and inoperativity. Instead of industrial standardization, its goal is to produce otherness, something we have previously called consistency. The task is laborious, but perhaps the diligence and doggednes of the techno-crafters in their recalcitrant persistence to achieve a purpose are capable of reclaiming time from its rational homogenization. Their time is the time of the indetermination of life; their speed is one of self-animation and self-maintenance. Their science is the humble science of interstices and cracks, in other words, a science of defects and tortuous learning about their métier. They articulate something beyond the good intentions and optimism of design, and beyond the postmodern fascination with the technical sublime, namely that learning is not only about how to do things but also about why you are doing this and with whom. Whereas Rem Koolhaas's affirmation of the infinite, for example, still tends toward a cynical expansion of scientificism, crafters know that there comes a point when you can't improve by doing better and finitude becomes more important than the

sublime. There is no general response, only the informal compromises in which we become a machine among other machines, or one manner of producing coherence in matter among others. The artisan is cosmic precisely to the extent that he participates in this interstitial, self-reflective space of a mannered nature, that is, a civic, urban, and modern earth.

## Virtuosity

In mannerism the artisan is traditionally said to part ways with the anonymous swamp of his colleagues and emerge into the solitary figure of the artist under the sole authority of originality. Of course, it was lucrative to have this authority. Outside the guild orbit of assay and raw material, goldsmiths such as Lucas Cranach the Elder, Vasari, Ghiberti, Botticelli, and Verrocchio made more money as artists than their peers in crafts. The artist's dependency on the market and the public misunderstanding that came with it quickly led to heightened self-consciousness. However, originality does not equal autonomy. The newly gained inner life came at the price of social estrangement. Vasari's *Lives* reads like an early modern taxonomy of the pathologies of the artist's psyche. Worse still, individual autonomy leads to a loss of speed and agency, or indeed of a fundamental crisis of belief in the world: 'The master's own mastery changed in content; claims for his distinctiveness and originality now posed a motivational problem for him.'[49] This becomes abundantly clear from post-fordist conditions of labor, where managers have seized the image of the creative artist for themselves and demand from the people on the ground to mirror themselves in it. The illusion that everybody can be a designer without appropriate training in fact reveals that, whereas the workshop was a recipe for binding people together in a way that enabled them to deal face-to-face with issues of authority and mastery, originality is bad for coherence at almost every level of our relations: those to ourselves, those to others, and those to our physical environments.

In craft, to emphasize one more time, this means that you do not begin with an abstract idea and then translate it onto work. In design, aesthetic virtuality is the correlate of plastic invention, which is never a given power but also in/ under construction itself. Making is thinking. Moreover, design is not just about making or imitating things, it is also about making ourselves. Taking up Foucault's classic argument for an ethico-aesthetics of the self, Sennett stresses that form pertains to subjectivity no less than to objectivity: 'who we are arises directly from what our bodies can do. Social consequences are built into the

structure and the functioning of the human body, as in the workings of the human hand.'[50] Here, another aspect of craft becomes important: collective discipline, or the convergence of design and use, production and exercise. There can be no mastery of design without constant rehearsal. To make is to practice. In the words of Anish Kapoor: 'In the end, what one's working with is oneself. Every piece of sculpture, every drawing, every painting is a kind of chemistry. It's like an alchemy.'[51] The contemporary artisanal turn points, then, to the compelling question, provoked by metamodern conditions, of how we must shape our lives together with others in a network and media society.

Instead of rejecting the allegation that their craft amounted to mere work, the mannerists related sculpture's exercises to a spiritual presence. The repetitive training of skill in mannerism was part of a more general revival of interest in exercises of man on himself through one medium or another. The autobiography of Cellini, that great anti-Vasari, reads as a sort of care of the self based on *esercizi* or *lavori* by which he elevates himself from the profane to the sacred. *Disegno*, for him, was not the end of knowledge, but the learning curve that leads to grace; it made his art significant not just as a form or idea, but as a work, an *opera*.[52] As such, it stands at the very intersection of sculpture and morality: virtuosity is directly related to virtue. If intuition is a feeling of sympathy that transports us into the interior becoming of things themselves, then mastery is inseparable from a responsibility for what is being brought forth. As Agamben points out, while for Aristotle neither virtuous actions nor virtuous beings exist, virtue is the mode of existence of both. What is virtuous is use, something between being and acting, the virtuality of operative habit.[53] It is inseparable from delicate and tender care for an existential urge which is not simply ours, but of which we nonetheless form an inextricable part and on the continuation of which we depend.

For this reason, contemporary political theorists from Sennett to Sloterdijk and from Bernard Stiegler to Paolo Virno have rediscovered craftsmanship as a model for an engaged life. Under the real subsumption of labor by capital, public life no longer transcends manual labor, as Hannah Arendt thought. Instead, it is in integral skilling that they find the conditions for civic maturity.[54] For more than the mere acquisition of competence, a skill makes us experience the effect of how we connect and cohere. Craftsmanship in this sense is the new guise for the pedagogy of the senses. As enacted intuition, it triggers an abstract or mannerist sensibility. It produces the media literacy, eco-literacy, cosmo-literacy which transforms isolated individuals into sociable beings. Medial, ecological, cosmological subjectification—an *agençement* of the 'inter' more than

intersubjectivity—means becoming-individual in realizing transindividuality. Concretely this implies that people are prepared to take responsibility for the effects of how they interact on a specific scale. Acquiring skills and cultivating relationships are aspects of a medial enlightenment and an eco-emancipation or cosmo-emancipation. If ecology is 'the science of multiplicities, disparate causalities, and unintentional creations of meanings',[55] it becomes political when practices, out of their own efficacy and immanence, create agency in making people realize their interdependency: in literally being (*esse*) the in-between (*inter*), being interested. For like virtue, virtuosity is irreducibly public or virtual. Being neither the property of a subject nor the quality of his actions, a virtue's only mode of reality is that of virtuous use. Even when our habits are enacted mainly in the disciplined and controlled manner of private subjectivity, we are only the individuations of the relations of which we are composed and through which we inhabit the world. Thus whereas conscious intentionality is temporally dephased from the agency of its media, no matter whether these are natural or made up of sophisticated algorithms, the mastery of skilled labor triggers an agency that makes us interested, and could even provide a sense of dignity in performing our own collective subjectivation.[56]

The point is not that craftsmanship would be a model for the politics that might follow from it. Their relation, too, is a matter of meta-modellization, or reciprocal deterritorialization, which can straddle any number of domains and extend into all sorts of crossovers. But the return of craftsmanship does offer a key to understanding the present, provided that we associate this return with the sixteenth century and not the nineteenth century. In the sixteenth century the gradual reversal begins of the opposition between individual genius and collective industry into that between unskilled mass production and small-scale neo-crafters. By contrast, the nineteenth century is based on desingularization, such that the craftsperson is less a mediator between conception and execution than simply the enemy of the machine that produces non-biodegradable trash. The contemporary convergence of art, craft, and design, by contrast, is about resingularization. Instead of standardization, design processes happen among or within machinic modes of production in the form of a testing of new materials, customization of technologies, and an active care for their waste, just as contemporary technology turns design into a kind of generalized craftsmanship.

Artistically speaking, the return of craftsmanship and mannerist virtuosity marks a rematerialization of the art object. Socio-economically speaking, it undoes the traditional division of labor between the conceptual and executional moments, now that work has become increasingly networked and immaterial.

Ecologically speaking, craftsmanship puts us back in touch with shared social and material conditions of production. Of course, many of today's so-called workshops, labs, and breeding grounds are not productive spaces but places for the incapacitating consumption of originality. The use of handmade sketches which characterizes the design process of architects like Renzo Piano or Frank Gehry merely leads to an affected illusion of a proper engagement with matter. Ultimately, this is also the problem of Sennett's approach to craftsmanship, which never arrives at the question of technology.[57] In both cases, craft is no more than a false concretion of the real abstraction of money and technoscience, which is itself based on the ever-increasing split between intellectual labor and manual labor. If craftsmanship is to mean anything today, it must therefore be based on the reversal of the old idea that it is possible to design without making.

# Notes

## Introduction

1 Bruno Latour, 'Agency at the Time of the Anthropocene', *New Literary History* 45 (2014): 13.

2 Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York/London: Continuum, 1994), 28.

3 Timothy Morton, *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 108.

4 Bernadette Bensaude-Vincent and William R. Newman, 'Introduction', in *The Artificial and the Natural: An Evolving Polarity* (Cambridge, MA/London: The MIT Press, 2007), 6.

5 Ernst Kris, *Le Style rustique*, trans. Christophe Jouanlanne (Paris: Macula, 2005).

6 John Shearman, *Mannerism: Style and Civilization* (London: Penguin, 1977), 19.

7 Frank Reijnders, *Metamorfose van de barok* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij 1001, 1991), 103.

8 Giancarlo Maiorino, *The Portrait of Eccentricity: Arcimboldo and the Mannerist Grotesque* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1991), 3.

9 Peter Sloterdijk, *Zeilen und Tagen: Notizen 2008–2011* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2012), 179. Unless otherwise indicated, translations from foreign language sources are my own, and I retain the original emphasis in quotations.

10 Maria Fabricius Hansen, 'Maniera and the Grotesque', in *Manier und Manierismus*, ed. Wolfgang Braungart (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2000), 251–73.

11 Félix Guattari, *Chaosmosis: An Ethico-Aesthetic Paradigm,* trans. Paul Bains and Julian Pefanis (Sydney: Power Publications, 1995), 18–19.

12 The Italian art critic Achille Bonito Oliva has proposed the concept of 'chamber nature' in which the domestic and the monstrous interact through association and constant play of the imagination. Achille Bonito Oliva, ed., *Arcimboldo*, trans. John Shepley (Milan: Franco Maria Ricci, 1980), appendix.

13 Thomas Da Costa Kaufmann, *Arcimboldo: Visual Jokes, Natural History, and Still-Life Painting* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

14 Paul North, *Bizarre-Priviliged Items in the Universe: The Logic of Likeness* (New York: Zone Books, 2021), 136–48.

15 Roland Barthes, 'Arcimboldo, or Magician and Rhêtoriqueur', in *The Responsibility of Forms*, trans. Richard Howard (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985), 145–6.

16  Ibid., 147. North proposes the explanatory schema of homeosis, 'the happening of likeness' according to 'excentric habits', as an alternative to that of semiosis. In defining likeness as 'an arraying display of inertial pairs with overlapping traits' (North, *Bizarre-Priviliged Items in the Universe*, 11), the aim is 'to reverse the order form-being-likeness' (ibid., 43) and thereby push the reversal of the conclusion that likenesses are trivial. This brings about a more radical rupture with classical ontology than semiotics. In homeosis, likeness is without metamorphosis. Likeness is not even about the components and their networks but thoroughly adverbial. It happens 'as is', cutting across 'manners' (ibid., 134) of existence. From one likeness to the next, there is no continuity of motion, just a static genesis, which happens bidirectionally and remains fully invertible. In pointing to a cosmos not made up of being or beings but of overlapping modes, North thus draws the ultimate conclusions from the mannerist revolution.

17  'Forms do not exist without matter, in which they are generated and corrupted, and out of whose bosom they spring and into which they are taken back. Hence, matter, which always remains fecund and the same, must have as the fundamental prerogative of being the only substantial principle; as that which is, and forever remains, and the forms together are to be taken merely as varied dispositions of matter, which come and go, cease and renew themselves, so that none have value as principle.' Giordano Bruno, *Cause, Principle and Unity and Essays on Magic*, trans. and ed. Richard J. Blackwell and Robert de Lucca (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 57, 59–61, 89–90.

18  Arnold Hauser, *Mannerism: The Crisis of the Renaissance and the Origin of Modern Art*, trans. Eric Mosbacher in collab. with the author (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965), 15.

19  Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, 'Monadology', § 67, *Philosophical Essays*, ed. and trans. Roger Ariew and Daniel Garber (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1989 [1714]), 222.

20  Erwin Panofsky, 'What is Baroque', in *Three Essays on Style*, ed. Irving Laving (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997), 88.

21  Patricia Falguières, 'Extase de la matière: Note sur la physique des maniéristes', in *Les éléments et les metamorphoses de la nature, Imaginaire et symboloque des arts dans la culture européenne du XVIe au XVIIIe siècle*, ed. Hervé Brunon, Monique Mosser and Daniel Rabreau (Bordeaux: William Blake & Com Arts & Arts, 2004), 55–84.

22  Étienne Souriau, *Avoir une âme: essai sur les existences virtuelles* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres/Annales de l'Université de Lyon, 1938), 114.

23  'The decoration of the *studiolo* was a secret self-glorification of the sovereign and his hermetic inner life. The ideal self, on the representation of which Federico da Montefeltro has been working in Urbino, no longer existed as such, having resolved itself into a universal dimension. The small, intimate space had become a place of gathering for someone who was steeped in the consciousness of his cosmic

dimension.' Daniel Arasse, 'Kunst und Obrigkeit—Die Macht der Kunst', in *Der Europäische Manierismus 1520–1610*, ed. Daniel Arasse and Andreas Tönnesmann (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1997), 417–74, 456.

24   As Jacques Rancière has pointed out, modernism does not divide into a linear sequence from modernism to postmodernism, because it was itself already a correction, marked by several crises, of the narrative of progress. Modernism is not only the tradition of the new but also the reappropriation of the novelty of tradition (and therefore, a mannerism). Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics*, trans. Gabriel Rockhill (London/New York: Continuum, 2006), 20.

25   Colin Rowe, 'Mannerism and Modern Architecture', *The Architectural Review* 107 (May 1950): 289–99.

26   Peter Eisenman and Elisa Iturbe, *Lateness* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020), 9. Accordingly, mannerism is neither a break with the past nor an embrace of history but a non-dialectical and non-linear possibility of critique, one based neither on looking backward nor on looking forward but on a different understanding of the relationship between form and time, whereas the modern itself is only the 'backdrop against which different temporal and formal attitudes emerge'. 'Lateness presents an alternative form of time because the integrity of form is preserved at the scale of specific conventions, while at the same time, inherited notions of how one convention might relate to another are challenged or reinvented. Operating outside a strict dichotomy between transgression and regression, and remaining instead in the realm of the untimely, lateness is neither an explicit break with history nor an overt return to the past. Lateness has no ties to any particular style, nor does lateness operate as a style in itself. It manifests itself as an interruption to linear time, as such its form must be contingent, its outward appearance dependent on historical context in which certain conventions are dominant and others are suppressed.' Ibid., 20.

27   Following Rowe, Frans Sturkenboom proposes the splendid formula: 'all explicitly modern, all implicitly mannerist'. Sturkenboom, *De gestiek van de architectuur: Een leerboek hedendaags maniërisme* (Arnhem: ArtEZ Press, 2017), 11, 229. He describes a 'dramatization' or 'mannerism of the surface/plane' in recent prestigious architectural projects that use texture, posture, bigness, foreshortening, receding/ projecting perspective, abstraction of scale, trapezoids, obliqueness, ellipses, rhomboids, flowing space, or monstrosity as deformations of primary geometry and intensifications of gesture (UNStudio, BIG, Zaha Hadid, but also Zumtor, Scarpa, Wright, the later Le Corbusier, MVRDV). 'In Bomarzo the earth gave birth to a park full of monsters. Today we dramatize the surface of the earth, we pull it upwards, the landscape as *rustica*.' Ibid., 236.

28   Giorgio Agamben, *The Use of Bodies*, trans. Adam Kotsko (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015), 173.

29   Cf. Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, *Architecture as Signs and Systems for a Mannerist Time* (Cambridge, MA/London: The Belknap Press of Harvard

University Press, 2004). My understanding of contemporary mannerism is closer to Jean-François Lyotard than Fredric Jameson. Lyotard identified postmodernism as the avant-gardist moment of modernism, and as we will see the concept of 'manner' bears close resemblance to Lyotard's concept of the immaterial. Jean-François Lyotard, 'The Sublime and the Avantgarde', *Artforum* 22, no. 8 (1984).

30  Gilles Deleuze, *Desert Islands and Other Texts 1953–1974*, ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Michael Taormina (New York: Semiotext(e), 2004), 137; Gilles Deleuze, *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975–1995*, trans. Ames Hodges and Michael Taormina (New York: Semiotext(e), 2006), 139.

31  Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 346–7.

32  Ibid., 411, 377.

33  Kamini Vellodi, 'Tintoretto: Cosmic Artisan', *Deleuze and Guattari Studies* 13, no. 2 (2019): 207–39.

34  Gilles Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco (London/New York: Verso, 1998), 159.

35  'The Bergsonian revolution is clear: We do not move from the present to the past, from perception to recollection, but from the past to the present, from recollection to perception.' Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Zone Books, 1991), 56–7, 63. See also: Jae Emerling, 'Afterword: An Art Historical Return to Bergson', in *Bergson and the Art of Immanence: Painting, Photography, Film*, ed. John Mullarkey and Charlotte de Mille (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 260–71.

36  Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 327. Thus, the composer Olivier Messiaen captures the 'stars, atoms and birds in the same being of sensation' (ibid., 170), and Paul Klee 'renders visible' a cosmogenetic 'interworld' within which plant, mineral, animal, machinic, human, and celestial elements collide and combine (ibid., 56).

37  See Sjoerd van Tuinen, *Deleuze's Mannerist Aesthetics* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, forthcoming, 2023).

38  See Sjoerd van Tuinen and Stephen Zepke, eds., *Art History after Deleuze and Guattri* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2017).

39  Vladimir Jankélévitch, *Le Je-ne-sais-quoi et le Presque-rien. 1. La manière et l'occasion* (Paris: Seuil, 1980), 15. Agamben quotes Aristotle—'privation [*sterēsis*] is like a face, a form [*eidos*]'—to show how the mode of existence of potentiality is like appearance or semblance in that it 'creates its own ontology' by 'emancipating itself from Being and non-Being alike' and constitutes a 'hiatus' or 'threshold', 'the luminous spiral of the possible'. Giorgio Agamben, *Potentialities: Collected Essays in Philosophy*, ed. and trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 181, 257.

40  Jankélévitch, *Le Je-ne-sais-quoi*, 81, 89.

41  Ibid., 29–30.

42  Gilbert Simondon, 'The Position of the Problem of Ontogenesis', *Parrhesia* 7 (2009): 4–16, 10.

43  Edmund Husserl, 'Foundational Investigations of the Phenomenological Origin of the Spatiality of Nature', in *Shorter Works*, trans. Fred Kersten, in Edmund Husserl, ed. P. McCormick and F. A. Elliston (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), 222–33.

