

Sonorous Heterogenesis

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Abstract

This article starts from the questions: How is the domain of music called upon by Deleuze? What is the nature of the particular *encounter* that the philosopher enacts with the musical? What is it that motivated and mobilised Deleuze's attention with respect to this domain? The encounter is a key concept in Deleuze's thought, an operational device that puts machines and disparate elements, themselves charged with consistency, into tension with one another. Moving from these considerations, the aim is to try to detect what is taking place at the hinge of the philosophical and musical field, how this interest is established, and which fields are called upon, focusing in particular on the notion of heterogenesis.

How is the domain of music called upon by Deleuze? What is the nature of the particular *encounter* that the philosopher enacts with the musical? Deleuze had a philosophical interest in music. More specifically, he was interested in it from the point of view of the creation of concepts; and even if music never became the object of a specific work by Deleuze, it nonetheless occupies a privileged place: it is recurrent in his thought. Even when he turns towards film, painting, or literature to elaborate his system, music remains for him the place of a particular encounter, one which calls upon multiple aspects of the musical and, more broadly, the sonorous.

What is it that motivated and mobilised Deleuze's attention with respect to this domain? The *encounter* is a key concept in Deleuze's thought, one which is supported by an ensemble of signs that take on meaning via the problem that they allow to pose, a problem that implicates the need for a movement of thought or an act of creation: the "claw of necessity". This isn't because these signs are explicit, but, to the contrary, because they are obscure and they "force (us) to think". The encounter is an operational device that puts machines and disparate elements, themselves charged with consistency, into tension with one another; and so, it's on the basis of the *dispar*, and not a communication of principle, that partial resonances are constituted. Deleuze's thought places us at the level of the musical and sonorous event,

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at the level of the formation of *material-force* relations, and of expressive processes that conjugate dynamisms and determinations.

We will try to detect what is taking place at the hinge of the philosophical and musical field, how this interest is established, and which fields are called upon. We will also present some characteristic features of the concepts that drive the main lines of a *music-thinking*: multiplicity, consistency, cut, continuum, diagonal, subjectivation, deterritorialization. Thus, we will analyse the way Deleuze solicits music, on the plane of technique and operation as well as the intensive plane of affects; putting the two in relation. Finally, we will evoke what, in music, is renewed by this incursion that comes from a point of view that is external to it.

An Operational Field

If music itself is rarely mentioned in the early works of Deleuze, the study of aesthetic, technical, physical, and psychic individuations takes form against the background of a dynamic tension between elements that are non-communicating *a priori*. Deleuze pays special attention to the manner in which the individuations of bodies and of events are constituted. He is interested in the compositions of relations, in the distribution of elements, and in the articulations that will preside over the emergence of forms, their organisation and their variation. More precisely, Deleuze searches for what is determined in the temporal event (act, operation) and what is composed in the movement of forces brought into relation; not, however, from the perspective of a principle that would be exterior to them and would organise them in a stable fashion, but rather according to a thinking of potential relations, resulting from dynamic couplings. This problematic feeds all of the domains in which Deleuze invests: the individuation of bodies, events, and the states of things, as well as artistic production—all of which are apprehended from the perspective of their specific spatial and temporal determinations.

Starting in the 60's, Deleuze took up the analysis of aesthetic individuations in Proust and took note of spatial and temporal "compounds of perception". The circulation of small, non-signifying perceptions, for example, is notably identified in the individual and collective compounds of *In Search of Lost Time* in relation with the "lines of time", (Deleuze 2000a: 12, 17, 55, 56) unfolding rhythms, and irreducible speeds (Deleuze 2000a). What constitutes the essence of Vinteuil's little phrase is an ensemble of signs; and the expressive and technical forms of the music are indissociable from the subjectivations that it aggregates (Deleuze 2000a). Deleuze's interest in energy and spatio-temporal determinations is constitutive of the differential thinking developed in *Difference and Repetition*; and this dynamic tension precedes, in a certain sense, the productive encounter with the musical that will be deployed over the course of the 70's, with Félix Guattari. Starting with *Difference and Repetition*, the

search for a dynamic model of the formation of bodies—of variable and non-symmetric curvatures—begins to appear at the level of rhythmic events (Deleuze 1995).