44  For Kit Fine, modal criteria do not account for the intrinsic nature of the object under consideration. Essence and modality are entirely separate, to the extent that it seems possible to agree on all the modal facts and yet disagree on the essentialist facts. Kit Fine, 'Essence and Modality: The Second Philosophical Perspectives Lecture', *Philosophical Perspectives* 8 (1994): 1–16.

45  As Souriau, inspired by Bergson's reversal of the Aristotelian apparatus of the possible and the real, objects against essentialist philosophy, the categories of the possible, the potential, the ready-to-emerge are set '*beside* the actual, the real, and seen through it, as in rear projection', because they presuppose what they modalize. Étienne Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, trans. Erik Beranek and Tim Howles (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015 [1943]), 112.

46  Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles. Book One: God*, trans. Anton C. Pegis (Notre Dame: Notre Dame Press, 1975), I, 28, 6.

47  For a more in-depth elaboration of this distinction, see Nahum Brown, *Hegel on Possibility: Dialectics, Contradiction, and Modality* (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2021).

48  Agamben, *The Use of Bodies*, 157. Agamben suggests that the difference between continental and analytical philosophy goes back to the unresolved tension between the logical notion of modality (the modal categories) and the ontological concept, already found in Scotus and Suárez, of a mode that is real yet not like things. Ibid., 161. Indeed, whereas the latter complexifies logical dualisms such as essence and existence, the former is essentially reductionist: 'It is often said that philosophers are concerned with essence, that, confronted with a thing, they ask "What is it?" But this is not exact. Philosophers are above all concerned with existence, with the mode [or rather, the modes] of existence. If they consider essence, it is to exhaust it in existence, to make it exist.' Agamben, *Potentialities*, 179.

49  Simondon, 'The Position of the Problem of Ontogenesis', 4.

50  Isabelle Stengers and Bruno Latour, 'The Sphinx of the Work', in Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 11–90, 33–4. In this regard, Hegelian dialectics already marked a big step forward, insofar as it understands modality as 'measure': instead of conceiving possibility as a modality of essence, essence is a modality of possibility, that is, a becoming-necessary in the encounter of contingencies. Georg

Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Wissenschaft der Logik I* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1986), 387.

51  'If it were true that logic [the law of the excluded middle and the principle of identity] provided statements about being only after individuation, it would be necessary to institute a theory of being that is anterior to any form of logic; this theory could serve as the foundation to logic, because nothing proves in advance that there is only one possible way of individuating being. If multiple types of individuation were to exist, multiple logics would also have to exist, each corresponding to a specific type of individuation. The classification of the ontogeneses would allow us to pluralize logic using a valid foundation of plurality.' Simondon, 'The Position of the Problem of Ontogenesis,' 13.

52  Cf. the modal as 'a qualifier for the quantitative measurement of contingency and necessity stated by systems of propositions, laws, predications, or a particular knowledge model'. Felicity Colman, 'Modality', *Philosophy Today* 63, no. 4 (2019): 983–98, 984.

53  Simondon, 'The Position of the Problem of Ontogenesis', 5.

54  'There is genesis when the coming-into-being of a system of a primitively oversaturated reality, rich in potential, greater than unity and harboring an internal incompatibility, constitutes for this system the discovery of computability, a resolution through the advent of structure. This structuration is the advent of an organization that is the basis of an equilibrium of metastability. Such genesis opposes itself to the degradation of the potential energies contained in a system through the passage to a stable state from which transformation is no longer possible.' Gilbert Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects*, trans. Cecile Malaspina and John Rogove (Minneapolis: Univocal, 2017), 168.

55  Agamben, *Potentialities*, 179–80.

56  For Tarde as for Leibniz, difference is the 'sufficient reason' of everything that exists: 'Difference, in one sense, is the substantial side of things, what they have most in common and what makes them most different. One has to start from this difference and to abstain from trying to explain it, especially by starting with identity, as so many persons wrongly do. Because identity is a minimum and, hence, a type of difference, and a very rare type at that, in the same way as rest is a type of movement and the circle a type of ellipse. To begin with some primordial identity implies at the origin a prodigiously unlikely singularity, or else the obscure mystery of one simple being then dividing for no special reason.' Gabriel Tarde, *Monadologie et sociologie* (Paris: Les empêcheurs de penser en rond, 1999 [1883]), 72–3, 38.

57  Deleuze, *Desert Islands*, 89.

58  Deleuze, *Two Regimes of Madness*, 384. 'Life is not your history—those who have no charm have no life, it is as though they are dead. But the charm is not the person. It is what makes people be grasped as so many combinations and so many unique

chances from which such a combination has been drawn. It is a throw of the dice that necessarily wins, since it affirms chance sufficiently instead of detaching or mutilating chance or reducing it to probabilities. Thus through each fragile combination a power of life is affirmed with a strength, an obstinacy, an unequalled persistence in the being.' Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues II*, trans. Barbara Habberjam and Hugh Tomlinson (New York/London: Continuum, 2002), 5. Or: 'At the most profound level of subjectivity, there is not an ego but rather a singular composition, an idiosyncrasy, a secret cipher marking the unique chance that *these* entities had been retained and willed, that *this* combination had been thrown and not another.' Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, 120.

59   Henri Bergson, *The Creative Mind: An Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Mabelle L. Andison (New York: Dover Publications, 1998 [1903]), 141–2. Bergson distinguishes 'partial expressions' of an open whole from the component parts of closed systems. Ibid., 144, 154.

60   Martin Heidegger, 'Moira', in *Early Greek Thinking: The Dawn of Western Philosophy*, trans. David Farrell Krell and Frank A. Capuzzi (San Francisco: Harper Row, 1984), 79–101.

61   Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, ed. David Ray Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1979 [1929]), 21. And as he continues: 'The term "one" does not stand for "the integral number one," which is a complex special notion. It stands for the general idea underlying alike the indefinite article "a or an," and the definite article "the," and the demonstratives "this or that," and the relatives "which or what or how."'

62   Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 20. For a more intra-analytical take on Deleuzian modal logic, see Jean-Claude Dumoncel, 'Les modalités Deleuziennes', https://www.academia.edu/23505679/LES_MODALITES_DELEUZIENNES. However, as Dumoncel notes, Deleuze doesn't speak about modalities but about possible worlds. Possible worlds are not there to be analyzed logically in their modalities, as that would be 'like the plough without the oxen'.

63   Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 182.

64   Information is not a set of data but 'a difference that makes a difference'. Gregory Bateson, *Steps to An Ecology of Mind: Collected Essays in Anthropology, Psychiatry, Evolution, and Epistemology* (New Jersey: Jason Aronson Inc, 1972), 459.

65   For further methodological considerations, see also my 'Introduction' to Sjoerd van Tuinen, *Speculative Art Histories* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 1–10.

66   This book is indebted to recent thematizations in feminism and Black studies of seriality and deformation as aesthetic practices that pervert, rather than subvert, the authoritative artwork and social life of form by accumulating 'surreptitious (re)turns beneath' them, thereby producing their immanent declension. For an introduction, see: Rizvana Bradley and Denise Ferreira da Silva, 'Four Theses on

Aesthetics', *e-flux* 120 (September 2021), https://www.e-flux.com/journal/120
/416146/four-theses-on-aesthetics/

67  Michel Jeanneret, *Perpetual Motion: Transforming Shapes in the Renaissance from da Vinci to Montaigne*, trans. Nidra Poller (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 173.

68  Ibid., 116.

69  Ruyer upholds the neo-finalist principle of 'the homogeneity of intelligence' against the 'pseudo-rationalists', who want to break everything down to a small number of past causes. That these themes are absolute means that they select and link all that appears relative to them in a non-dimensional, 'absolute survey' or 'absolute', non-psychological 'consciousness' of the event of their formation. Thus a theme relates to bonds like a mode to existence: to exist is to consist of X in a unifying mode. Raymond Ruyer, 'The Philosophy of Morphogenesis', trans. Jon Roffe and Nicholas B. de Weydenthal, *Parrhesia* 29 (2018): 1–25, 16–20.

70  Ruyer, 'The Philosophy of Morphogenesis', 10. And: 'The living being forms itself directly in accordance with a theme, without the theme first having to become an idea-image or represented model.' Ibid., 21–2.

71  Following the Deleuzian method of dramatization, the aim of a conceptual portrait is to exhibit, by means of a small number of vital anecdotes that unify thought and affect, the gestures by which a philosopher, as a persona of thought, moves back and forth between his artifacts of thought and their plane of immanence, which, in the case of Leibniz, goes by the name of common sense. On this method, see: Sjoerd van Tuinen, 'Hermeticism instead of Hermeneutics. The History of Philosophy Conceived of as Mannerist Portraiture', in *Deleuze, Guattari, and the Problem of Transdisciplinarity*, ed. Guillaume Collet (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2019), 133–6.

72  Since there is not one schematism but many, Ruyer replaces the Kantian schematism with a multiple thematism, in which every theme (e.g., the molecule, the organism, consciousness) is like an 'absolute hand' (a reference to Leroi-Gourhan) that selects and inspires the relative hand that binds. The schematism thus becomes 'the dimension of a trans-spatial thematism indissolubly combined with spatio-temporal dimensions'. Ruyer, 'The Philosophy of Morphogenesis', 6, 9.

73  Gilbert Simondon, *Individuation in Light of Notions of Form and Information*, vol. II, trans. Taylor Adkins (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020), 663–73.


# Chapter 1


1  Liana de Girolami Cheney (ed.), *Readings in Italian Mannerism* (New York: Peter Lang, 2004), 17.

2 Shearman, *Mannerism*, 16–19.

3 'The exhibition *Entartete Kunst* suggested that modernism was the contemporary form of the pathological. It inherited a judgment that had been formed in the aversion against mannerism and used against the modern.' Horst Bredekamp, 'Der Manierismus: Zur Problematik einer kunsthistorischen Erfindung', in *Manier und Manierismus*, ed. Wolfgang Braungart (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2000), 118.

4 Heinrich Wölfflin, *Renaissance and Baroque*, trans. K. Simon (London: Collins, 1964 [1888]), 15.

5 Two older overviews of the controversies surrounding the nomenclature of mannerism in art history including extensive bibliographies can be found in Claude-Gilbert Dubois, *Le maniérisme* (Paris: PUF, 1979), 161–91, 212–18 and in James V. Mirollo, *Mannerism and Renaissance Poetry: Concept, Mode, Inner Design* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1984), 1–71.

6 Erwin Panofsky, *Idea: Ein Beitrag zur Begriffsgeschichte der älteren Kunsttheorie* (Dresden: Fundus, 2008), 149.

7 Beat Wismer and Michael Scholz-Hänsel (eds.), *El Greco and Modernism* (Berlin: Hatje Canz, 2012).

8 Max Dvôrák, *Kunstgeschichte als Geistesgeschichte: Studien zur abendländischen Kunstentwicklung* (Munich: Piper, 1924), 270. Dvôrák was a student and successor of Riegl, but whereas Dvôrák saw a strong spiritual presence in mannerism, Riegl—mentioning Vasari and the two Zuccari—saw only spiritual absence compared to the decorative arts. 'What do we call mannerism? The superficial imitation of characteristics in the art of Michelangelo, and also of Raphael, in his last Michelangelesque phase. But spiritual absorption has fallen away—not because artists are no longer able to achieve this, but because they no longer want to; it was no longer required in the austere Counter Reformation era. Spiritual absorption defied imitation, as it needed to be internally comprehended and lived.' Aloïs Riegl, *The Origins of Baroque Art in Rome*, ed. and trans. Andrew Hopkins and Arnold Alexander Witte (Los Angeles: Getty publications, 2010 [1903]), 209.

9 Cited in Dagobert Frey, *Manierismus als europäische Stilerscheinung* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer Verlag, 1964), 42.

10 Arnold Hauser, *Der Ursprung der modernen Kunst und Literatur: Die Entwicklung des Manierismus seit der Krise der Renaissance* (Munich: DTV, 1979), 8, 148.

11 Georges Didi-Huberman shows how Winckelmann's model of art history arises from an organic notion of history, which imagines that it develops in the same way that an embryo grows into a fully mature animal. When Winckelmann writes about the renaissance he pictures it as culture's point of full maturity and perfection, a moment of flourishing after which only decline and decadence was possible. Burkhardt (a crucial source for Warburg and Nietzsche) on the contrary, thinks of the renaissance in vital but not organic terms. There is no art history without a morphology of forms in time, and Burckhardt understood these forms as being

constituted by a play of forces (*Potenzen*) from which they derive their various modes of existence. Georges Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images: Questioning the Ends of a Certain History of Art*, trans. J. Goodman (University Park: Penn State Press, 2005), 110–11.

12  Hauser, *Der Ursprung der modernen Kunst*, 24.

13  Marcia B. Hall, a leading art historian of the period and mentee of David Freedberg, has included an apologetic 'Note on style labels' at the beginning of her book *After Raphael: Painting in Central Italy in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), and a promise to keep their use to a minimum (9).

14  Antonio Pinelli, *La bella maniera: Artisti del Cinquecento tra regola e maniera* (Rome: Einaudi, 2003), xxi. The problem is exemplified by the contrast between the subtitle and the introduction of the catalog accompanying the 2014 exhibition *Pontormo and Rosso Fiorentino: Divergent Paths of Mannerism*, according to which mannerism 'is a hackneyed categorization that may be useful to delimit (albeit summarily) the timeline of a period, but it proves deceptive and downright pernicious if employed to refer to a figurative language or, worse yet, artifices, chiefly imbued with eccentric attitudes, in both expression and life. It does not behoove us by any means to discuss, yet again, the issues belaboured by authoritative historians for decades: in other words, what is meant by "Mannerism", what its formal characteristics are, its ideological traits, how the word "Mannerism" was coined, which term would be best used in its stead and so on. These are questions that, in the end, would be germane above all to the history of art, except that the use of the term affects the very understanding of the artists given this label and often leads to exegetic distortions about them.' Carlo Falciani and Antonio Natali (eds.), *Pontormo and Rosso Fiorentino: Diverging Paths of Mannerism* (Florence: Mandragora, 2014), 15.

15  Bredekamp, 'Der Manierismus', 129.

16  Bergson gives the example of the prefiguration of romanticism in classical writers, which only becomes visible once romanticism has posited itself: 'To take a simple example, nothing prevents us today from associating the romanticism of the nineteenth century with what was already romantic in classical writers. But the romantic aspect of classicism is only brought by the retroactive effect of romanticism once it has appeared. If there had not been a Rousseau, a Chateaubriand, a Vigny, a Victor Hugo, not only should we never have perceived, but also *there would never really have existed*, any romanticism in the earlier classical writers, for this romanticism of theirs only materializes by lifting out of their work a certain aspect, and this slice [*découpure*], with its particular form, no more existed in classical literature before romanticism appeared on the scene than there exists, in the cloud floating by, the amusing design that an artist perceives in shaping to his fancy the amorphous mass. Romanticism worked retroactively on classicism as the artist's design worked on the cloud. Retroactively it created its own

prefiguration in the past and an explanation of itself by its predecessors.' Bergson, *The Creative Mind*, 12.

17  I emphasize 'critical' because the original philosophical meaning and purpose of critique which inspired the founders of art history as a discipline is precisely what has been contested for some time now, namely that art history and art criticism can be regulated by a transcendental idea of art. The belief in a definable essence of art provided art historians with a concept to guide empirical inquiry, just as it provided artists with a constancy in time in their self-understanding. If, in the nineteenth century, the art historian's practice is a redoubling of that of the artist and vice versa, then today, after endless modernist ruptures, their estrangement could not be greater. For art history, this means that it has come to focus more and more on the historical context of works of art (documents, texts, archival materials) as well as the a-historical, material properties of the work of art itself.

18  This is, according to Deleuze, the secret of transcendental empiricism. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 25.

19  Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?,* trans. H. Tomlinson and L. Burchill (London/New York: Verso, 1994), 160–1; Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, xxi.

20  Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, trans. Tom Conley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 56–7.

21  Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations: 1972–1990*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 31, 33; Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues*, viii.

22  Emil Maurer, *Manierismus: Figura Serpentinata und andere Figurenideale* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2001), 12.

23  Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 82. 'A true idea, in the pragmatic sense, is an idea that changes something in a satisfactory way in the mind of the person thinking it. The true idea is not only what one believes, does, or thinks; it is what makes us believe, makes us act or makes us think. Pragmatism is thus at the same time a method of evaluation of truth. . . . In effect, truth is now evaluated in function of a value that exceeds it: the Interesting.' David Lapoujade, *William James: Empirisme et pragmatisme* (Paris: Les Empêcheurs de penser on rond, 2007), 74.

24  It should be noted that Adorno did not relate the notion of late style to mannerism, although he had a subtle understanding of mannerism as both a protest against and a travesty of the classical ('historical') tendency. Cf. Theodor W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (London: Bloomsbury, 2002), 301. At the same time he also worried that an aesthetical concept such as mannerism corresponds to 'the tendency of philosophical aesthetics toward those abstract rules in which nothing is invariant other than that they are ever and again given the lie by spirit as it takes shape.' Ibid., 339.

25  Cf. Vasari's judgment: 'It would have been well for him in these last years not to work save as a pastime, so as not to diminish with works of less excellence the

reputation gained in his best years, when his natural powers were not declining and drawing towards imperfection.' Cited in Gordon Mcmullon (ed.), *Late Style and Its Discontents: Essays in Art, Literature, and Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 16.

26  'The rendering indifferent of the material, the stepping back from appearance which characterizes the late style.' Theodor W. Adorno, *Beethoven. The Philosophy of Music*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), 136.

27  'For Adorno, lateness is the idea of surviving beyond what is acceptable and normal; in addition, lateness includes the idea that one cannot really go beyond lateness at all, cannot transcend or lift oneself out of lateness, but can only deepen the lateness.' Edward Said, *On Late Style: Music and Literature Against the Grain* (New York: Vintage, 2007), 13. Said illustrates this claim with a quote from Thomas Mann: 'Beethoven's art had overgrown itself, risen out of the habitable regions of tradition, even before the startled gaze of human eyes, into spheres of the entirely and utterly and nothing—but personal—an ego painfully isolated in the absolute, isolated too from sense by the loss of his hearing; lonely prince of a realm of spirits, from whom now only a chilling breath issued to terrify his most willing contemporaries, standing as they did aghast at these communications of which only at moments, only by exception, they could understand anything at all.' Ibid., 7.