Are the rules hierarchical or structurally predetermined? Deleuze calls upon Simondon's metastable systems in order to think the neighbouring relations that are constituted by couplings and that are capable of producing singular individuations. What determines and gives rise to events is not identifiable from a structurally exogenous point of view, but from a moving and reciprocal structuration, in perpetual transformation. From biology to animal ethology, as it was thought by Uexküll, the "associated milieus" are determined by molecular combinations, perceptive and energetic exchanges¹. These fields of variables, which Deleuze refers to as "multiplicities", are, from the beginning, multiple and do not require a unity in order to form a system. Multiplicities—of which any point is susceptible of communication with any other point—are compounds of variables in interaction. Without opposing them, Deleuze distinguishes between topological and distributive multiplicities—which is a reference to Riemann—and to intensive and qualitative multiplicities, in reference to Bergson. The metastable character of the differential approach is not without relation to the composition of relations in music: the conditions of simultaneity of the elements determines the reciprocal relations, while also giving consistency to both the expression and the form. Without question, certain musical machines already present signs of consistency sufficient for couplings to come...

This implicit dynamic principle also subtends the *machinic* distributions that appear later, in *Anti-Oedipus* (cut/continuous flow), written together with Félix Guattari. It's in *A Thousand Plateaus*, however, that the musical-sonorous reference traverses a complex, transversal semiotic field. Indeed, the 70's would see the blossoming of the encounter staged by the two philosophers with the musical model, an encounter in which music is broadly convoked, with reference to a series of contemporary composers, from Berg to Webern, Bartók, Messiaen, Boulez, Berio, Xenakis, Cage and Steve Reich, to name only a few, in addition to the classics of the beginning of the 20th century: Debussy and Ravel. More broadly, however, they will bring their attention to the ensemble of sonorous signals and to their expression in space and time. Over the course of the 70's, Deleuze and Guattari turn towards a new relation between expression and apparatuses of thought. Distancing themselves from the idea of structure, to which they prefer the idea of machine, their point of view is established with the project of a transversal semiotic heterogenesis. This notion is supported by research into tools of thought drawn from all domains of representation, traversing expressive fields from the political to the technical, and from the social to the psychic: the apparatuses and the specific inventions of linguistics, ethnology, sociology, and psychiatry, as well as mathematics, aesthetics, literature, and painting are all called upon. The particular domain of music, meanwhile, is interrogated from this perspective.

¹ "To a form-matter schema, Simondon opposes a dynamic schema, matter endowed with singularity-forces or the energetic conditions of a system" (Deleuze & Guattari 1987). See also Simondon 1964.

What are its tools? What is its operational field? Can music be called upon in service of a transversal thinking? What can music help us to think? These questions, which are often renewed, indicate the field, both technical and intensive, that is taken up in the problematisation of the musical from the perspective of an assemblage of thought capable of producing new types of reality.

The musical field, which was fed by the conceptual ruptures of the 50's and 60's, opens onto an intense semiotic production. And musical machines, traversed by the technical revolutions of recorded sound, which is both organisable and synthesizable, pose anew questions of space-time, of the limits of continuity and discontinuity, of the generation of forms, and of the limits of perception. What spatial and temporal multiplicities does music put in place in order to free up its individuations? The musical model will be called upon within the field of its technique—from harmony to polyphony, from rhythm to timbre, from instruments to machines—as well as on the terrain of its own critical field, interrogating the stakes of the molecularisation of sound and variation on an open operational plane. Music is thus called upon, it seems to us, at the level of its operational and technical field and with a concern for its functions of temporalization, distribution, articulation, and variation—none of which is separated from the expressive, from technical machines, or from the modes of subjectivation that it activates. Further on, we will see that this interest is not distinct from the affects transmitted by music and their possible relation with a heterogeneous “outside”.

For the philosopher, it's a question of tending to the paradoxical individuations of music, which are “without identity”, and of bringing to light a material of thought capable of capturing new forces. Deleuze emphasises the fact that this is a requirement that bears upon music as much as philosophy². From this perspective, music is invited to join the experience of thought of which philosophy can no longer claim to be the only specialist. As a vector of a transversal process of expression, variation, and subjectivation outside the discursive, the question posed to music concerns the role it can play in the conception of such intensive transversal processes.