28  Hauser, *Der Ursprung der modernen Kunst*, 27.

29  Bergson, *The Creative Mind*, 84–5.

30  As Lars Spuybroek points out, this may well imply a transformation of (art) history into theory. It is nonetheless limited by rigor because we don't use history to legitimate the present. Spuybroek, *The Sympathy of Things: Ruskin and the Ecology of Design* (London: Bloomsbury, 2011), 9.

31  Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images*, 86. While works of art have plural relations to time insofar as they figure their own origins and construct a future possibility beyond the control of the present, Nagel and Wood show how renaissance art distinguishes itself in its apprehensiveness about this temporal instability: 'To anachronize is to be belated again, to linger. The work is late, first because it succeeds some reality that it re-presents, and then late again when that re-presentation is repeated for successive recipients.' (Alexander Nagel and Christopher S. Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York: Zone Books, 2010), 13.)

32  Didi-Huberman refers to the 'historian's blow' as the anti-speculative argument that contemporary categories cannot apply to past realities. Shearman, for example, has famously redefined the study of mannerism by demanding that only categories produced by the age itself are used, such that we can finally consider a period through its own eyes, whereas other prominent methods would obstruct the original intentions of artists and patrons (Shearman, *Mannerism*, 15–16; Falciani and Natali, *Pontormo and Rosso Fiorentino*, 16). The limitations of this method are obvious: no less than the present, the empirical past can be a

limitation, a past that screens out itself, since the true past lies outside the merely discursive. Here Didi-Huberman's warning applies: 'Art historians who gibly dismiss "theory" are actually dismissing, or rather expressing their dread of, the strange fact that questions can outlive answers' (Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images*, 33–4). More recently, Paul van den Akker has shown how changes in art criticism and aesthetic theory between the renaissance and the eighteenth century—a formalist valuation of curved lines at the cost of illusion, and thus the necessity of legitimating the 'ugly' as art—meant that the problem of mannerism would be dealt with in classical art history on the basis of ideas that would only appear two centuries after it had actually occurred. That this method has remained paradigmatic ever since is proven precisely by Shearman, who in fact does not live up to his own advice that art historians read mannerist artworks by using 'their code rather than ours', to the extent that no sixteenth-century art critic would describe a Parmigianino by the 'curves that, like waves, flow together to climaxes, and then part again—curves so filled with their own aesthetic vitality that the illustrative meaning of the forms . . . of which they are composed is partially lost' (Shearman, *Mannerism*, 65). Although still deeply, albeit unconsciously, indebted to Riegl's nineteenth-century convictions (there is an essence of a whole artistic period, this essence manifests itself in a period's style, this style is best described in terms of two-dimensional, formal features, form and content are the two weights on the artistic balance), moreover, Shearman and Smyth reduced the former's theory of style as the expression of an attitude toward life to an artistic idea about style as a manifestation of an aesthetic taste. Paul van den Akker, *Looking for Lines: Theories on the Essence of Art and the Problem of Mannerism* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), 383–4.

33  John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (New York: Perigee / Penguin, 2005 [1934]), 232–3.

34  Werner Hofmann, *Zauber der Medusa: europäische Manierismen* (Wien: Löcker, 1987), 42.

35  Hauser, *Der Ursprung der modernen Kunst*, 38.

36  Erwin Panofsky, 'Das Problem des Stils in der bildenden Kunst', in *Erwin Panofsky: Aufsätze zu Grundfragen der Kunstwissenschaft*, ed. Hariolf Oberer and Egon Verheyen (Berlin: Verlag Volker Spiess, 1980 [1915]), 23–49.

37  Vasari, *The Lives*, 'Preface to Part Three'.

38  Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. J. C. Meredith, revised N. Walker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007 [1790]), 147.

39  Gottlob Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, Vol. 1. trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975 [1820–9]), 291. Precisely to the extent that art history aims at general recognizable knowledge, it intrinsically tends to this reduction of manner to mannered. Not without irony, one should add that, for Hegel, manner covers those aspects of treatment and execution that are central to contemporary art history.

40  Robert Klein, 'L'art et l'attention au technique', in *Gestalt und Gedanke: Zur Kunst und Theorie der Renaissance*, trans. and ed. Horst Günther (Berlin: Verlag Klaus Wagenbach, 1996), 382–93.

41  Richard Wollheim, *Painting as an Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 26–7, 42.

42  Maiorino, *The Portrait of Eccentricity*, 20, 3, 16.

43  Ibid., 30.

44  Ibid., 27.

45  Jonathan Gilmore, *The Life of a Style: Beginnings and Endings in the Narrative History of Art* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), 112.

46  Svetlana Alpers, 'Style Is What You Make It: The Visual Arts Once Again' in *The Concept of Style*, ed. Berel Lang (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1987), 137–61, 162. And: 'The study of styles and genres seems to me always in danger of extracting, by naming and singling out, the accomplishment of specific modes that seem by virtue of this nomination to have preeminence. But style is what you make it and the mode is in the making. The Renaissance model appeals to students of style and aesthetics because it produces the material for their study: works judged when completed, objective, outside the maker and prior to the viewer and presumably not tied to a function in the world. It is only certain modes that posit such an objective world and maker. Questions about style and iconography are appropriate for Renaissance art, but we want questions that are appropriate for all art. The main question, it seems to me, should be modal. And it goes something like this: "What would it (reality, the world) be like if the relationship between us and the world would be this one?" This formulation has the virtue of not distinguishing form and content, of not excluding function, of not choosing in advance between the parts played by the individual maker, his community, certain established modes of perceiving the world, or the viewer.' Ibid., 158.

47  Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community*, trans. M. Hardt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 28.

48  Ibid., 11.

49  For Peirce the relation of resemblance is the lowest degree of individuation and the lowest degree of intimacy of relation. It is a 'degenerate form of generality', because it lacks real interaction or 'systematicity' (e.g., manners of 'hardness', 'Aristotelicity', 'Kanticity', 'thirdness', etc.) between the terms. Charles Sanders Peirce, *The Essential Peirce. Volume 1 (1867–1893)*, ed. Nathan Houser and Christian Koesel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 280–1.

50  Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 27.

51  Alain Badiou, *Logics of Worlds*, trans. Alberto Toscano (New York: Continuum, 2009), 51–2.

52  Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 11.

53  Ibid., 87.

54  Agamben, *The Use of Bodies*, 248.

55  With reference to Rodin's molds, Duchamp's readymades, Warhold's screen prints, Sol LeWitt's 'machines', and the industrially produced components employed by Donald Judd and Carl Andre, Sebastian Egenhofer argues against Walter Benjamin's diagnosis that singularity does not mean unreproducibility of empirical characteristics but a transcendental or formal shape of the work, which is 'not that of the material object, it is the temporal shape of this happening, of which the beginning, the origin, is the choice and dating of a first, though quickly replaceable, object-carrier'; 'the structure of singularity that belongs to the mode of being of the world of art in general: that is, the unrepeatability of its temporal shape.' Egenhofer, *Produktionsästhetik* (Zürich/Berlin: Diaphanes, 2010), 90. And hence: 'the production of the work is not repeatable due to its inscribing a mysterious sequence of movements of the hand in a plastic material. Instead, the unrepeatability of the date of the designation of an object that is thoroughly reproducible on the formal level constitutes the non-reproducibility of the work.' Ibid., 92.

# Chapter 2

1  Friedrich Balke, *Mimesis zur Einfuhrung* (Hamburg: Junius Verlag, 2018), 84–93, 101, and more generally, 9–26.

2  I am paraphrasing Deleuze, who writes: 'It is not the historian's reflection which demonstrates a resemblance between Luther and Paul, between the Revolution of 1789 and the Roman Republic, etc. Rather, it is in the first place for themselves that the revolutionaries are determined to lead their lives as "resuscitated Romans," before becoming capable of the act which they have begun by repeating in the mode of a proper past, therefore under conditions such that they necessarily identify with a figure from the historical past. Repetition is a condition of action before it is a concept of reflection. We produce something new only on condition that we repeat—once in the mode which constitutes the past, and once more in the present of metamorphosis. Moreover, what is produced, the absolutely new itself, is in turn nothing but repetition: the third repetition, this time by excess, the repetition of the future as eternal return.' Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 90.

3  Ibid., 57.

4  Ibid., 136.

5  Ibid., 2, 25.

6  'To repeat is to behave in a certain manner, but in relation to something unique or singular which has no equal or equivalent. And perhaps this repetition at the level of external conduct echoes, for its own part, a more secret vibration which animates it, a more profound, internal repetition within the singular. This is the apparent

paradox of festivals: they repeat an "unrepeatable". They do not add a second and a third time to the first, but carry the first time to the "nth" power. With respect to this power, repetition interiorizes and thereby reverses itself: as Péguy says, it is not Federation Day which commemorates or represents the fall of the Bastille, but the fall of the Bastille which celebrates and repeats in advance all the Federation Days; or Monet's first water lily which repeats all the others. Generality, as generality of the particular, thus stands opposed to repetition as universality of the singular.' Ibid., 1.

7   Ibid., 94. And: 'in this final synthesis of time, the present and [past] are in turn no more than dimensions of the future: the past as condition, the present as agent.' Ibid., 93.

8   Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, trans. M. Lester with C. Stivale (London/New York: Continuum, 1990), 263.

9   Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 67.

10  Ibid., 54.

11  Ibid., 293.

12  Translation modified. Cf. Wolfgang Iser's notion of *ungefesselte Emergenz* as non-linear system in which the past is virtually retrieved and enriching the system in the form of feedback loops.

13  Susan Sontag, *Against Interpretation and Other Essays* (London/New York: Penguin, 2009), 16–17, 19–20.

14  Gustav René Hocke, *Die Welt als Labyrinth. Manier und Manie in der europäischen Kunst* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1957), 121. In short, 'the danger of classicism is consolidation, that of mannerism dissolution' (Ibid., 226).

15  Thus when animals play, '[it] is not play that is modeled on the form of combat—it is the form of combat that is modulated by play.' (Brian Massumi, *What Animals Teach Us About Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 12)

16  Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Muses*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 35, 22, 93–4. With Nancy, we could extend the explosion of mannerism into contemporary art, that is art after 'the end of Art', which is 'in default or in excess of its own concept', insofar as art and the arts, being one and multiple, 'inter-belong to each other in a tense, extended mode of exteriority, without any resolution in interiority'. Nancy, *The Muses*, 4. Cf. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, 260, where the heteronomous autonomy of each of the arts is captured by the Leibnizian concept of the monad.

17  Here I follow Frank Reijnders's similar claim about the baroque when he argues that there is no desire for true art without the utopian nostalgia, loss of subjectivity, decadent artificiality, and general falseness of the baroque, which changes along with art itself. Without distinguishing mannerism from the baroque, he argues that the true baroque is therefore the false baroque. Reijnders, *Metamorfose van de barok*, 84. Deleuze mentions three modern 'manners' in which such metamorphoses take place corresponding to three arts, music, painting, and

literature: 'Each art has its interrelated techniques or repetitions, the critical and revolutionary power of which may attain the highest degree and lead us from the sad repetitions of habit to the profound repetitions of memory, and then to the ultimate repetitions of death in which our freedom is played out. We simply wish to offer three examples, however diverse and disparate these may be: first, the manner in which all the repetitions coexist in modern music (such as the development of the leitmotiv in Berg's *Wozzeck*); second, the manner in which, within painting, Pop Art pushed the copy, copy of the copy, etc., to that extreme point at which it reverses and becomes a simulacrum (such as Warhol's remarkable "serial" series, in which all the repetitions of habit, memory and death are conjugated); and finally the novelistic manner in which little modifications are torn from the brute and mechanical repetitions of habit, which in turn nourish repetitions of memory and ultimately lead to repetitions in which life and death are in play, and risk reacting upon the whole and introducing into it a new selection, all these repetitions coexisting and yet being displaced in relation to one another (Butor's *La modification*; or indeed *Last Year at Marienbad*, which shows the particular techniques of repetition which cinema can deploy or invent).' Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 293–4.

18  Deleuze, *The Fold*, 19, 34.

19  Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 222.

20  Sloterdijk, *Zeilen und Tagen*, 153.

21  Jeff Wall, 'Depiction, Object, Event', Hermes lecture ('s Hertogenbosch: Avans University, 2006), 9.

22  Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, trans. D. W. Smith (London/New York: Continuum, 2003), 160–1.

23  Ibid., 122.

24  Deleuze is no doubt inspired by Ruyer's notion of active resemblance based on an 'imitation without tracing' or 'memory without engrams'. Accordingly a manner is a 'mnemic theme' that informs a transspatiotemporal schema of morphogenesis: 'Within a schema, the "detour" through the transspatial and the transnumerical inevitably looks like a progression; but the essence-in-itself and the essence incarnated in a form are in fact identical by virtue of the transnumerical nature of essence. In the same way that mnemic subsistence is a participation in the eternity of the essence, the action of resemblance is a participation of the actual in the law of numerical identity of similar beings, which reigns in the transspatial region.' Raymond Ruyer, *Neo-Finalism*, trans. Alyosha Edlebi (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2016 [1952]), 128.

25  Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 3.

26  'The repetition of a work of art is like a singularity without concept, and it is not by chance that a poem must be learned by heart. The head is the organ of exchange,

but the heart is the amorous organ of repetition. (It is true that repetition also concerns the head, but precisely because it is its terror or paradox.) Pius Servien rightly distinguished two languages: the language of science, dominated by the symbol of equality, in which each term may be replaced by others; and lyrical language, in which every term is irreplaceable and can only be repeated.' Ibid., 2.

27  Ronald Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts* (London/New York: Routledge, 2003), 38.

28  Deleuze, *Two Regimes of Madness*, 298.

29  See Carsten Henrik Meiner, 'Deleuze and the Question of Style,' *Symploke* 6, no. 1 (1998): 157–73. The great exception is Barthes, for whom style is 'a difference, a distance', and therefore both form and content, both norm and deviance. Roland Barthes, *The Rustle of Language*, trans. Richard Howard (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 90.

30  Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *L'Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze*, DVD (Paris: Editions Montparnasse, 2004), 'S'. See also Jean-Jacques Lecercle, *Deleuze and Language* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 64.

31  Deleuze and Parnet, *L'Abécédaire*, 'O'.

32  Deleuze, *Two Regimes of Madness*, 366–7.

33  Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, 5.

34  Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 97–8.

35  Ibid., 142; Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, 113.

36  Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 79. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, trans. Dana Polan (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 84.

37  Roland Barthes, *Writing Degree Zero*, trans. Annette Lavers and Colin Smith (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 11.

38  Gabriel Tarde, *The Laws of Imitation*, trans. Elsie Clews Parsons (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1962 [1890]), 221–2. To the historical model one must therefore oppose a vectoral field adhering to a logic of interference of flows based on the three universals identified by Tarde: imitation (propagation), opposition (rivalry), and invention (variation).

39  Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 76–7.

40  Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 291.

41  Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 77.

42  Giordano Bruno, *The Heroic Frenzies*, trans. Paulo Eugene Memmo Jr. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1964 [1586]), 1585.

43  Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 100. And: 'Are there not as many different planes as universes, authors, or even works?' Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, 196. Gilles Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, trans. Richard Howard (London/New York: Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 1973), 43, 48.

44  Deleuze, *Negotiations*, 141.

45  Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 104.

46  Ibid., 76.

47  Ibid., 101.

48  Ibid., 106.

49  Deleuze and Guattari, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, 109–10.

50  For Georges Canguilhem, the anomalous designates a principle of difference and variation, not of opposition or contradiction. See: *The Normal and the Pathological*, 85.

51  Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 243–4.

52  Ibid., 98.

53  Deleuze, *Negotiations*, 131; Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 10.

54  Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 104–5.

55  Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues II*, 4; Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, 55, 107–14; Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, 176).

56  Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 98.

57  Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, 107.

58  Ibid., 107.

59  Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, 21.

60  Deleuze, *Two Regimes of Madness*, 369.

61  Ibid., 370.

62  Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane (London/New York: Continuum, 2003), 133; Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, 109. Typical of schizophrenia are linguistic mannerisms such as the prolonged pronunciation of words, overemphasized syllables, pronouncing words by spelling them. Deleuze provides an inventory of such contentless strategies in the work of Louis Wolfson, who struggled with language in order to find his own rhythm in it. Ibid., 7–20.

63  Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, 16–17.

64  Ibid., 79; on sobriety cf. 7, 19, 23, 25, 58, 70 and Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 99. Nevertheless, the opposition between archetype and sobriety remains relative, as both strategies of repetition involve a Jungian irruption of unconscious, embryonic ideas. It is the same in Sacher-Masoch, where 'it is true that our loves repeat our feelings for the mother but the latter themselves repeat still other loves, ones that we ourselves have not lived'. Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, 87.

65  Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, 21–2. Sobriety is a method which constitutes 'an expression machine capable of disorganizing its own forms, and of disorganizing its forms of content, in order to liberate pure contents that mix with expressions in a single intense matter'. Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, 28. It serves to 'arrive at a perfect and unformed expression, a materially intense expression'. Similar to abstract expressionist painting, Deleuze and Guattari argue, 'dryness and sobriety'

equate 'a willed poverty' that pushes 'deterritorialization to such an extreme that nothing remains but intensities'. Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, 19.

66  Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 110.

67  Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, 22.

68  Gilles Deleuze, *L'Abécédaire*, G.

69  Deleuze, *Negotiations*, 128.

70  Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, 17.

71  Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 221.

72  Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka*, 41.

73  Sontag, 'On Style', 27–8.

74  David Lapoujade, *Les existences moindres* (Paris: Minuit, 2017), 32.

75  Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 105.

76  Ibid., 127.

77  Ibid., 114, 121.

78  Ibid., 220.

79  'In order to exist, a being must not only pass by way of another but also in another manner, by exploring other ways, as it were, of altering itself.' Bruno Latour, *An Inquiry Into Modes of Existence*, trans. Cathy Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 62–3. The problem that taints Latour's overview of the modes of existence of the moderns is that their number is arbitrary. Modes don't stand on their own, because it is the virtual totality of modes that is presupposed by their very individuation.

80  Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 130.

81  Ibid., 101.

82  As David Lapoujade explains, it is not a matter of reducing the different modes to a common ground (Being) conceived as indeterminate plenitude, but of how the modes take off from that which grounds them, of how they produce being as a fully determined plurality. Lapoujade, *Les existences moindres*, 14–16.

83  Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 44.

84  Michel Guérin, *Philosophie du geste* (Paris: Actes Sud, 2011), 24.

85  Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 171. Interestingly, Souriau was influenced both by Walter Benjamin's essay on 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' and by Henri Focillon's definition of style as 'coherent ensemble of forms united by mutual suitability', and it is precisely this aestheticism that is taken up again by Simondon ('the aesthetic tendency is the ecumenical motion of thought'). Henning Schmidgen, '*Mode d'Existence*: Memoirs of a Concept', 320–7. https://www.academia.edu/35464697/Mode_of_Existence._Memoirs_of_a_Concept_on_Simondon_and_Souriau_

86  Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 131, 184, 189. 'All of Souriau's thought is a philosophy of art and does not pretend to be anything else.' And if Souriau

finds the model for his existential pluralism in the arts, then one can just as well invert the analogy: 'is it not the arts that derive their plurality from the diversity of manners of making exist a being, of promoting an existence or of rendering it real?' Lapoujade, *Les existences moindres*, 12–15. It is this autonomy of the phenomenon that sets the adjectival reduction of Jankélévitch and Souriau apart from the phenomenological reduction, which makes the phenomenon immanent to the subject/cogito. The point of view of the thing itself is not in the view but in the mode by which an existence acquires legitimacy on its own terms: 'Souriau proposes a new type of reduction that confounds with the affirmation of a profound perspectivism. This "existential" type of reduction is the exact antithesis of the phenomenological reduction, since it consists of exposing for each thing and each moment of the world the point of view which constitutes their mode of existence and not of subordinating everything to the point of view of consciousness.' David Lapoujade, 'Étienne Souriau—Métaphysique de l'événement', in *Philosophie des Possessions*, ed. Didier Debaise (Paris: Les presses du reel, 2011), 167–96, 178.

87  Roberto Calasso, *Tiepolo Pink*, trans. Alastair McEwen (New York: Knopf, 2011).

88  Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 125. Souriau's example of an assemblage is a 'rose-colored cloud'. Ibid., 125–7. Cf. Agamben: 'Yes, there is a unique substance, yet this is not a subject that remains behind or beneath its qualities but [that] is always already homonymically shared in a plurality of forms of life, in which life is never separable from its form and, quite to the contrary, is always its mode of being, without for that reason ceasing to be one.' Agamben, *The Use of Bodies*, 3–4.

89  Karl Marx, *The German Ideology* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1975 [1845–46]), Vol 1, part 1, 47.

90  Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 195–7, 200, 203–4.

91  Ibid., 130, 187–90.

92  Ibid., 174, 176.

93  Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues II,* 35.

94  Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 160.

95  Ibid., 73.

96  Ibid., 131.

97  Ibid., 172–3, 115–18.

98  Susan Sontag, *As Consciousness Is Harnessed to Flesh: Journals and Notebooks, 1964–1980*, ed. David Rieff (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2012), 209.

99  Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 232.

100  Or as Deleuze and Guattari, following Pierre Klossowski's interpretation of the eternal return as a form of metempsychosis, write about Nietzsche's geohistorical schizophrenia: 'There is no Nietzsche-the-self, professor of philology, who suddenly loses his mind and supposedly identifies with all sorts of strange people;

rather, there is the Nietzschean subject who passes through a series of states, and who identifies these states with the names of history: "every name in history is I". Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 21.

101  Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 181–3.

102  Ibid., 123.

103  Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 23. Among Whitehead's examples of eternal objects are sensory qualities (redness, roughness), conceptual abstractions (helix, dodecahedron), moral qualities (bravery, cowardice), and physical fundamentals (gravitation, electricity). We can also distinguish modes of thought, modes of reality, modes of existence, modes of composition, modes of relevance, modes of division, modes of infinitude, modes of experience, modes of error, modes of sensation, modes of procedure, modes of enjoyment, modes of unity, and so on.

104  On the concept of moreness in relation to Whitehead, see Brian Massumi, *Semblance and Event: Activist Philosophy and the Occurrent Arts* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011).

105  William James, *Essays in Radical Empiricism* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2003), 84.

106  Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 18, 24.

107  Ibid., 32–3, 36.

108  'That each entity in the universe of a given concrescence can, so far as its own nature is concerned, be implicated in that concrescence in one or other of many modes; but in fact it is implicated in only one mode: that the particular mode of implication is only rendered fully determinate by that concrescence, though it is conditioned by the correlate universe. This indetermination, rendered determinate in the real concrescence, is the meaning of "potentiality." It is a conditioned indetermination, and is therefore called a "real potentiality." ' Ibid., 23.

109  Ibid., 156.

110  Ibid., 23. Cf. 'This is the point to clarify: that a becoming lacks a subject distinct from itself; but also that it has no term, since its term in turn exists only as taken up in another becoming of which it is the subject, and which coexists, forms a block, with the first.' Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 238.

111  In this sense Whitehead refers to the unity of occasion as a 'monad'. Alfred North Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1967 [1933]), 177.

112  'Apart from the experiences of subjects there is nothing, nothing, nothing, bare nothingness.' Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 167.

113  Ibid., 31, 212; Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*, 176.

114  '"Creativity" is another rendering of the Aristotelian "matter," and of the modern "neutral stuff." But it is divested of the notion of passive receptivity, either of "form," or of external relations; it is the pure notion of the activity conditioned by

the objective immortality of the actual world. . . . Creativity is without a character of its own in exactly the same sense in which the Aristotelian "matter" is without a character of its own. It is that ultimate notion of the highest generality at the base of actuality.' Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 31.

115  Ibid., 226–7.

116  '"That way of enjoyment" is selected from the boundless wealth of alternatives.' Alfred North Whitehead, *Modes of Thought* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968 [1938]), 152.

117  Following Deleuze, Didier Debaise therefore speaks of a 'cosmic mannerism' in Whitehead. Didier Debaise, *Nature as Event: The Lure of the Possible*, trans. Michael Halewood (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017).

118  Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 237.

119  Ibid., 53. And: 'Continuity concerns what is potential; whereas actuality is incurably atomic.' Ibid., 61, 67.

120  Robert Williams, *Art, Theory, and Culture in Sixteenth-Century Italy: From Techne to Metatechne* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 83–4.

121  Bertrand Prévost, 'The Potentiality of Art, the Force of Images, and Aesthetic Intensities', in *Speculative Art Histories*, ed. Sjoerd van Tuinen (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 152.

122  Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 102.

123  Whereas Wölfflin opposes a structuralist 'art history without names' to the *Lives* of Vasari, at issue is the invention of an activating mode of naming that gives what it tags a reason or force to exist. On several occasions throughout his work, Deleuze proposes a grammatical form that would be adequate for intensive descriptions. In *The Logic of Sense*, its model is borrowed from the Stoic theory of incorporeals, which replaced Aristotle's 'the tree is green' with 'the tree greens'. Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester with Charles Stivale (London/New York: Continuum, 1990), 4–11. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, the model is 'indefinite article + proper name + infinitive verb'. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 263; cf. Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues II*, 64.

124  Whitehead shows that 'experience involves becoming, that becoming means that something becomes, and that what becomes involves repetition transformed into novel immediacy'. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 137.

125  '"Process" is the rush of feelings whereby second-handedness attains subjective immediacy; in this way, subjective form overwhelms repetition, and transforms it into immediately felt satisfaction; objectivity is absorbed into subjectivity.' Ibid., 155; cf. 133–5.

126  Ibid., 237.

127  Ibid., 105.

128  See, for example, Kamini Vellodi, *Tintoretto's Difference: Deleuze, Diagrammatics and Art History* (London/New York: Bloomsbury, 2019).

# Chapter 3

1  Heidegger, 'Metaphysics as History of Being', *Nietzsche*, vol II.

2  William James, *Pragmatism and Other Writings*, ed. Giles Gunn (London: Penguin, 2000 [1892–1909]), 139–40.

3  Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 239.

4  Giorgio Agamben, *Opus Dei: An Archaeology of Duty*, trans. Adam Kotsko (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013), 29–64. Since the liturgical mystery is not limited to representing the passion of Christ, it can easily be generalized into an ontology of effects. Agamben, *Opus Dei*, 38, 55. For this reason, James had already recognized a pragmatic value in maintaining the Scholastic concept of substance. The replacement of the wafer-substance with divine substance (or the exchange of their accidents) marks precisely the modern moment in Scholasticism, since this is the only case where substance actually matters, that is where the mode of existence of substance makes a tremendous difference in collective experience. James, *Pragmatism and Other Writings*, 42. For similar arguments, see Charles Sanders Peirce, *Philosophical Writings* (New York: Dover Publications, 1955), 30–1 and John Dewey, *Experience and Nature* (New York: Dover Publications, 2000 [1925]), 166: 'All communication is a form of transubstantiation.'

5  Erwin Panofsky, *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism* (Latrobe, PA: Archabbey Press, 1951). Panofsky was inspired by Cassirer's symbolic forms.

6  Latour, *An Inquiry Into Modes of Existence*, 102, 107.

7  Agamben, *The Use of Bodies*, 224.

8  Gilles Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Zone Books, 1997), 169–90.

9  Deleuze, *Two Regimes of Madness*, 261; Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy*, 172–24; Deleuze, *The Fold*, 24; Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 45.

10  Maurice de Gandillac, *Nicolaus von Cues: Studien zu seiner Philosophie und philosophischen Weltanschauung*, transl. Karl Fleischmann (Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1953), 118–24.

11  Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy*, 179, 177–80. More recently, North has demonstrated how already in Plotinus, 'likeness skirts being'. North, *Bizarre-Privileged Items in the Universe*, 105. As the concept of 'circumradiation' (*perilampsis*) indicates, the Plotinian cosmos is characterized by hypostases that exist 'elsewise' than the One that keeps its unity to itself. Ibid., 108. Perilamptical composition is fibrous. It happens through all that 'yields, assents, stirs toward a secondary' and in so doing finds its substantiality only in the echo-space of its surroundings, that is, in exterior images of the archetypes from which they were created. Hence the absolute centrality of likeness, which must be understood as qualitative rather than quantitative, and which exists in the mode of existence of

overlapping without mediation by the One: 'Secondary things enjoy the community of the many, though, it should be said, never all at once. Seconds are in constant movement toward a second. Each is second to the other, each pair second to a second pair, and so on and on and on, bending, with each seconding, into an errant arc. For likeness, firstness has almost as little significance as oneness. . . . Homeosis thrives in the One's neglect.' Ibid., 107.

12 Heinz Heimsoeth, *Die sechs grossen Themen der Abendländischen Metpahysik und der Ausgang des Mittelalters* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1965), 39. According to Nicolas of Cusa the world is the explication of God, as concepts are of human spirit, as time is of the instant, as movement of rest and as numbers of unity. As a principle of ontogenesis, Cusanus's fold can be regarded as a foreshadowing of fractal mathematics: the line is the explication of the point, the surface is the explication of the line, the volume is the explication of the surface, and so forth, such that the transitivity of the point is the complication of the entire space just as inversely the entire space is the explication of the point. For an overview of the use of the double category of complicatio-explicatio in the history of philosophy until Giordano Bruno, see Jean-Michel Counet, 'Les complications de l'histoire de la philosophie: Boèce, Nicolas de Cues, Giordano Bruno', in *Différence et identité: Les enjeux phénoménologiques du pli*, ed. Grégory Cormann, Sébastien Laoureux, and Julien Piéron (Berlin/Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2003), 5–26.

13 William James, 'A Pluralistic Universe', in *William James: Writings 1902–1910*, ed. Bruce Kuklick (New York: The Library of America, 1987 [1908]), 776. Latour speaks of a 'second empiricism' of relations, prepositions, and sense, as distinguished from a first empiricism belonging to a world divided into primary and secondary qualities. This modal empiricism is important, since it never suffices to say, for example, that everything is a network. What matters is the how of the relations that make up experience as expressed in prepositions and conjunctions. Latour, *An Inquiry Into Modes of Existence*, 178.

14 Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy*, 66–7.

15 *Ethics* 2d6, in: Baruch de Spinoza, *Complete Works*, trans. Samuel Shirley (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2002). Perfection in Spinoza is defined as substance parsimony combined with modal plenitude. Samuel Newland, 'Spinoza and the Metaphysics of Perfection', in *Spinoza's Ethics: A Critical Guide*, ed. Yithzak Melamed (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 266–84.

16 This is why Souriau argues that Spinoza, by identifying causality with expression, turned substance into surexistence (or what Deleuze, directly following up on Souriau's suggestion, calls 'the expressed' or 'sense'), by which he means that substance only exists in transmodal passages. Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 190–91n123.

17 Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 37.

18  In his discussion of the Scholastic problem of the *principium individuationis*, Agamben notes: 'the limit of Duns Scotus is that he seems to conceive common nature as an anterior reality, which has the property of being indifferent to whatever singularity, and to which singularity adds only haecceity. Accordingly, he leaves unthought precisely that quodlibet that is inseparable from singularity and, without recognizing it, makes indifference the real root of individuation. . . . The relationship between the common and the singular can thus no longer be conceived as the persistence of an identical essence in single individuals, and therefore the very problem of individuation risks appearing as a pseudoproblem.' Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 17–18.

19  Knox Peden, *Spinoza Contra Phenomenology: French Rationalism from Cavailles to Deleuze* (Stanford: Stanford University Press: 2014), 211–17.

20  Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 223.

21  Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 40–1, 39–42; Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy*, 178, 180–6.

22  Quentin Meillassoux, *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency*, trans. Ray Brassier (London/New York: Continuum, 2008), 118.

23  Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 41, 197, 47–8, 68.

24  Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 41, 38; Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 7.

25  'When we say that univocal being is related immediately and essentially to individuating factors, we certainly do not mean by the latter individuals constituted in experience, but that which acts in them as a transcendental principle: as a plastic, anarchic and nomadic principle, contemporaneous with the process of individuation, no less capable of dissolving and destroying individuals than of constituting them contemporarily; intrinsic modalities of being, passing from one "individual" to another, circulating and communicating underneath matters and forms.' Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 38. Cf. Whitehead, for whom there is no eminent reality of God, only creativity and God as its 'primordial, non-temporal accident': 'The philosophy of organism is closely allied to Spinoza's scheme of thought. But it differs by the abandonment of the subject-predicate forms of thought, so far as concerns the presupposition that this form is a direct embodiment of the most ultimate characterization of fact. The result is that the "substance-quality" concept is avoided; and that morphological description is replaced by description of dynamic process. Also Spinoza's "modes" now become the sheer actualities; so that, though analysis of them increases our understanding, it does not lead us to the discovery of any higher grade of reality.' Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 7.

26  In Deleuze's lyrical phrasing: 'The nomadic distributions or crowned anarchies in the univocal stand opposed to the sedentary distributions of analogy. . . . A single and same voice for the whole thousand-voiced multiple, a single and same Ocean

for all the drops, a single clamour of Being for all beings: on condition that each being, each drop and each voice has reached the state of excess—in other words, the difference which displaces and disguises them and, turning upon its mobile cusp (*pointe mobile*), causes them to return.' Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 304.

27  Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 150, 47, 69.

28  Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 39, 285–94.

29  Deleuze, *The Fold*, 68; Deleuze, *Negotiations*, 161.

30  Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 42.

31  Deleuze, *The Fold*, 67.

32  Letter to Des Bosses, November 7, 1710, Brandon Look and Donald Rutherford, *The Leibniz—Des Bosses Correspondence* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 2007), 188.

33  Deleuze, *The Fold*, 41, 130; Gilles Deleuze, *Course Notes*, http://www.webdeleuze .com (accessed March 3, 2022), May 6, 1980. In terms of *Anti-Oedipus*, the baroque handling of the mannerist crisis of capitalism becomes paradigmatic of all following capitalist 'axiomatics' until today. Unlike in pre-capitalist societies, Deleuze and Guattari argue, schizophrenia as process becomes a real potential in the capitalist machinery of value production. Yet at the same time a truly free production of flows would be a perversion of the capitalist state. Capitalism therefore 'axiomatizes [i.e., encloses] with one hand what it decodes with the other'. The result is a baroque multiplication of axioms that replaces schizophrenia with paranoia: 'Concerning capitalism, we maintain that it both does and does not have an exterior limit: it has an exterior limit that is schizophrenia, that is, the absolute decoding of flows, but it functions only by pushing back and exorcising this limit.' Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 250, 230–1, 245–53, 266.

34  Deleuze, *The Fold*, 43–4, 68.

35  Ibid., 57. Deleuze illustrates this as follows: 'Thus sufficient Reason: it appears for itself in things, where inner characters begin to connect in order to provide the reason for the thing. But then, the principle of indiscernibles is only the explication of Reason at the level of individuals, at the point of appearing to be a simple dependency of sufficient reason. . . . And further, the principle of contradiction itself expresses the very reason of the identicals, and is not limited to forming an alternative with the principle of sufficient reason. To the contrary, it rules in the zone where noncontradiction *suffices* as reason' (Ibid).

36  Every substance, Leibniz says, 'contains in its nature a law of continuation of the series of its own operations and [thus] of everything that has happened or will happen to it'. Letter to Arnauld, March 23, 1690, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Philosophical Papers and Letters*, ed. and trans. L. E. Loemker (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1989), 359. Cf. Letter to De Volder, January 21, 1704, *Philosophical Papers and Letters*, 533.

37  Deleuze argues that it was, first, the new mathematics of inflection and the notion of converging series, and secondly, the logic and corresponding metaphysics of

inclusion, that allowed Leibniz to posit the actual infinity of an individual unity as irreducible. 'In effect, as long as series remained finite or undefined, individuals risked being relative, called upon to melt into a universal spirit or a soul of the world that could complicate all series.' Deleuze, *The Fold*, 24.

38  Deleuze, *The Fold*, 57.

39  Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Die philosophische Schriften*, ed. C. J. Gerhardt (Berlin/Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1875–90), IV, 586.

40  'Neither does it seem to me that we have to deny action or power to created things on the grounds that if they produced modifications [*modalités*] they would be creators. For it is God who conserves and continually creates their power, that is to say, the source of modifications within a created thing, or a state of that thing from which it can be seen that there will be a change of modifications. Otherwise, it seems to me . . . that God would have produced nothing, and there would be no substances other than God—which would bring back all the absurdities of the God of Spinoza.' Leibniz, *Die philosophische Schriften*, IV, 568.