Consistency and disparate elements

The seminars of Deleuze that I attended³ starting in 1974 allowed me to take part in the elaboration of a hinge between the fields of philosophy and music. And so, I'd like to evoke what Deleuze referred to as “the construction of a plane of consistency” and to the precision he brought to the manner of “establishing relations” (*contracter*). Deleuze paid particular

² “We are all faced with somewhat similar tasks...” (Deleuze 2006: 60).

³ “Over the course of the 70's, Deleuze worked on the notions of war machines and the state apparatus. Chromaticism was going to rub shoulders with the war machine, participate in operations of consistency, stratified and planed assemblages, and see itself associated with the work of deterritorialisation...” (Criton 2005: 60).

attention to the manner of creating a floating state, a collection of precautions and preliminary dispositions that are far from a fixed frame, but rather convoking independent lines, constituting a turbulent nebula of local contractions and small tensions, which would, in turn, be extracted, displaced. Different regimes of attention marked the dimensions and the linking of operations of thinking that, in some respects—from my point of view—were not without relation to familiar movements in musical composition. Within this phase of coexistence, he underlined, differential traits, couplings, and the reciprocal captures that could prepare for deterritorialisation were experienced; it is the time of bringing into relation, without insistence; the time of an equilibrium between tact and sketch. To allow the idea to fabricate itself by successive strata, reprisals, abandonments, delayed effects: “What is required for it to hold together?”. The idea is *between*: it is a zigzag that moves between selection and re-chaining, while the problem that emerges is a matter of *orientation* within thinking. It is the movement of a “drama” formed by the concepts and the states of things themselves, beneath representation, beneath *logos*. And so there would be operations that would put in place a “theatre of properties and events”. There would be conditions preliminary to situating a *consistency* and allowing an active processuality: “a fuzzy aggregate, a synthesis of disparate elements, *is defined only by a degree of consistency* that makes it possible to distinguish the disparate elements constituting that aggregate (discernibility)” (Deleuze & Guattari 1987: 344).

The issue of music is distinguished in a remarkable fashion by the notion of *consistency* in *A Thousand Plateaus*, as it becomes the privileged site of a heterogenesis that holds together the disparate elements (Deleuze & Guattari 1987: 344) and allows for categorial overlap. If the notion of *refrain* is both composite and transversal—“trans-categorial”—linking territories, affects and codes, it is based on an intensive process and a manner of making a plane consist. A plane of consistency is built up step by step and prepares for deterritorialisation against the backdrop of a synthesis of heterogeneities that is articulated according to three stages: 1) the creation of a “milieu” (an intensive field); 2) the production of matters of expression (a territory); 3) an excessive movement (*deterritorialisation*) (Criton 1998). These three stages are constitutive of “intensive systems”, whether they be aesthetic, psychic, linguistic, physical, thermodynamic, energetic, embryological, etc., as well as the specific individuations that are produced in each of these domains. This three-step focus, essential in the thought of Deleuze—and preexisting the encounter with Guattari—calls for expression under the double movement, both spatial and temporal, of dynamic determinations.

An Intensive Matrix

What determinations do we give ourselves for thinking the relations between dynamisms and energy, the processuality of forces, the formation of events and the states of things?

Deleuze is interested in the question of the processuality of the event under relations that are not pre-established, but are in contact with a pre-individual virtuality. To pursue this, it's necessary to liberate the virtuality of the temporal and spatial varieties of what can function as a prejudice in the idea. Let's remember some of the characteristics of this conception, which seems to us essential for an intensive, transversal approach, and certainly for a musical-thinking.