41  Leibniz, 'Modalogy' §47; *Theodicy*, 382–91. 395, 398.

42  Leibniz, 'Discourse on Metaphysics', §1, in Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, ed. and trans. Roger Ariew and Daniel Garber (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1989), 35.

43  Ibid., §§8, 16, in *Philosophical Essays*, 40, 48. And: 'Each simple substance is a perpetual, living mirror of the universe.' Leibniz, 'Monadology', §56, *Philosophical Essays*, 220. Leibniz is generally regarded, together with Pascal, as one of the inventors of game theory, as he discovers an ideal game at the basis of the creation of the world.

44  Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 50.

45  Leibniz, 'On the Ultimate Origination of Things', [1697] in *Philosophical Essays*, 149. It is the desire or intensity of the possible, for which he coined the neologism *existiturire* or future existence-desiring, that sets Leibniz apart from analytical modal metaphysics, which appear to only have an extensional definition of the possible.

46  Ibid., 150–1.

47  Cited in Raymond Ruyer, 'The Philosophy of Morphogenesis', 22.

48  'In short, the two movements of thought between which the philosophers are generally divided—some tending to admit existential plurality, others tending to deny it, while at the same time denying or admitting, for inverse reasons, the plurality of existing beings—appear to Leibniz alone as a twofold swaying to and fro.' Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 99.

49  Agamben, *The Use of Bodies*, 86–186.

50  Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 213. This modalization of the relation between potential and actual is formulated in a precise way by Agamben: 'Not only are possibility and essence transformed by demand; act and essence as well, invested

with demand, lose their fixity and, contracting themselves on potential, demand to be possible, demand their own potential. If existence becomes a demand for possibility, then possibility becomes a demand for existence.' Agamben, *The Use of Bodies*, 170.

51  Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, 172.

52  Ibid., 102. If, in his earlier work, Deleuze had rejected the principles of a 'vulgarized Leibnizianism', the later Deleuze undergoes a change of perspective. Against the background of a 'return of the baroque' Deleuze now seeks to be, as he says in his last series of lectures at Vincennes VIII, 'more Leibnizian than Leibniz' (Deleuze, *Course Notes*, January 20, 1987). And: 'I see this book as both a recapitulation and a continuation. . . . The whole thing is a crossroads, a multiple connectedness. We're still a long way from exhausting all the potential of the fold, it's a good philosophical concept' (Deleuze, *Negotiations*, 155, 154). The fold is the minimal structural element of a system that knows no generality of propositions but only the singularity of problems and that therefore remains in perpetual heterogenesis. 'The trinity complication-explication-implication accounts for the totality of the system—in other words, the chaos which contains all, the divergent series which lead out and back in, and the differenciator which relates them one to another. Each series explicates or develops itself, but *in* its difference from the other series which it implicates and which implicate it, which it envelops and which envelop it; *in* this chaos which complicates everything. The totality of the system, the unity of the divergent series as such, corresponds to the objectivity of a "problem."' Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 123–4. It is precisely in this sense that *The Fold* can be seen as a continuation and recapitulation of his early works. Deleuze's mannerist enterprise in *The Fold* comes down to 'the affirmation of a virtual Leibnizianism implying real Leibnizianism as its restricted version'. Alliez, *Signature of the World*, 100.

53  'Whitehead is the successor, or *diadoche*, as the Platonic philosophers used to say, of the school's leader. The school is somewhat like a secret society. With Whitehead's name there comes for the third time an echo of the question, *What is an event?*' Deleuze, *The Fold*, 76. Accordingly, the first time would be the Stoic theory of incorporeal events, in which logic acquires the capacity to enunciate the event as pure becoming, unhindered by the form of the subject that actualizes it or the finite corporeal mixture in which it is realized. Besides *The Logic of Sense*, see Emile Bréhier, *La théorie des incorporels dans l'ancien stoïcisme* (Paris: VRIN, 1928).

54  Cf. Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects*, 103–28.

55  Deleuze, *The Fold*, 79.

56  Leibniz, *Die philosophischen Schriften*, VI 539, 546.

57  Letter to Arnauld, April 30, 1687, *Philosophical Essays*, 84.

58  In a reply to some critiques presented by Bayle against his *New System*, and in opposition to Descartes for whom 'there is often not so much perfection in works

composed of many pieces and made by the hands of various master craftsmen as there is in those works on which but a single individual has worked'. Descartes, *Discourse on Method* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2004), part II, 7. Leibniz describes his system as a pliable perspectivist amalgam that excludes nothing—Spinozism excepted, of course. 'I despise nothing', he used to say in explaining his art of perspectives, 'one must always see people from their good side.' Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Sämtliche Schriften und Briefe (Akademie-Ausgabe)* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1923), VI-3, 377.

59  Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 38. In his study of Leibniz's *New Essays*, Dewey demonstrates that pre-established harmony is a dynamic law, that is, a 'law which is no longer abstract, but has realized itself in life'. John Dewey, *The Early Works of John Dewey, Volume 1, 1882–1898: Early Essays and Leibniz's New Essays* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2008), 295. It is the law of 'a true democracy, in which each citizen has sovereignty' (295), such that 'the term "pre-established" is superfluous. It means "existent." There is no real harmony which is not existent or pre-established' such that '[a]n accidental harmony' is something like a 'lawless law', 'a contradiction in terms'. Ibid., 295–7.

60  Deleuze, *The Fold*, 56.

61  Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 151; Whitehead, *Modes of Thought*, 166.

62  Deleuze, *The Fold*, 54.

63  Deleuze, *Negotiations*, 154; Deleuze, *The Fold*, 126, 53.

64  Leibniz, 'Discourse on Metaphysics', §§8, 13, 26, *Philosophical Essays*, 40–1, 44–6, 58.

65  Ibid., §8, *Philosophical Essays*, 40–1. An efficient cause can be necessary but is not sufficient. The difference between a cause (*causa*) and a reason (*ratio*) is that the latter explains not only an individual but first of all the part of the common world this individual expresses. In other words, sufficient reason is not the efficient cause of the thing, but the final cause or reason for causality itself. As Deleuze shows, cause and effect do not even share the same time, causation taking place in the empirical time of Chronos composed only of interlocking presents, each present spreading out and comprehending the past and the future, while effects take place in an unlimited past-future, each effect constituting an intensive fold of the transcendental time of Aion decomposed into a future that never ceases to arrive without already being past. Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, 5, 62.

66  Leibniz, Letter to Arnauld, May 1686, *Philosophical Essays*, 75.

67  'By nature, essence is anterior; chronologicaly—existence' (Leibniz, *Sämtliche Schriften und Briefe (Akademie-Ausgabe)*, VI 1 483). For a discussion of Sartre's 'existence precedes essence' in relation to Leibniz's striving possibles, see André Robinet, *Le Sera: Exististurientia Leibniz* (Paris: VRIN, 2004), 22–6. The sharp difference with Sartre is of course that in Leibniz existence is understood relationally, that is transindividually. Each individual has a constitutive relation with

the outside and is conceived only as the final cause for the inherent. As Bergson says, 'finality is external or it is nothing at all'. Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, trans. Arthur Mitchell (New York: Dover Publications, 1998 [1907]), 41.

68 There is another clear link here between Leibniz and Bergson, who in his 'Introduction to Metaphysics' defines the intuitive method of philosophy by its 'flexible, mobile, almost fluid representations, always ready to mould themselves on the fleeting forms of intuition' (Bergson, *The Creative Mind*, 141), that is, its 'fluid concepts, capable of following reality in all its windings and of adopting the inner life of things'. Ibid., 160.

69 Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 18–19. For this reason, Bergson defines his evolutionist concept of *élan vital* or vital impulse directly in contrast to Leibniz's finalism as based on pre-established harmony: 'Like [Leibniz's] radical finalism, although in a vaguer form, our philosophy represents the organized world as a harmonious whole. But this harmony is far from being as perfect as it has been claimed to be. It admits of much discord, because each species, each individual even, retains only a certain impetus from the universal vital impulsion and tends to use this energy in its own interests. In this consists *adaptation*. . . . Harmony, therefore, does not exist in fact; it exists rather in principle; I mean that the original impetus is a *common* impetus, and the higher we ascend the stream of life the more do diverse tendencies appear complementary to each other. . . . Harmony, or rather "complementarity", is revealed only in the mass, in tendencies rather than states. Especially . . . harmony is rather behind us than before. It is due to an identity of impulsion and not to a common aspiration.' Bergson, *Creative Evolution,* 50–1.

70 Leibniz, 'Discourse on Metaphysics', §8, *Philosophical Essays*, 40.

71 Ibid., 75.

72 Leibniz, *Sämtliche Schriften und Briefe*, VI.iii, 573. Leibniz makes this claim very early on, in 1776, just before he is to meet with Spinoza, which may explain why it contains no reference to substantial forms.

73 As Leibniz ironizes in a letter to his Cartesian correspondent Arnauld (May 1686), it is not only possible to think *sub ratione possibilitatis* of several Adams, each belonging to a different possible world, we can also think of a fuzzy or indeterminate Adam *sub ratione generalitatis*. Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, 72. Accordingly, the actual, monadic Adam would be only a crystallization of an Adam=x straddling different possible worlds. For Deleuze, this is a nomadic Adam, a subject constantly already surpassed by, and always still to come through, his own manners of existence: a virtual subjectivity that is irreducible to an actual subject. Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, 115.

74 As Peirce says in his continuum hypothesis (his 'synechism' of transfinite sets), one cannot speak atomically of possibilities, which participate in an ideal continuum that serves as their medium of refraction. Actual relations distinguish possible worlds, which are not conceivable as being distinct without also being actual.

Charles Sanders Peirce, 'The Logic of Continuity', in *Reasoning and the Logic of Things: The Cambridge Conferences Lectures of 1898*, ed. Kenneth Laine Ketner (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 242–68. For this reason, Deleuze can claim that 'contrary to certain aspects of the Leibnizian theory, it is necessary to assert that the analytic order of predicates is an order of coexistence or succession, with neither logical hierarchy nor the character of generality. . . . The increasing or decreasing generalities [for example Adam=x] appear only when a predicate is determined in a proposition to function as the subject of another predicate.' Deleuze, *Logic of Sense,* 112. Or again: 'The concept speaks the event, not the essence or the thing—pure Event, a haecceity, an entity.' Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 21.

75  'It is indeed true that the expressed world does not exist outside of the monads which express it, and thus that it does exist within the monads as the series of predicates which inhere in them. It is no less true, however, that God created the world rather than monads, and that what is expressed is not confused with its expression, but rather insists and subsists.' Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, 110, 21, 171–2; Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, 43; Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy*, 334; Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 47–8; Deleuze, *The Fold*, 25–6, 50, 60. The thrust of Deleuze's reading of Leibniz's logic is precisely that a singularity always comes before its distribution or inclusion in a monadic concept and that if this were not so, it would lose its virtual character that makes it irreducible to the series of the actual world, which must be conceived not as a One, but as communication of incompossible worlds. Deleuze, *The Fold*, 9, 23–6, 51, 60, 63–4, 129.

76  Hauser claims that the concept of spontaneity from which Kant would later derive his epistemology first appeared in mannerism. Hauser, *Der Ursprung der modernen Kunst*, 90–1.

77  Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *New Essays on Human Understanding*, ed. and trans. P. Remnant and J. Bennett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 52.

78  Deleuze, *The Fold*, 63. See also Peirce's redefinition of Aristotelian substances as 'bundles of habits'. Peirce, 'A Guess at the Riddle', in Charles Sanders Peirce, *The Essential Peirce. Volume 1 (1867–1893)*, ed. Nathan Houser and Christian Koesel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 245–79, 279.

79  Agamben, *The Use of Bodies*, 29.

80  Leibniz, 'Critical Thoughts on the General Part of the Principles of Descartes' [1692], *Philosophical Papers*, 385.

81  Leibniz, 'Discourse on Metaphysics', §13, *Philosophical Essays*, 45. Letter to Arnauld, July 1886, *Philosophical Essays*, 70. In the words of American pragmatism, thought is a flux of experience in which the difference between causing and caused is neutralized. The self is effectuated through an impersonal self-affection of impersonal experience understood as 'a serial course of affairs with their own characteristic properties and relationships, occurs, happens, and is what it is.

Among and within these occurrences, not outside them nor underlying them, are those events which are denominated selves.' Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 232.

82  Leibniz, 'Discourse on Metaphysics', §11, *Philosophical Essays*, 11.

83  Leibniz, *New Essays*, IV, 17 §16, 490.

84  Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 50.

85  Leibniz, 'On the Ultimate Origination of Things', *Philosophical Essays*, 150–1.

86  Cf. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 29: 'An actual entity is at once the subject experiencing and the superject of its experiences.'

87  For Simondon this abstract and generic moreness is implied by all modes of individuation: 'In order to think individuation, being must be considered neither as a substance, nor matter, nor form, but as a system that is charged and supersaturated, above the level of unity, not consisting only of itself, and that cannot be adequately thought using the law of the excluded middle. Concrete being, or complete being— that is, preindividual being—is being that is more than a unity. . . . One can also suppose that reality, in itself, is primitively like the supersaturated solution and even more completely so in the preindividual regime, where it is more than unity and more than identity, capable of expressing itself as a wave or as a particle, as matter or energy, because every operation, and every relation within an operation, are an individuation that divides, or dephases, the preindividual being, while at the same time correlating extreme values and the orders of magnitude that were primitively without mediation.' Simondon, 'The Position of the Problem of Ontogenesis', 6.

# Chapter 4

1  Leibniz, 'Monadology', §81, *Philosophical Essays*, 223.

2  I borrow the example from Latour, who describes instauration as a procedure of *faire faire* (and *faire faire faire*, and so forth ad infinitum) and sees the uncertainty of action, the oscillation of its vector, and hence the doubling of manner and matter as the basic intuition of social science. Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 59–60; Latour, *An Inquiry Into Modes of Existence*, 157–8.

3  Leibniz, Letter to De Volder, June 30, 1704, *Die philosophische Schriften*, II 270. 'I regard the explanation of all phenomena solely through the perceptions of monads agreeing among themselves, *with corporeal substance excluded*, to be useful for a fundamental investigation of things. In this way of explaining things, space becomes the order of coexisting phenomena, as time is the order of successive phenomena, and there is no absolute or spatial nearness or distance between monads.' Leibniz, Letter to Des Bosses, June 16, 1712, *Leibniz-Des Bosses Correspondence*, 254, my emphasis.

4   Leibniz, Letter to Arnauld, April 30, 1687, *Philosophical Essays*, 86.

5   Leibniz, Letter to Queen Sophie Charlote, 1702, *Philosophical Essays*, 191.

6   Leibniz, Letter to Arnauld, April 30, 1687, *Philosophical Essays*, 88. And: 'the plural presupposes the singular.' Ibid., 86.

7   Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*, 204. For the possible to be real (e.g., a mode) does not mean to be realized. Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*, 197. For this it must come with a world (Souriau's plane of existence). A possible world is a 'unison of becoming' (Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 124) in actuality; it is a kind of transversal cross-section of the actual occasions as given in their presentational immediacy: 'A complete region, satisfying the principle of "concrescent unison," will be called a "duration." A duration is a cross-section of the universe; it is the immediate present condition of the world at some epoch.' Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 125, 168.

8   Chunglin Kwa, 'Romantic and Baroque Conceptions of Complex Wholes in the Sciences', in *Complexities: Social Studies of Knowledge Practices*, ed. John Law and Annemarie Mol (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 23–52, 26.

9   Leibniz, preface in *New Essays*, 18, cited in Deleuze, *The Fold*, 110; this is a constant theme in the letters to Des Bosses.

10  Leibniz, Letter to Arnauld, April 30, 1687, *Philosophical Essays*, 86.

11  Leibniz, Letter to Princess Sophie, February 1706, *Philosophische Schriften* VII, 570; Deleuze, *The Fold*, 146n21. In his letter of June 30, 1704, to Lady Masham Leibniz calls the body 'the point of view of the soul on the universe'. *Philosophical Essays*, 290.

12  Leibniz, 'Principles of Nature and Grace', §3, *Philosophical Essays*, 207. And: 'I have said that the soul, which naturally expresses the entire universe in a certain sense and according to the relationship which other bodies have to its own, and which as a consequence express more immediately the properties of the parts of its body, must therefore, by virtue of the laws of relationship which are essential to it, particularly express certain unusual motions of the parts of its body.' Leibniz, Letter to Arnauld, October 9, 1687, *Philosophical Papers*, 339.

13  Leibniz, 'On the Method of Distinguishing Real from Imaginary Phenomena', date unknown, *Philosophical Papers*, 363–6.

14  Leibniz, 'A New System of Nature', *Philosophical Essays*, 143.

15  Leibniz, 'Monadology', §85, *Philosophical Essays*, 224.

16  Tarde, *Monadologie et sociologie*, 89. Tarde finds in Leibniz a universal 'avidity' with which every possible tends to 'universalize itself' according to the model of repetition or propagation (physical undulation, biological generation, social imitation) in a field of endless interferences (ibid., 95, 72) or as Tarde says, 'counter-repetitions'. Gabriel Tarde, *L'Opposition universelle* (Paris: Les empêcheurs de penser en rond, 1999), 53. 'At the bottom of all the content of the notion of being, there is the notion of having. But the reciprocal is not true: being does not make up all

the content of the idea of property.' Tarde, *Monadologie et sociologie*, 87. Monads 'can be proprietors without being agents, but they cannot be agents without being proprietors'. Ibid., 89. This also leads Tarde to emphasize the medial nature of possession: 'Being and non-being, the self and the non-self: infertile oppositions that make us forget the true correlatives. The true opposite of the *self* is not the non-self, but the *mine*; the true opposite of being, that is, the having, is not non-being, but the had.' Tarde, *Monadologie et sociologie*, 87. Tarde thus interprets Leibnizian appetite as literally as possible such that he compares biological processes of nutrition with those of religious conversion, apostolic propaganda, or army recruitment. Tarde, *Monadologie et sociologie*, 99–101. Each monad is a 'future history [*histoire future*]': 'Each historical individual' is 'a new humanity in project, and all of his individual being, all his individual effort' is nothing 'but the affirmation of this fragmentary universal that he carries within.' Gabriel Tarde, *Les lois sociales* (Paris: Les empêcheurs de penser en rond, 2002), 128. Cf. Agamben: '*To be* established an intrinsic relationship of equivalence between the two terms which it joins: it is the consubstantial state. In contrast, the two terms joined by *to have* remain distinct; the relationship between them is extrinsic and establishes a belonging.' Agamben, *The Use of Bodies*, 60. Or Deleuze, who emphasizes that while 'for Leibniz, internal individuation will only be explained at the level of souls' (Deleuze, *The Fold*, 8), body and soul 'are not in the least distinct' since they 'have no point in being inseparable'. Ibid., 11.