The majority of the encounters that Deleuze stages with literature, music, and film are located *beneath* representation, in the “distinct and obscure” region where the individuating operations that liberate material forces, affects, and precepts are carried out. Starting in 1967, in a lecture at the Sorbonne, Deleuze introduces the principle of *differentiation* (Deleuze 2004) that he would take up and develop in *Difference and Repetition*, and that we consider to be the matrixial nucleus of the subsequent concepts: *the refrain* and *detrterritorialisation*. He also exposes the principle of reciprocity of sub-representative dynamisms, determining the intensive individuating experience according to a complementary double movement of qualification and organization (qualities and areas, species and parts). If the intensive model of the egg which is given as reference is a pure *spatium*, not yet extended, prior to the extension of the organism, or the organization of organs (Deleuze 1995: 214) — an intensive matrix potentially occupied by dynamic tendencies encompassing the mutation of energy—the differential of forces will be integrated by “by taking diverging paths, splitting into dualisms, and following lines of differentiation without which everything would remain the dispersion of an unrealized cause” (Deleuze 1988: 37). Any individuating system—whether physical, psychic, aesthetic, or political, takes on particular specifications and modes of extension. An intensive field of individuation will be built on a series of heterogeneous or disparate borders. Taking place via the action of a differentiator, the bringing into communication of series consists of phenomena of coupling between series, of internal resonances within the system, and of *forced movement* in the form of an amplitude that exceeds the basic series themselves: “Dynamism thus comprises its own power of determining space and time, since it immediately incarnates the differential relations, the singularities and the progressivities immanent in the Idea” (Deleuze 1995: 218). Here again we find the three times that are characteristic of intensive systems for which *differentiation* is actualisation, a double movement of specification and organisation. Dynamisms work “in all forms and areas qualified by representation” and even if they are usually covered by the constituted areas and qualities, Deleuze emphasizes “that it is necessary to take note of this in all domains” (Deleuze 1995: 218). The analysis of individuations will consist in taking note of what is attempted in each case, the object and the modalities of capture, and showing how these are specific in each domain. What is at stake? The qualification of a species and the organization of an area, individuation (event, object, state) in a spatial and temporal field, according to its two complementary aspects: qualities and extension. In the field of art, writing, and painting, it is an operation of *differentiation*, it is “the actualisation of an idea”. We will retain the

irruptive nature of this intensive matrix, whose axes, vectors, gradients and thresholds are experienced on non-communicating edges, without an *a priori* structure: the synthesis of disparate elements has the extraction of new expressive materials as its object.

The musical arrangement

The question of a non-extended *spatium*, prior to any effectuations, makes sense for music, as this latter concerns, on the one hand, an open distribution of space-time functions, and, on the other hand, the play of differences and their emergence in a system of thought and/or expression. We are thinking here of the musical conceptions which, in the years 1950-1970, were liberated from a transcendental, regulatory model, thereby radically renewing spatio-temporal representations and schemas. The question of differences and of their individuation is at the heart of concerns of a musician like Varèse who, aspiring to the “corporealization” of new sonorous components, takes an interest in the differential idea found in Wronski in order to support the idea of “sound to organize” (Varèse 1983: 153-154). We also find the open play of differences in the idea of acoustic variation in Luigi Nono, in the variables of expression in Stockhausen, in the screens of Xenakis, as well as the ultrachromatic spaces of Wyschnegradsky (Wyschnegradsky 2013) to name just a few. All of these conceptions were fueled by research at the crossroads of science, mathematics, philosophy and music. More broadly, it is the dynamics of a movement experienced by the conjunctions of extension and expression, which comprise a conceptual break with consonance or the regulatory unity of form or of measure, whether it be in serial, repetitive, ultrachromatic, concrete or electronic music, or even free jazz and progressive trends in rock, pop, or improvisation.

Continuum – cut⁴ (*coupure*)

What is the specificity of the field of individuation of music? How does one extract varieties of spaces, or play on the variability of qualities and their extension, or allow the Idea to dive into the *obscure*, the virtual, the preindividual? Engaged with virtual links, Deleuze's intensive matrix recalls how limits, cuts, and disjunctions condition the “differentiating” elaboration by composing, fixing, and delimiting the qualitative and quantitative series in space and time. Taking a distance from transcendent exclusive principles, this abstract/concrete model brings into play the coexistence of virtual liaisons *and* the effectuation of selections according to divergent dualisms and variable signs, defining each time the states of

⁴ TRANS: the word is the french “*coupure*”, generally translated, and having an important intellectual genealogy, as *cut*.

tension and the relations of the continuous and the discontinuous. If disjunction is the exclusive moment of selection, it can also be conceived of as variable and can bring into play the distribution of the cut in order to extract a variety of qualitative spaces. The function of the break is to make possible new articulations, new integrations, new conjunctions or renewed linkages. Boulez, in the 60s, proposed a definition of the *cut* intrinsically linked to the notion of *continuum*:

[The continuum] is surely not the continuous journey ‘*made*’ from one point to another in space (successive journey or instant sum). The continuum is *manifested* by the possibility of *breaking/cutting* the space in accordance with certain laws; the dialectic between continuous and discontinuous thus passes through the notion of *cut* would go so far as to say that the continuum *is* this very possibility because it contains both the continuous and the discontinuous: the cut, if you like, changes the sign continuum. (Boulez 1963: 95)

The notion of a space of virtual liaisons to be organized is preliminary and essential if new functions and new types of operators are to inform a matter that is not formed *a priori*, a matter which therefore remains to be created. This non-exclusive conception of the displacement of the cut allows us to grasp the diversity of the transversal relations that exist between the parameters and that govern the development of new continuities: continuums that are transversal with respect to categories, transitive continuums of pitch-timbre-duration-intensity-dynamics, and exogenous connections. The problematic of the continuous and the discontinuous raises the question of norms, of the description and various formalisations of the musical; these are questions that traverse music not only at the level of the representation and analysis of sound, but also in terms of syntheses and perspectives of the fabrication of new instruments. If these questions fundamentally renew manners of approaching music, by establishing the open site of a space-time to be organised, more broadly at stake is a non-mediated reading of what can be experienced.

Material-forces

Several times in *A Thousand Plateaus*, music appears as associated with a reflection on the notions of *forces* and *planes*. The immaterial character—“without identity”—of musical components, sensibilises the “diagrammatic” moment which makes it possible to connect an (abstract) plane of forces to a material for thought to develop. We see a dialectical field specific to music becoming more precise between, on the one hand, a plane of consistency—or plane of composition of powers [*forces*] without prior affectation, which could also be called non-

consistency⁵—, and, on the other hand, a plane of organisation (or of development) that is present in music as writing. This latter is not “audible” for itself and just as Proust or Balzac “set out the plan of the development of their work as a metalanguage” (Deleuze 2000: 266), musicians such as Stockhausen and Xenakis have a need to expose the structure of the sound forms in an “off-time”⁶. The duality of these two planes brings to light the virtual connections or unextended forces and their effective differentiation in a *music-thinking*, a writing, a work. Two years before the publication of *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze, invited by Boulez to join a conference on “Musical time” at IRCAM⁷, establishes a field of relation between music and philosophy and proposes to think in terms of *material-forces* rather than *form-matter*. It’s a method, he emphasises, that “concerns music, but can also concern a thousand other things”. It’s a question of being able to *map variables* in order to distinguish particular profiles of time in the different works presented⁸. The time-profiles analysed detach themselves from a plane of (abstract) consistency potentially occupied by “a multiplicity of heterochronous, qualitative, non-coincident, non-communicative durations”. Empty of *a priori* links, this plane is the condition for developing a material of critical thinking based on “differential speeds and slownesses”, outside any identity. Contrary to the hierarchy of the *form-matter* couple which would go from a simple form to its complexification, the *material-forces* couple will play a differential game between elaborated matter and imperceptible forces, “in such a way that we can even perceive the differences between these forces, all the differential play of these forces”. This operational plane, at once abstract and concrete, places the intensive idea in the position of driving force, the imperceptible requiring the modalities of time and space to be deployed with the maximum of flexibility and precision: “The work of art must mark the seconds, tenths and hundredths of seconds” (Deleuze 2000: 267). The complexity of the matter here evoked is not an aesthetic in itself, but the search for a quality in relation to the idea. A material elaborated for the purpose of a synthesis of disparate elements is above all selective: the business of the material is to contract the relations that will allow for an act of consistency suitable for lightning strikes (*fulgurances*), breaks, speed changes, irrational cuts (which can benefit from being sober, reduced to the essentials). These qualities, which are proper to music—variable flows, lines and temporal forms, their direct, immediate nature—will often be mentioned in *A Thousand Plateaus* for the sake of an elaboration of a heterogeneous and transversal field.