17  Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 50. It is significant that Whitehead does not speak of embodiment but of the 'withness of the body'. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 64, 81.

18  'The universe is a kind of fluid, all of one piece, and as is the case in an ocean without bounds, all the movement is conserved and propagated infinitely, although insensibly.' Leibniz, Letter to Princess Sophie, February 6, 1706, *Philosophische Schriften*, VII 566–77.

19  Leibniz, *Akademie-Ausgabe*, VII 483; 'Monadology', §70, *Philosophical Essays*, 222.

20  For these qualifications of aggregates, see Leibniz, Letter to Des Bosses, March 11, 1706, *Leibniz-Des Bosses Correspondence*, 30–8.

21  Habit or manner 'contains a certain act or entelechy and is thus midway between the faculty of acting and the act itself and involves a conatus. It is thus carried into action by itself and needs no help but only the removal of an impediment'. Leibniz, *Philosophical Papers and Letters*, 433.

22  Leibniz, 'On Nature Itself', *Philosophical Essays*, 162.

23  Leibniz, Letter to Arnauld, October 9, 1687, 343.

24  Deleuze, *The Fold*, 108, 10.

25  Leibniz, 'A New System of Nature', *Philosophical Essays*, 142.

26  Agamben, *The Use of Bodies*, 36.

27  Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, 198.

28  Leibniz, Letter to Des Bosses, April 29, 1715, *Leibniz-Des Bosses Correspondence*, 337; Leibniz, *Philosophische Schriften* II, 496.

29  For a more in-depth discussion, see Christiane Frémont, *L'Être et la relation. Avec trente-sept lettres de Leibniz au R. P. Des Bosses*. Translated by Christiane Frémont (Paris: VRIN, 1999), 47–69, and Leibniz, *Leibniz-Des Bosses Correspondence*.

30  Leibniz, Letter to Arnauld, April 30, 1687, *Philosophical Essays*, 8.

31  Leibniz, Letter to Des Bosses, May 29, 1716, *Philosophical Essays*, 203.

32  Leibniz, Letter to Des Bosses, February 15, 1712, *Leibniz-Des Bosses Correspondence*, 227.

33  Leibniz, Letter to Des Bosses, January 18, 1710, *Philosophische Schriften* II 399. [vind ik niet terug in L&R]

34  Leibniz, Letter to Des Bosses, February 15, 1712, *Leibniz-Des Bosses Correspondence*, 233.

35  Ibid.

36  Leibniz, Letter to Des Bosses, May 29, 1716, *Philosophical Essays,* 202, 199.

37  Ibid., 204.

38  As Leibniz says: a composite substance is 'a middle thing between a simple substance, which chiefly deserves the name "substance," and a modification. Simple substance is perpetual; a substantiated thing can arise and perish, and be changed.' Leibniz, Letter to Des Bosses, September 20, 1712, *Leibniz-Des Bosses Correspondence*, 240. Cf. Leibniz's remark that habit or 'active force contains a certain act or entelechia and is thus mid-way between the faculty of acting and the act itself and it involves a conatus'. Leibniz, 'On the Correction of Metaphysics and the Concept of Substance', *Philosophical Papers*, 433.

39  Bertrand Prévost, *La peinture en actes: Gestes et manières dans l'Italie de la Renaissance* (Actes Sud, 2007), 154. Or as Agamben puts it: 'yes, there is a unique substance, yet this is not a subject that remains behind or beneath its qualities but [that] is always already homonymically shared in a plurality of forms of life, in which life is never separable from its form and, quite to the contrary, is always its mode of being, without for that reason ceasing to be one.' Agamben, *The Use of Bodies*, 218.

40  Agamben points to Francisco Suarez's concept of *vinculum permanens et quasi in habitus* ('permanent, and as it were, habitual bond') as main Scholastic source to the theory of the vinculum. Agamben, *Opus Dei*, 105.

41  Agamben, *The Use of Bodies*, 272.

42  Ibid., 218.

43  'Mode determines the ultimate state of a thing and its reason for existence without adding a new essence but only by modifying it.' Agamben, *The Use of Bodies*, 155. The formula 'anexact yet rigorous' stems from Husserl's understanding of 'morphological essences' as descriptive (like biological essences) yet eidetic (like geometrical essences). See Edmund Husserl, *Ideen einer reinen Phänomenologie*

*und phänomenologischen Philosophie*. Book I. In: *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung*, vol. 1 (Tübingen: Niemeyer Verlag, 1980), §§1–17, 7–32 and Edmund Husserl, *Erfahrung und Urteil* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1976), §§86–89, 409–26.

44 The vinculum remains without necessary reason, that is, contingent: 'The substantial bond is a particular path traced on the graph of Harmony, a specific relation between certain monads, in no way necessary and universal, but contingent and particular.' Frémont, *L'Être et la relation*, 55. Frémont explains this by drawing an analogy between the metaphysically contingent and Leibniz's account of the mathematically irrational. Whereas the number 2, like a monad, exists by itself, the irrational number $\sqrt{2}$ requires, as Leibniz argues, a vinculum that keeps the random sequence of numbers it implies together—that unites the constant to its variables. The vinculum is contingent upon its numbers, but can't be separated from the quantity it modifies and of which it is the source of modification. Leibniz: 'If corporeal substance is something real over and above monads, as a line is taken to be something over and above points, we shall have to say that corporeal substance consists in a certain union, or rather in a real unifier superadded to monads by God.' Leibniz to Des Bosses, February 15, 1712, *Des Bosses Correspondence*, 225. Cf. *Philosophical Essays*, 184, 196–7.

45 Guérin, *Philosophie du geste*, 77.

46 Leibniz, Letter to Des Bosses, April 29, 1715, *Des Bosses Correspondence*, 2007, 336–8. *Philosophical Essays,* 205, 203. In Greek *hexis* derives from *echo*.

47 Leibniz, Letter to Des Bosses, May 29, 1716, *Des Bosses Correspondence*, 375.

48 As Deleuze summarizes this redoubling: 'Leibniz discovers that the monad as absolute interiority, as an inner surface with only one side, nonetheless has another side, or a minimum of outside, a strictly complementary form of outside. Can topology resolve the apparent contradiction? The latter effectively disappears if we recall that the unilaterality of the monad implies as its condition of closure a torsion of the world, an infinite fold, that can be unwrapped in conformity with the condition only by recovering the other side, not as exterior to the monad, but as the exterior or outside *of* its own interiority: a partition, a supple and adherent membrane coextensive with everything inside. Such is the vinculum, the unlocalizable primary link that borders the absolute interior.' Deleuze, *The Fold*, 111.

49 Leibniz, Letter to Des Bosses, May 29, 1716, *Philosophical Essays*, 204.

50 Leibniz cited in Frémont, *L'Être et la relation*, 72. Even the most classical form of modern correspondence, that between representations and things, is immediately dramatized by this activity of co-responding itself. Cf Latour, *An Inquiry Into Modes of Existence*, 91–3.

51 André Robinet, *Architectonique disjunctive, automates systematiques et idealité transcendentale dans l'oeuvre de G.W. Leibniz* (Paris: VRIN, 1986).

52  Deleuze, *The Fold*, 29, 3.

53  Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 274.

54  As Deleuze and Guattari write, manner or soul is 'a force that is but does not act', that is, a presence without interaction. Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, 213.

55  Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 210–12, 189.

56  Isabelle Stengers, *Cosmopolitics II*, trans. Robert Bononno (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 402.

57  Agamben, *The Use of Bodies*, 85–7.

58  Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 190. Or as Tarde writes: 'the specialty of each of the elements, being a veritable universal milieu, is being not only a totality, but a virtuality of a certain type, and incarnating in it a cosmic idea always called upon, but rarely destined to, effectively realize itself.' Tarde, *Monadologie et sociologie*, 93.

59  Hence Tarde's definition of a society as 'the reciprocal possession, under extremely varied forms, of all by each'. Tarde, *Monadologie et sociologie*, 85. For Tarde, this means that all action is not executed by a subject but first of all *takes* place as the event by which several subjects are 'possessed', but which is itself produced by the vibratory movement of the universe in which 'each molecule of the solar system, for example, has for its physical and mechanic property . . . all the other molecules'. Tarde, *Monadologie et sociologie*, 88. Since every collective is produced as a temporal relation of mutual possession among monads, these relations of possession can be differentiated 'in a thousand different manners'. Tarde, *Monadologie et sociologie*, 55, 66, 91. Or as Deleuze seconds, via Foucault, this 'multiplicity of relations between forces' is 'a multiplicity of diffusion which no longer splits into two and is free of any dualizable form'. Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, trans. Seán Hand (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 84. Hence: 'Power flows through the ruling class no less than through those who are ruled, in such a way that classes result from it, and not the reverse. The State or Law merely effects the condensation of power which capitalism always deterritorializes. Classes and the State are not forces, but subjects which align forces, integrate them globally, and perform the relation of forces, on and in the strata.' Deleuze, *Two Regimes of Madness*, 249.

60  'By transduction we mean an operation—physical, biological, mental, social—by which an activity propagates itself from one element to the next, within a given domain, and founds this propagation on a structuration of the domain that is realized from place to place: each area of the constituted structure serves as the principle and the model for the next area, as a primer for its constitution, to the extent that the modification expands progressively at the same time as the structuring operation.' Simondon, 'The Position of the Problem of Ontogenesis', 11. Transduction is thus a circular kind of causality that modulates between

potential energy and actual energy. Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects*, 155–6. It is an art of relations, provided that we understand relation to be 'not an accident *vis-à-vis* substance, it is a structuring, energetic, and constitutive condition that extends into the existence of constituted beings'. Gilbert Simondon, *L'individu et sa génèse physico-biologique* (Paris: Jérôme Millon, 1995), 81.

61  Bertrand Russell, *A Critical Exposition of the Philosophy of Leibniz* (London: Routledge, 2002 [1900]), 179.

62  Brandon Look, 'Leibniz and the Substance of the *Vinculum Substantiale*', *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 38, no. 2 (2000): 204.

63  Souls alone are too general to explain real phenomena. Leibniz, 'Specimen Dynamicum I', in *Philosophical Papers and Letters*, 436–7.

64  Christiane Frémont, *Singularités: Individus et relations dans le système de Leibniz* (Paris: VRIN, 2003), 11.

65  A singularity, according to Frémont, is a 'residue of harmony'. Since it is both a substance and a relation, the paradoxical entity of the vinculum is a 'singularity' within the Leibnizian system that retains the 'extraordinariness' of a point of divergence or 'bifurcation point' and lets in a moment of 'contingency' or 'undecidability'. The account of the vinculum substantiale therefore does not so much deny Leibniz's systematicity, or transform harmony into cacophony, as it prevents the system from becoming rigid. As befits a system based on the method of vice-diction, it retains its plasticity or pliability, always folding according to local circumstances in a system of real communication. Frémont, *Singularités*, 17–19.

66  Latour, *An Inquiry into Modes of Existence*, 42–3.

67  See his preface in Frémont, *L'Être et la relation*, 7–9.

68  As a process, this understanding of secondness is closely related to what Peirce calls abduction. To know a thing ('substance') is to know its 'habit', which does not exert direct influence on the thing but is like the whole that calls out its individual elements and accounts for the real (instead of nominal) persistence or 'continuity of reactions' (Charles Sanders Peirce, *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, ed. Charles Hartsthorne and Paul Weiss (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1960), vol. 3, 613). Secondness thus combines some of the aspects Peirce assigns to the category of secondness (modificatory lateness, resistance, dynamic connection, singularity, reactivity, but not: the absoluteness of the last, degeneration, negation, pure actuality without possibility, and duality) with most of the categories he assigns to thirdness (the relativity of first and last, mediation, continuity, likeness, the combinatory, habit-taking, interpretation, finality). I understand this synthesis of Peircean secondness and thirdness in the same way that Deleuze defines the mode of the alcoholic who always desires his 'second-to-last-glass'. Secondness takes the series of penultimate glasses (the Peircean thirdness of always 'one more . . .') as the always singular one last glass (Peircean secondness).

69  Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 25. Cf. Simondon's notion of coherence as the
    moment when the disequilibrium between causality and finality disappears.
    Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects*, 135.

70  Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 81.

71  Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 183.

72  Ibid., 212–13. Cf. Latour's description of the mode of existence of religious 'beings
    sensitive to the word' as a constant rationalization of the question of substance but
    with no original type of subsistence. Latour, *An Inquiry into Modes of Existence*,
    295–326.

73  Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Confessio philosophi*, trans. R. Sleigh (New Haven/
    London: Yale University Press, 2005), 29, 43–5. Cf. Simondon's non-dialectical
    understanding of the operation of transduction as opposed to deduction, and
    reduction: 'Transduction is . . . a discovery of dimensions of which the system
    puts into communication each of its terms, and in such a way that the complete
    reality of each of the terms of the domain can come to order itself without loss,
    without reduction, in the newly discovered structures. The resolving transduction
    undertakes the inversion of the negative into the positive: that by which the terms
    are not identical to each other, that by which they are disparate (in the sense this
    word takes in the theory of depth perception) is integrated into the system of
    resolution and becomes the condition of signification.' Simondon, 'The Position of
    the Problem of Ontogenesis', 12.

74  For Stengers, the form of this question performs the equivalent of Agamben's
    project of rendering inoperative (*désoeuvrement*) the Aristotelian apparatus of
    potential and actual and corresponds to what Souriau calls the work of instauration.
    Isabelle Stengers, 'Que vas-tu faire de moi?' in *Étienne Souriau: Une Ontologie de
    l'Instauration*, ed. Fleur Courtois-l'Heureux and Aline Wiame (Paris: VRIN, 2015),
    63–85.

75  'Leibniz's writing is multiple just like the system and the world are, the author no
    less than God produces a unitary or uniform whole, the work as well as the universe
    remain an aggregate which mixes and hence connects analogically or harmonically
    various regions, without ever reducing them to systemic unity.' Frémont,
    *Singularités*, 26. And: 'The pluralist reading has as its privileged object, obligingly
    even, the world as it develops. . . . The world as it develops demands or gives rise
    to a rationality (of which Leibniz describes the rules and conditions) that ordinary
    logic doesn't let us make out. . . . The little stories and fictions effectively mediate
    the events that happen in reality, caused by existing individuals, not only those
    inscribed in the rules of the possible but caught up in the play of circumstances.'
    Frémont, *Singularités*, 28–9.

76  Leibniz, Letter to Des Bosses, February 15, 1712, *Des Bosses Correspondence*, 233.

77  Frémont, *L'Être et la relation*, 62. One is reminded here of Whitehead's Augustinian
    definition of religion, *re-ligare* (to bind fast), as 'what the individual does with

his own solitariness'. Alfred North Whitehead, *Religion in the Making* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1996 [1926]), 15–16.

78 Frémont, *L'Être et la relation*, 55.

79 See Lynette M. F. Bosch, *Mannerism, Spirituality and Cognition: The Art of Enargeia* (London/New York: Routledge, 2020), esp. 26–51.

80 Agamben, *The Use of Bodies*, 174. 'Only the idea of this modality of rising forth, this original mannerism of being, allows us to find a common passage between ontology and ethics. . . . That manner is ethical that does not befall us and does not found us but engenders us.' Agamben, *The Coming Community*, 27–8.

81 Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Textes inédits*, ed. Gaston Grua (Paris: PUF, 1948), 341; *Theodicy* §133.

82 Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 122.

83 Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 109–10.

84 If the virtual is a field of varying relations between antagonistically interacting tendencies (Tarde speaks of 'universal opposition') that are all real, but not all actualized, this means that peace can only exist as successful stylization of war. Prévost gives the example of Andrea del Castagno's *David* (1450), in which the real triumph is not a representation (the story) but the event of the presentation (the image) itself—that is, the new manner of combining the aggressive gestures of combat into a mutually inclusive individuation. Prévost, *La peinture en actes*, 87–115, 103.

85 Letter to Placcius, February 21, 1696, in Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, *Opera Omnia*, ed. Louis Dutens (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1989 [1768]), VI 1, 64–5.

86 Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold*, 20.

87 Isabelle Stengers, *Cosmopolitics I*, trans. Robert Bononno (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 4, 11.

88 Henri Bergson, *Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic*, trans. Cloudesley Brereton and Fred Rothwell (Minneola, NY: Dover Publications, 2005), 3.

89 Leibniz, *Textes inédits*, 341.

90 Stengers, *Cosmopolitics II*, 403.

91 Leibniz, 'Discourse on Metaphysics', §6; *Philosophical Essays*, 39.

92 Reasons, according to the principle of sufficient reason (*principium reddendae rationis*), are not simply given in nature but are founded on prudent judgment and the civil necessity of establishing laws. They must be 'rendered' or 'returned' to what is already given in the world of appearances—not to render the world 'accountable' to the necessities of good sense, as Heidegger thought, but in order to take responsibility for sufficient equity between what we consider rational and the real itself. Serres distinguishes reason (the necessity of truth and innovation) from judgment (the necessity of arbitration and tradition). What is at stake is the (Leibnizian) conversion of reason to a new 'equation of optimization, symmetry, and justice': 'Starting with the Enlightenment, reason has presided at the court

of judgment. . . . Now we are witnessing judgment catching up with reason. . . . Through a new call to globality, we need to invent a reason that is both rational and steady, one that thinks truthfully while judging prudently.' Michel Serres, *The Natural Contract*, trans. Elizabeth MacArthur and William Paulson (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008), 89–94.

# Chapter 5

1  Others have already hinted at the possibility of such a demonstration: 'The old paradigm of mass production is on its way out; a new paradigm, the individuation of experience, arises in its place. In this scenario, the balance shifts from material to immaterial. The question is no longer what to design, but why. Craft has provided viable answers to that, historically. Designers are beginning to understand these issues and to explore them, though perhaps unwitting as to their origins. Some time way back around the sixteenth century, craft and industry were synonyms, both capable of denoting the idea of skill. Now that industry is in the process of reinventing itself, perhaps design and craft will become synonyms too: complementary aspects of the same ongoing process of shaping experience through the interaction between people and things.' Rafael Cardoso, 'Craft versus Design: Moving Beyond a Tired Dichotomy', in *The Craft Reader*, ed. Glenn Adamson (Oxford/New York: Berg Publishers, 2010), 331.

2  Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images*, 77–8.

3  Michelangelo Buonarroti as cited in Robert J. Clements, *Michelangelo's Theory of Art* (New York: New York University Press, 1961), 16.

4  Elizabeth Gilmore Holt, ed., *A Documentary History of Art, Volume II: Michelangelo and the Mannerists, the Baroque and the Eighteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 91.

5  Cited in Panofsky, *Idea*, 121.

6  Ibid., 132.

7  Ibid., 119–23.

8  Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images*, 46. 'Vasari here becomes the first thinker about art to have questioned the reality of the "thing in itself."' Ibid., 110. Didi-Huberman summarizes Panofsky's neo-Kantian adaptation of Vasarian academism in three 'magic words': 'the Renaissance is recast in terms of rationalist humanism and its conception of the history of art; imitation is recast by hierarchical subordination of figuration to signification; and the inevitable idea recast in an idealist use of Kant's transcendental schematism.' Ibid., xix. Moreover, he regards this art-historical academism as definitive for the 'humanist conception of art in general': 'a conception wherein *Mimesis* walked hand-in-hand with *Idea*,

wherein the tyranny of the visible—the tyranny of resemblance and of congruent appearance—had managed to express itself perfectly in the abstract terms of an ideational truth or an ideal truth, of a *disegno interno* of Truth or of an ideal of Beauty . . . all of which ultimately comes back to the same thing, namely *Sameness* as shared metaphysical authority.' Ibid., 88.

9 Anton Francesco Doni as cited in Stephen J. Campbell and Michael W. Cole, *Italian Renaissance Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2012), 496.

10 Patricia A. Emison, *Creating the 'Divine' Artist: From Dante to Michelangelo* (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

11 Even the most repetitive paintings depend on imagination, hence Cennini's elevated claims for the dignity and intellectual prestige of the art. Painting is by definition a combination of imagination and skill of hand, 'in order to discover things not seen, hidden themselves under the shadow of natural objects, and to fix them with the hand, presenting to plain sight what does not actually exist.' Cited in Campbell & Cole, *Italian Renaissance Art*, 115.

12 Robert Williams, for example, argues that in mannerism art seeks the status of a *metatechne*, 'a superintendency of knowledge, a form of knowledge, a mode of knowing that necessarily involves a mastery of other modes and is distinguished by being potentially, ideally, a mastery of all modes.' Williams, *Art, Theory, and Culture in Sixteenth Century Italy*, 4.

13 Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images*, 74. There is indeed a rational system in Vasari, Didi-Huberman argues, but it is a cracked system, or rather, a 'mended crack' that forever separates knowledge about art from the truth of art. What mends the crack is the floating signifier of *disegno*: 'A totem-word reinvented and reinvested to decline the final, synchronic meaning of artistic activity in general understood as imitation.' *Disegno* 'is a descriptive word and it is a metaphysical word. It is a technical word and it is an ideal word. It is applicable to the hand of man, but also to his imaginative *fantasia*, and also to his *intelletto*, and also to his *anima*—as well as, finally, to God the creator of all things. It comes from the vocabulary of the studio, where it designates the form obtained on a support by the charcoal or crayon of the artist; it also designates the sketch, the work in gestation, the project, the compositional schema, and the layout of lines of force.' Ibid., 72, 80.

14 Deleuze, *Two Regimes of Madness*, 312.

15 Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 28.

16 Klein, 'L'art et l'attention au technique', 90.

17 Hauser, *Der Ursprung der modernen Kunst*, 15. On 'the speculative dimension of mannerism' see also Patricia Falguières, 'Le maniérisme et nous', in *L'automne de la Renaissance, d'Arcimboldo à Caravage*, ed. Claire Stoullig (Paris: Somogy, 2013), 16–25, 20.

18 Baxter Hathaway, *The Age of Criticism: The Late Renaissance in Italy* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1973).

19  Bergson, *The Creative Mind*, 155.

20  Zuccaro as cited in Williams, *Art, Theory, and Culture in Sixteenth Century Italy*, 138.

21  Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, 24. This chiaroscuro rationality proper to sense perception and by extension to art was to be developed into a full-scale aesthetics by Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten. See Jeffrey Barnouw, 'The Cognitive Value of Confusion and Obscurity in the German Enlightenment: Leibniz, Baumgarten, Herder', *Studies in Eighteenth Century Culture* 24 (1995): 24.

22  Michelangelo as cited in Clements, *Michelangelo's Theory of Art*, 35.

23  Charles de Tolnay, *The Art and Thought of Michelangelo*, trans. Nan Buranelli (New York: Pantheon Books, 1964), 97.

24  Bergson, *The Creative Mind*, 83.

25  Ibid., 81.

26  Ibid., 85.

27  'For the privation too is in a way form.' Aristotle, 'Physics', 193 b, 13–20, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 1984.

28  Falguières, *Le maniérisme*, 66–8. In its matrixical quality, Aristotelian matter is comparable to Plato's *khora*, the receptacle or screen that beckons the idea by featuring as a middle term between origin and destination, between extended and non-extended without ever departing from itself. Plato, *Timaeus*, 50–1b.

29  Bergson, *The Creative Mind*, 10.

30  Ibid., 73, 75, 84.

31  Ibid., 81.

32  Ibid., 76.

33  Ibid., 203–4.

34  Baltasar Gracián explains the *concetto*, the poetic invention that is counterpart to the artistic idea, as 'a thought of the intellect, imagined or similar to real things and formed in the fantasy' and as 'an act of understanding that expresses the correspondence which subsists among objects' (cited in Maniates, *Mannerism in Italian Music*, 26–7).

35  Bergson, *The Creative Mind*, 196. Indeed, to intuit conditions of real experience is already to materialize them in 'the thinking-feeling of our active implication in the ever-rolling-on in the world to really-next-effects'. Massumi, *Semblance and Event*, 37.

36  Bergson, *The Creative Mind*, 19.

37  Ibid., 112, 131.

38  Robert Bresson, *Notes on Cinematography*, trans. Jonathan Griffin (New York: Urizen Books, 1975), 25, 57.

39  Bergson, *The Creative Mind*, 190.

40  Henri Bergson, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, trans. R Ashley Audra and Cloudesley Brereton (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006 [1932]), 217.

41  Bergson, *The Creative Mind*, 116.

42  Ibid., 132.

43  Felice Le Monnier, *Le rime di Michelangelo Buonarroti, pittore, scultore e architetto*, ed. Cesare Guasti (Florence: Felice Le Monnier, 1863), 216.

44  Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, 194 (translation modified).

45  Leibniz, *New Essays on Human Understanding*, II, I, 110; I, I, 80, 86. In Dewey's commentary: 'An innate idea is a dynamic relation of intelligence and some of its ideas. Intelligence has a structure, which necessarily functions in certain ways. Structure is not something ready-made. Rather it is the perfectly determined connections and relations which form the logical prius and the psychological basis of experience. Innate idea is a necessary activity of intelligence as it enters into the framework of all experience, not a faculty or potentiality. There is no hard and fixed division between a priori and a posteriori truths. They are "real possibilities."' Dewey, *The Early Works, 1882–1898, Volume 1*, 307–10.

46  Leibniz, 'Meditations on Knowledge, Truth, and Ideas', [1684], *Philosophical Essays*, 23–7.

47  Leibniz, Letter to Arnauld 28 November/8 December 1686, *Philosophical Essays*, 7.

48  Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*, 292. What distinguishes manner from matter is the 'artistic import' the former adds to the latter. But artistic import is not restricted to the conscious or reflective use (intellectual idea) of some material, as Susanne Langer sometimes suggests. 'If the origin of art had to wait on somebody's conception of this inner meaning, and on his intention to express it, then our poor addle-brained race would probably never have produced the first artistic creation. We see significance *in* things long before we know what we are seeing, and it takes some other interest, practical or emotional or superstitious, to make us produce an object which turns out to have expressive virtue as well. We cannot conceive significant form *ex nihilo*; we can only *find* it.' Susanne Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key: A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite and Art* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979 [1942]), 251.

49  Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 212. Deleuze stresses that ideo-motivity is still a too intellectualist notion, since a practice is never based on an abstract representation, but on the repetition of a differential in real movement. 'The movement of the swimmer does not resemble that of the wave, in particular, the movements of the swimming instructor which we reproduce on the sand bear no relation to the movements of the wave, which we learn to deal with only by grasping the former in practice as signs . . . In other words, there is no ideo-motivity, only sensory-motivity.' Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 23.

50  Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 158, 223–4. And: 'the ideal is not a kind of existence' since 'what is really at issue is the problem resolved, in the reality of its solution. It is not the ideal, but the reality of this ideal that is in question.' Ibid., 208.

51  Ibid., 128, 222–3.

52  Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects*, 160.

53  Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 229.

54  Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 164. Dewey explains this indistinction between material and sensation as follows: 'What is overlooked is that it is *not* the painting as a *picture* (that is, the object in aesthetic experience) that causes certain effects "*in us*." The painting as a picture is *itself* a *total effect* brought about by the interaction of external and organic causes.' Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 261, cf. 228. Cf. 'The image I see reflects not only the trace of the hand or the intention of the artist, nor do I directly see the diagrammatical configuration of colors on the painting surface. The image is not a medium, but the product of an imaginative process that involves several actors in a specific architecture. Imagination is a collective performance of perception.' Ludger Schwarte, 'Intuition and Imagination. How to See Something that Is Not There' in: *Dynamics and Performativity of Imagination: The Image between the Visible and the Invisible* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 56–75, 68.

55  Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 75.

56  Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 236, 238.

57  Ibid., 239, 211–12.

58  Ibid., 128–9, 236.

59  Ibid., 238, 208.

60  As Bruno Latour explains, instauration has three features: the doubling of the action (*faire faire*), the oscillation of the vector (who is the author?), and the risky search. (*An Inquiry into Modes of Existence*, 160–2) If the work needs a subjective interpretation it is in the sense of the adjective: we are subject to it, we win our subjectivity through it. The concept of instauration (*restoration* and *instauration* have the same Latin etymology) describes a 'growing existence' in such a way that the source of action, the choice between what comes from the artist and what comes from the work, is avoided: 'saying of a work of art that it results from an instauration, is to get oneself ready to see the potter as the one who welcomes, gathers, prepares, explores and invents the form of the work, just as one discovers or "invents" [in French the legal term for someone who discovers a treasure is *inventor*] a treasure.' Bruno Latour, 'Reflections on Etienne Souriau's *Les différents modes d'existence*', trans. Stephen Muecke in *The Speculative Turn: Continental Materialism and Realism*, ed. Levi Bryant, Nick Srnicek and Graham Harman (Melbourne: Re-Press, 2010), 304–33.

61  Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 128.

62  Latour, *An Inquiry Into Modes of Existence*, 263, 277. Latour emphasizes that while habit presupposes and preserves its habitat, it is indifferent to lies and truth alike, yet does not escape pragmatic veridiction, since once we forget habit we can no longer distinguish good and bad habits in terms of their consequences for

their habitats. 'Let us say that habit is the mode of existence that *veils* all modes of existence—*including its own.*' Latour, *An Inquiry Into Modes of Existence*, 268. See also Michael Cuntz, 'On the Oddness of Habit', in *Reset Modernity!*, ed. Bruno Latour and Christophe Leclerq (Karlsruhe: ZKM, 2016), 215–23.

63  Latour, *An Inquiry Into Modes of Existence*, 268.

64  Rainer Warning, 'Manier als Emergenz: Zur Manierismus-Kritik bei Diderot', in *Manier—Manieren—Manierismen*, ed. Erika Greber and Bettine Menke (Tübingen: Günter Narr Verlag, 2003), 183–92.

65  Cited in Clements, *Michelangelo's Theory of Art*, 12, 23–8. Maurer, *Manierismus*, 131–7.

66  Henri Bergson, *Mind-Energy. Lectures & Essays*, trans. H. Wildon Carr (London: Macmillan and Co, 1920 [1919]), 165.

67  Deleuze, *Two Regimes of Madness*, 296.

68  Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 228. 'To instaure is to follow a path. We determine the being to come in exploring its path. In blooming, the being demands its own existence. In all of this, the agent must yield before the work's own will, must work out what it is it wills, and must renounce himself for the sake of this autonomous being, which he seeks to promote in accordance with its own right to existence.' Ibid., 231–2.

69  Ibid., 222.

70  Giorgio Vasari as cited in Paul Barolsky, 'The Artist's Hand', in *The Craft of Art: Originality and Industry in the Italian Renaissance and Baroque Workshop*, ed. Andrew Ladis and Carolyn Wood (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1995), 9. Deleuze draws an analogy between Michelangelo's figures and Leibniz's monads by claiming that neither are essences but rather sources of modifications or manners of being: 'In some way, when one thinks of painting that is called mannerist, Leibniz's entire philosophy is without doubt mannerist par excellence. Already with Michelangelo one finds traces of a first and profound mannerism. A mannered posture of Michelangelo is not an essence. It is rather the source of a modification, the source of a manner of being.' Deleuze, *Course Notes*, April 7, 1987.

71  Adrian Stokes, 'Carving, Modelling and Agostino', in *The Outwardness of Art: Selected Writings*, ed. Thomas Evans (London: Ridinghouse, 2020), 116–51, 127.

72  Souriau, *The Different Modes of Existence*, 128–9. Cf. Whitehead'a warning of the 'furies,' 'the horrors lurking within [ideas'] imperfect realization.' Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*, 148.

73  Wylie Sypher, *Four Stages in Renaissance Style: Transformations in Art and Literature 1400–1700* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1955), 30. This relatives Stokes's classical opposition between the rawness of quattrocento carving and the effect of the preconceived in seicento ('baroque') modeling.

74  Brian Massumi, 'Involutionary Afterword', *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature* 23 (1998): 23:3, 2013, http://www.anu.edu.au/hrc/first_and_last/works/crclintro.htm (accessed July 7, 2013). Dewey describes this energetic rupture with hylomorphism as follows: 'Apart from some special interest, every product of art is matter and matter only, the contrast is not between matter and form but between matter relatively unformed and matter adequately formed. . . . "Stuff" is everything, and form a name for certain aspects of the matter when attention goes primarily to just these aspects.' Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 189–98.

75  Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 132, 139 and Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, 134. 'What the artist is, is *creator of truth*, because truth is not to be achieved, formed or reproduced; it has to be created. There is no other truth than the creation of the New: creativity, emergence.' Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, 146.

76  Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 61–2.

77  Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 78.

78  Bergson, *The Creative Mind*, 148.

79  Giovanni Pietro Bellori, *Vite dei pittori, scultori ed architetti moderni* (Pisa: Presse Niccoló Capurro, 1821), book I.

80  Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, 149.

81  Spuybroek, *The Sympathy of Things*, 56.

82  Vlad Ionescu, *Applied Art, Implied Art: Craftsmanship and Technology in the Age of Art Industry* (Ghent: A&S Books, 2018).

83  'Design means adding spirits to things, or, in James's terms, giving them fringes, or in Ruskin's words, cloaking and veiling them. . . . Design's purpose is not to "make visible" the unforeseen or the invisible, as is often stated, but to make us feel it. Design makes things radiate feelings, to which we and other things can tune in. . . . To paraphrase Bergson, the role of design is to sympathize with the indeterminations of life.' Spuybroek, *The Sympathy of Things*, 205. And: 'the essence of art will be less that of rendering visible the unseen or the invisible as it intersects a seeing visibility . . . than of rendering Life sensible in its "zones of indeterminacy."' Alliez, *Signature of the World*, 69.

84  Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, 5.

85  Deleuze, *The Fold*, 35.

86  Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 67.

87  Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett, 1996), A137/B176-A148/B188.

88  Ibid., A 833/B862, A 570/B598.

89  Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A137/B176-A148/B188.

90  Didi-Huberman, *Confronting Images*, 130–3.

91  Giorgio Vasari, Rosanna Bettarini, and Paolo Barocchi, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori* (Florence: Sansoni, 1966–87) vol. I, 111.

92  Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A833-4/B861-2.

93  Wilhelm Worringer, *Abstraction and Empathy: A Contribution to the Psychology of Style*, trans. Michael Bullock (New York: International Universities Press, 1953 [1908]), 15, 18, 24.

94  Bart Vandenabeele argues that mannerist forms are so complex and distorted that the power of imagination fails to cooperate with the understanding to develop harmonious configurations and is forced to enter into an alliance with reason, which strives for totality. Mannerist art is thus a surplus of ideas within the sensible. It deranges the imagination and, through a distorted, excessive beauty, expresses unity only in order to emphasize the immense diversity. Accordingly, mannerism could also be defined as a 'surplus of form', as in the work of Leon Spilliaert, Rachel Whiteread, or Monica Bonvicini, whereas a matterist sublime would lack all form. Bart Vandenabeele, 'The Sublime in Art: Kant, the Mannerist, and the Matterist Sublime', *The Journal of Aesthetic Education* 49, no. 3 (2015): 2–49. The point, however, is not that grace or beauty are opposed to violence and the formless, but that even the loveliest paintings, the most beautiful sculptures contain technical imperfections as well as artistic protocols of innovative violence and power. J. M. Bernstein, 'Modernism as Aesthetics and Art History', in *Art History Versus Aesthetics*, ed. James Elkins (New York and London: Routledge, 2006), 241–68, 259. This is also what enabled Lyotard to speak of an anti-classicist sublime in mannerism and baroque. See Lyotard, 'The Sublime and the Avant Garde', 6.

95  Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, 46–7; Deleuze, *Negotiations*, 143.

96  Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 237.

97  Felix Thürlemann, 'Im Schleptau des grossen Glücks: Die doppelte Mimesis bei Albrecht Dürer', in *Manier—Manieren—Manierismen*, ed. Erika Greber and Bettine Menke (Tübingen: Narr, 2003), 17–40.