⁵ “The plane of consistency could be called the plane of nonconsistency.” (Deleuze 2000: 266). Let us recall that consistency is not given but passes through a degree zero and takes form from disparate series (proliferating potentialities).

⁶ We take the expression from Xenakis 1994.

⁷ A conference organised by Pierre Boulez at Ircam in February 1978 as part of the series *Le Temps musical* with Roland Barthes, Pierre Boulez, Gilles Deleuze and Michel Foucault.

⁸ Œuvres de György Ligeti (*Concerto de chambre*), Claude Debussy (*Dialogue du vent et de la mer*), Olivier Messiaen (*Mode de valeurs et d'intensités*), Elliott Carter (*A Mirror on Which to Dwell*) et Pierre Boulez (*Éclat*). Cf. Deleuze 2006.

Diagrams and resonances

How does the musical field take consistency from the philosophical perspective? The manner in which the various musical components are assembled and how they are “held together” by the transversal production of coordinates, by a polyphonic inscription system, which consists of transpositions of scale and proportion⁹, produces rapid extensions without prerequisite identities. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, music is constituted as flow, as spatial and temporal dynamic variation, and gives consistency to the “specialized vector” of deterritorialisation (Deleuze 2000: 336). The concept of *refrain* is characterized by the privileged relationship it entertains with respect to both deterritorialization and becoming. We will remember how the *refrain* inseparably combines expressive intensities—shouts, postures—and a marking of territory (Deleuze 2000: 310). If the expressive is first on the territory, the functionalities and the production of expressive materials takes shape with the production of signs, protocols and techniques, concrete effects and collectives that are organised over time. And so, it’s under this double aspect, both technical and intensive, that the musical assemblage and its apparatuses are called upon. No doubt the concept of *consistency* and the question of its implementation maintains a privileged relationship with the couplings, resonances, and transcodings that are associated with the process of deterritorialisation. Therein, the indissociable complementarity of the qualitative aspect and the distributive (partitive) aspect—which interest Deleuze and Guattari in any field: that of the assemblage of spatial and temporal coordinates necessary for any event or object of representation—finds the site of a bringing into relation of heterogeneous series and dissymmetrical variables in the material, transversal field of music.

We can see in *Mille plateaux* how certain aspects of the musical “model” become autonomous, how they are displaced, extracted, and brought to bear upon fields that are *a priori* exogenous. The model of “smooth spaces” and “striated spaces”, for example, can just as well function as a spatio-temporal diagram applicable to technical, maritime, mathematical, physical, and socio-political models. The productions of a *diagonal* will be relevant for making the functions of the statement (*l'énoncé*) hold together in the work of Foucault¹⁰. The musical was gradually introduced and associated with the process of *consistency*, capable of linking the sensible, the collective engaged with intensive distributions. These different fields, all placed on a diagrammatic plan and taken up as intensive systems producing forms and events, can just as well concern the political as the

⁹ The musical score is already a diagrammatic apparatus, with a horizontal temporal axis, a vertical axis of givens, of modular distributions; it is a product of transversal relations. The intensive is connectable, disconnectable, transposable, assignable, and is disposed to the reorganisation of its functions according to a diagrammatic effectuation.

¹⁰ “We have seen how Foucault discovered the form of expression in a most original conception of the ‘statement’ which viewed it as a function that crosses different unities, tracing a diagonal line more akin to music than to a signifying system. We must therefore break open words, phrases or propositions and extract statements from them...” (Deleuze 1988: 52).

social or the function of enunciations. The diagrammatic plane is crossed by compositions of power: and so, the analysis of formations in the social field, for example, will bring out the differential play of forces¹¹ as well as the necessity of their actualisation in concrete forms¹². However, the production of speeds and temporalities, a spatialisation of time (folds, stretching, repetitions) is also at stake as a site for the expression of forms and events, energetic and territorial economy, whether it be a question of political forces or of assemblages of enunciation. And it is thus that the individuating modalities of music will be real phenomena *par excellence*—as close as possible to the overlap of the material and the perceptual, their physical reality results from the distribution of space-time variables, from the temporalisation of forms and contents without prior identity.