98  Maurer, *Manierismus*, 88–93.

99  Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, 94.

100  Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 96.

101  Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 161.

102  Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, 10. 'The Titianesque manner exploited carefully worked chromatic harmonies to create a luxuriant decorative unity across the picture surface, one which could initiate a sophisticated play with natural form, but did not ultimately challenge its primacy. Tintoretto's sketchy paint surface was very different, chiaroscuro subduing local colour, the muted tones produced with a thinly loaded or dry brush barely covering the dark ground preparation, or the coarsely woven canvas beneath. All marks on the surface appear as improvised and approximate, with material figures and objects losing their more substantial qualities as a consequence. If the paint surface continues to draw attention to itself, its main function is to deny a simple correlation of material and spiritual splendour.' (Tom Nichols, *Tintoretto: Tradition and Identity* (London: Reaktion

Books, 2005)), 239. For an in-depth inventory of these new, colorist traits of expression in Venetian painting, see also: Stephen Zepke, *Art as Abstract Machine: Ontology and Aesthetics in Deleuze and Guattari* (London: Routledge, 2005), 129–40. For Deleuze, it was Tintoretto who pushed the Venetian reversal of the renaissance separation of color and light and contour to the level of mannerist or baroque hallucination: 'in place of the white chalk or plaster that primes the canvas, Tintoretto and Caravaggio use a dark, red-brown background on which they place the thickest shadows, and paint directly by shading towards the shadows. The painting is transformed. Things jump out of the background, colors spring from the common base that attests to their obscure nature, figures are defined by their covering more than their contour. Yet this is not in opposition to light; to the contrary, it is by virtue of a new regime of light.' Deleuze, *The Fold*, 31–2; Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, 128; Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 173, 301. More recently, Kamini Vellodi has sought to correct or at least complement Carlo Ridolfi's motto describing Tintoretto as 'drawing (disegno) as well as Michelangelo with coloring (*colorito*) like Titian's all aglow'. She opposes Tintoretto's new technique of composition-dramatization, the 'stage-method' as also described by Ridolfi, to the determination of the concetto. The use of wood and cardboard maquettes populated with little puppets made of wax and clay allowed for an endless recombination of compositional relations that displace the human body as model and lead to a new sense of space. This, rather than subjective imagination, Vellodi argues, is the artificial, practical resource of the drama in Tintoretto's work, and thus what is really new in Tintoretto's manner (Vellodi, *Tintoretto's Difference*, 30–64, 90–2).

103  Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 182.

104  Ibid., 192.

105  Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 334.

106  Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 370–1, 132.

107  Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 200.

108  Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, 99.


# Chapter 6

1  Peter Osborne, 'The Fiction of the Contemporary: Speculative Collectivity and Transnationality in the Atlas Group', in *Aesthetics and Contemporary Art*, ed. Armen Avanessian and Luke Skrebowski (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2011), 115–16, 111.

2  Armen Avanessian, 'Asynchronous Present Past', in *Speculative Art Histories: Analysis at the Limit*, ed. Sjoerd van Tuinen (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 11–20. If the contemporary is to be more than a journalistic

and curatorial (i.e., legitimating) term, then it has to be as a speculative and regulative fiction that projects into presence a strictly formal and global unity of times and spaces that is in principle futural, since it conjoins currently coeval times and empirical material that remain disjunctive. The contemporary, in other words, is heterochronic in itself yet inseparable from the revival of a grand narrative that is indifferently historical and fictional. John Rajchman, 'The Contemporary: A New Idea?' in *Aesthetics and Contemporary Art*, ed. Avanessian and Skrebowski, 126.

3 Richard Sennett, *The Craftsman* (London: Penguin, 2009), 9.

4 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 329.

5 Ibid., *A Thousand Plateaus*, 345. Deleuze and Guattari here side with the anarchists and unemployed youth of whom Marx and Engels wrote: 'They are like alchemists of the revolution. . . . They leap at interventions which are supposed to work revolutionary miracles: incendiary bombs, destructive devices of magic effect, revolts which are expected to be all the more miraculous and astonishing in effect as their basis is less rational.' Karl Marx, review, 'Les Conspirateurs', in *Neue Rheinische Zeitung Politisch-Ökonomische Revue*, no. 4, April 1850 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 2007).

6 For Sartre, Tintoretto's is an art of becoming rather than of being. Like Giacometti, a great admirer of Tintoretto, Sartre commended Tintoretto for his uneasiness and self-identification as someone 'born among the underlings who endured the weight of a superimposed hierarchy . . . the son of an artisan' who valued only 'physical effort, manual creation'. Quoted in Nichols, *Tintoretto*, 8.

7 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 347.

8 Ibid., 373.

9 Sennett, *The Craftsman*, 67–80.

10 If painting is the picture of the mind, then, as Leonardo famously argued, sculpture is the product of the body. The active, operative, non-contemplative pathway into the visual arts, sculpture is an art of noise, dirt, and sweat—in other words, amphibolic media. Sculpture is an art of the hand more than of the eye. In reference to the very marble dust that Leonardo derided, Michelangelo therefore portrayed himself not in the fine clothes of the gentleman, but in a protective turban. For the same reason, Cellini emphasized against Leonardo that God is a sculptor and not a painter. Michael W. Cole, *Cellini and the Principles of Sculpture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 1–3.

11 Pamela Smith describes alchemy as a 'vernacular science of matter' and 'practical naturalism' based on an 'artisanal literacy' and matching 'epistemology' (Pamela Smith, *The Body of the Artisan: Art and Experience in the Scientific Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 8, 145) that revealed that nature was not dead but vibrant with anorganic life and behaving in idiosyncratic ways, which can be mastered only through sense experience and not through theoretical

knowledge. Or rather, if alchemy does produce knowledge, this is a tacit knowledge that inheres in the objects themselves and that can be found only by 'overhearing' (Paracelcus in Smith, *The Body of the Artisan*, 115) them or sounding them out. Smith distinguishes four claims artisans shared with alchemists about knowledge, and from which modern science would emerge only gradually: 'First, nature is primary, and certain knowledge resides in nature. Second, matter is active, and one must struggle bodily with and against this active matter to extract knowledge of nature. Third, this process of struggle is called experience, and it is learned through replication. And, finally, this imitation of nature produces an effect—a work of art—that displays the artisan's knowledge of nature and in itself constitutes a kind of knowledge. The background to all these claims was the conviction that knowledge is active and knowing is doing' (Smith, *The Body of the Artisan*, 149).

12  Just as the basis of alchemy is the work (*opus*), an experimental and experiential *operatio* in chemical bodies aimed at the extraction of a *prima materia* in which *nous* and *physis* are still one, Cellini boasted that he did not create images but 'works'. He always took his work as a designer to be grounded in the diligence and industry of goldsmithery, even insisting on the addition of metalwork to Vasari's three arts of design. As Cole writes, goldsmithing is a peculiar casualty in Vasari's schema of *disegno*. While in the first 1550 edition of the *Lives*, Vasari frequently mentions the formation of many of the great renaissance artists as goldsmiths, these references have disappeared from the 1568 edition, which focuses on the more monumental arts of formal design that served Cosimo I de Medici. The fine arts are thus at once constituted on the exclusion of the labor of goldsmithing and continue to rely on its very principle of work and formation, the studio. 'Though the *Lives* set out to characterize an art, or at least a group of artists, that *break* with goldsmithing they end up suggesting that the phenomenon we know as the renaissance *depended* on the studios goldsmiths established.' Cole, *Cellini and the Principles of Sculpture*, 16.

13  Fundamental here is the ancient belief, upheld from Aristotle to Agricola, that the primary ingredient in metals was water, and that metals formed when waters (or waters-to-be) became trapped in the earth and congealed. The natural state of metals was thus not quite solid but rather unctuous. Cole, *Cellini and the Principles of Sculpture*, 51.

14  Hanna Rose Shell, 'Casting Life, Recasting Experience: Bernard Palissy's Occupation between Maker and Nature', *Configurations* 12, no. 1 (2004): 31.

15  Patricia Falguières, 'Sur le renversement du maniérisme: espèces infimes, génération spontanée et pensée du type dans la culture du XVIe siècle', afterword to Ernst Kris, *Le style rustique*, trans. Christophe Jouanlanne and Ginette Morel (Paris: Éditions Macula, 2005), 221–4. Cf. Stengers's stressing the ethopoietic character to knowledge, the production of which transforms the knower himself: 'The relation

between thinking and testing has its origin in alchemy, and it was related not to a knowing subject, able to question and evaluate something in a way anybody should recognize as legitimate, but to an immanent process producing both the thought and the thinker. A process which was called purification, but again purification here is not a knowledge operation, in the name of some preconceived norm. Purification must rather be understood in relation with chemist and alchemist operations, requiring the action of something which has the power to dissolve, to separate what resists its action from what does not.' Isabelle Stengers, 'Thinking with Whitehead and Deleuze: A Double Test', in *Deleuze, Whitehead, Bergson. Rhizomatic Connections*, ed. Keith Robinson (New York: Palgrave, 2008), 28–44, 28–9.

16  Falguières speaks of Kris's history of practical techniques as 'minor practice'. Falguières, 'Afterword', 209. A contemporary of the Werkbund and Bauhaus, Kris was the great inventor of 'a technical history of the arts' who marked 'the entry of mannerism in the age of photography' (Falguières, 'Afterword', 206, 210–11), refusing the distinction between fine arts and mechanical arts. But while the applied arts of his time were content to produce on a mass scale as long as the prototypes were still designed by humans, Kris discovered in mannerism a veritable constructivism in which *energeia* itself is based on a technological model, and art becomes a 'molding after/on life' (*moulage sur le vif*), both in its contingency and its automatism.

17  Falguières, 'Afterword', 241–5. Falguières emphasizes the German names for the craftsmen of that time: *Bildschnitzer*, *Formschneider*, *Patronengiesser*, indicating operations and technologies of flow and cut. Ibid., 245. In mannerism, these functions become part of a process of rematerialization by which symbolic representations are turned back into physical presences, an infinite '*maniément* of symbols without intention of signification' and a 'germination of signs'. Ibid., 260–6.

18  Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 409.

19  David Lapoujade, 'From Transcendental Empiricism to Worker Nomadism', *Pli: Warwick Journal of Philosophy* no. 9 (2000): 190–9.

20  Tim Ingold, *Making: Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), 26.

21  Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects*, 251–2.

22  Chemically speaking, metal is the second most powerful catalyst on the planet, losing only to biological enzymes. A catalyst is a substance or molecular assemblage that initiates or accelerates a chemical reaction without itself being affected by the reaction process. In fact, there is no material assemblage that does not contain a bit of metal. Manuel DeLanda, 'The Machinic Phylum', in *TechnoMorphica*, ed. Joke Brouwer and Carla Hoekendijk (Rotterdam: V2_Institute for Unstable Media, 1997), 78. Thus if the forging and quenching of metal comes both before and after formed matter, this means we always begin from a metallic milieu. As Deleuze and Guattari famously put it: 'Metallurgy is the consciousness

or thought of the matter-flow, and metal the correlate of that consciousness. As expressed in panmetallism, metal is coextensive to the whole of matter, and the whole of matter to metallurgy. Even the waters, the grasses and varieties of wood, the animals are populated by salts or mineral elements. Not everything is metal, but metal is everywhere. Metal is the conductor of all matter.' Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 411.

23  'Metal is what compels us to think matter, and it's what compels us to think matter as continuous variation.' Deleuze, *Course Notes*, February 27, 1979.

24  John Ruskin, *On Art and Life* (London/New York: Penguin, 2004 [1886]), 59–62, 66. In the nineteenth century, the introduction of mild steel allowed for the homogenization of metallic behavior and the transfer of skills from human to machine. By contrast, Ruskin attributes the love of metal to 'that strange disquietude of the Gothic spirit that is its greatness; that restlessness of the dreaming mind, that wanders hither and thither among the niches, and flickers feverishly around the pinnacles, and frets and fades in labyrinthine knots and shadows along wall and roof, and yet is not satisfied, nor shall be satisfied'. Ibid., 39. Following Smith, however, this restless modulation of metal seems to be essentially an early modern practice: 'the phrase "the working of metal" today conjures up the manipulation of inert matter with clear productive and economic meanings, in the early modern period, it had an entirely different meaning. Metalworking in the sixteenth century was part of a web that included vermillion, the color red, blood, mercury, gold, and lizards, and it had access to the powers of nature, transformation, and generation. The manipulation of metals in early modern Europe was not simply about the handling and transformation of inert materials, but rather allowed the artisan to investigate and engage in life forces, in the relationship of matter to spirit, even the imitation of the most profound mysteries like the incarnation.' Pamela H. Smith, '"Art" is to "Science" as "Renaissance" is to "Scientific Revolution"? The Problematic Algorithm of Writing a History of the Modern World', in *Renaissance Theory*, ed. James Elkins (New York: Routledge, 2008), 427–45.

25  Andrew Barry, 'Materialist Politics: Metallurgy', in *Political Matter: Technoscience, Democracy and Public Life*, ed. Bruce Braun and Sarah J. Whatmore (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2010), 92.

26  Quoted in Shell, 'Casting Life, Recasting Experience', 31.

27  Guattari, *Chaosmosis*, 101. See also: Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*, trans. Martin Nicolaus (London/New York: Penguin, 1993), 705.

28  Spuybroek, *The Sympathy of Things*, 42; Spuybroek, *The Architecture of Continuity*, 226–43.

29  Parisi argues that randomness is the condition of programming culture and big data, such that, in the form of entropic bursts of data, algorithms are neither the model nor the result of biophysical reality. Instead of simulating the movement

of physical bodies, they become equal to, merge with, and extend the generative qualities of matter as such. As a consequence, we can speak of a metabiology based on 'algorithmic architecture'. Luciana Parisi, *Contagious Architecture: Computation, Aesthetics, and Space* (Cambridge MA/London: MIT Press, 2013), ix.

30  Sennett, *The Craftsman*, 7–8.

31  Andrew Barry 'Materialist Politics', 92. With authorities such as James Edward Gordon and Cyril Stanley Smith, himself a metallurgist, STS has rediscovered the central problem of metallurgy, namely the relation between the transformation of metals and features of their external environment. Why do metals tend to stress and break? This is a practical question to which the answer implies a process of invention. Cracks are assemblages with their own modes of existence. They are actor networks and artifacts which can be mapped or narrated without being deducible in any *a priori* fashion. Metals thus illustrate Bruno Latour's principle of irreducibility. Their properties cannot be reduced to their external (social) environment or to the fundamentals of physics. For example, the fragility or toxicity of metals are the mundane properties of specific materials and material structures with unexpected political consequences. Alloys cannot be understood as combinations of pure substances and deduced from fundamental physical principles, since the behavior of metals in the conditions encountered in power stations or aircraft is quite different from any laboratory setting or simulation. Metallurgists are diplomats or mediators between economic calculation, government regulation, and the analysis of material properties. The routine tests and measurements of X-ray crystallography carried out on systems such as power stations, aircraft, and oil platforms to ensure their integrity and safety are governmental acts intended to manage the potentially unruly conduct of socio-material assemblages, aligning them with broader economic and governmental objectives.

32  De Landa, 'The Machinic Phylum', 39.

33  Graham Harman, *Guerilla Metaphysics: Phenomenology and the Carpentry of Things* (Chicago: Open Court, 2005), 135.

34  Ibid.

35  Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects*, 177, 25.

36  Ibid., 165, 182–3, 333.

37  Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects*, 29–31. Just as every mode, the mode of technicity, as distinguished from that of the living being or aesthetic mode, adheres to the law of conservation (ibid., xv, 32), which gives us a dynamic intuition of individual technical objects, each of which has a degree of perfection (ibid., 26) with respect to the modes it participates in. Since no object is of itself bound to a single use or stable essence (ibid., 25), 'the greatest perfection coincides with the greatest openness' (ibid., 18) with respect to the potential functions that it concretizes in its structural unity, whereas any

divergence of functions (the division of labor) is still a residue of abstraction (ibid., 28): 'specialization does not occur function after function, but synergy after synergy' (ibid., 38), meaning that 'it is not the production-line that produces standardization, but rather intrinsic standardization that allows for the production-line to exist' (ibid., 29).

38  Ibid., 134.

39  Ibid., 254–5.

40  Ibid., 248–9.

41  Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, chapter IV.

42  Simondon, *On the Mode of Existence of Technical Objects*, 162, 171–6.

43  Ibid., 251–7.

44  Deleuze, *Desert Islands*, 174.

45  Egenhofer, *Produktionsästhetik*, 7–8, 198–9.

46  Bergson, *The Creative Mind*, 69, 156.

47  Baldessare Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. George Bull (London: Penguin, 1976 [1528]), 43. More than a century later, Spinoza would paraphrase Plato (*chalepa ta kala*, *Politeia* IV, 435c) and Cicero (*De amicitia* § 79) in similar terms, see *Ethics*, EV42s.

48  'Slow and rapid are not quantitative degrees of movement but rather two types of qualified movement', the laminar movement of matter and the vertical movement of manner. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 371. See also Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues II*, 30–1. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 371.

49  Sennett, *The Craftsman*, 74.

50  Ibid., 290.

51  Quoted in Sven Dupré, Dedo von Kerssenbrock-Krosigk, and Beat Wismer (eds.), *Art and Alchemy: The Mystery of Transformation* (Munich: Hirmer, 2014), 17.

52  Cole, *Cellini and the Principles of Sculpture*, 111.

53  Agamben, *The Use of Bodies*, 65.

54  As Virno has shown, virtuosity is the post-fordist paradigm of labor in which labor converges with art and politics in its new performative quality. Paolo Virno, *A Grammar of the Multitude: For an Analysis of Contemporary Forms of Life*, trans. Isabella Bertoletti, James Cascaito and Andrea Casson (New York: Semiotext(e), 2004), 52–71.

55  Stengers, *Cosmopolitics I*, 34.

56  Henk Oosterling, 'Ecoliteracy in between Politics, Philosophy and Art: The shared Interests of Rotterdam Skillcity' in *Yes, Naturally: How Art Saves the World*, ed. Ine Gevers (Rotterdam: nai010 publishers, 2013), 100–7.

57  Sennett's approach includes the importance of the sketch (of knowing not quite what you are about when you begin), dialectical of freedom and constraint, relational openness versus self-contained perfection, learning when it is time to stop. Sennett, *The Craftsman*, 262.

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