Mechanical subjectivations

If *Mille plateaux* is the major work common to both authors, we can nonetheless note how much Guattari insists, in his own writings, on the heterogeneous consistency of music, on the semiotic field with which it is composed, on its intangible, abstract dimension, as well as its contaminating ductility, which is transversal with respect to categories. Starting with *The Machinic Unconscious*, the analysis of perceptual overlaps in Proust shows the possibilities of a semiotics that puts into play the representation of space and of bodies, as the emergence of a heterogeneous transversality¹³ (Guattari 2011: 243). As soon as he analyses Vinteuil's little phrase, music seems to acquire a "machinic" dimension, redistributing the order of sensations, to such an extent that "a whole micropolitics of conformity with dominant models is thus threatened by its irruption" (Guattari 2011: 244). The *refrain* and its "refrainifying function" (*la fonction "ritournellisante"*) were born. An agent of deterritorialization, "the refrain never ceases to go beyond itself, trans-versalize itself, and it will lead the Narrator to carry out a veritable and durable micropolitical mutation" (Guattari 2011: 236).

As a semiotic matter, escaping discursivity, music produces its regimes of signs by virtue of transitive logics, the composition of its own speeds and modes of articulation. As Daniel Stern notes—in a passage often cited by Guattari—music is an affect of *vitality*, intimately

¹¹ "We have seen that the relations between forces, or power relations, were microphysical, strategic, multipunctual and diffuse, that they determined particular features and *constituted* pure functions. The diagram or abstract machine is the map of relations between forces, a map of destiny, or intensity, which proceeds by primary non-localizable relations and at every moment passes through every point, "or rather in every relation from one point to another...", "...and these relations between forces take place 'not above' but within the very tissue of the assemblages they produce" (Deleuze 1988: 36).

¹² "If the effects realize something this is because the relations between forces, or power relations, are merely virtual, potential, unstable, vanishing and molecular, and define only possibilities of interaction, so long as they do not enter into a macroscopic whole capable of giving form to their fluid matter and their diffuse function" (Deleuze 1988: 37).

¹³ Guattari 2011: 243.

linked to movement, precociously elaborated (i.e. before language), and decisive for the constitution of a mobile and interactive self¹⁴. These subjective stakes are actively projected in Guattari's final book, *Chaosmosis*, in which the aesthetic dimension of the refrain is transversalized as a force capable of redistributing an existential desire, as an unmediated subjective capacity. This existential function of the *refrain* consists of an intensive attachment, both capture and repetition, which autonomizes components (partial objects) and reassigns them according to new couplings, to the point of elaborating—in art or in life—complex refrains “which make possible an immense complexification of subjectivity” (Guattari 1995: 18). And indeed, the “refrainifying” affect which underlies this thought of re-chaining derives its consistency, in part, from a reference to a *sonorous heterogeneity*. It's worth nothing how much the “machinic” subjectivation defined by Guattari refers to functions of polyvocality, to “incorporeal” exchanges, as well as how many expressions it borrows from the musical: subjectivity is “polyphonic”, the existential attachment is “rhythmic”, its operating mode is “*refrainifying*”. Guattari, a sustained critic of fragmenting rationality, turns to the resources of an aesthetic paradigm, conjugating its reciprocities and resonances, from therapeutic approaches to social practices, from the unconscious to the political, and from the ethical to the artistic (Crtiton 2012).

Proponents of the “ethics and aesthetics” paradigm invite us to produce a difference capable of opposing the unreality of a mass-mediatised, homogenised subjectivity. And doubtless, in the context of this new paradigm, art is granted a particular form of credit on the basis of its familiarity with a know-how linked to experimentation: an ethics of creation¹⁵. The domain of art thus sees itself “resituated” in a plural paradigmatic field, valued in its practices of “rupture and suture”, taken to be capable of giving meaning to a universe submitted to the empty signs of a universalising subjectivity. For the regimes of signs put to work by the mass mediatisation of the planet interfere at the level of processes of subjectivation and the semiological components involved therein: *how do we feel? How do we represent ourselves? How do we determine ourselves?*

Faced with capitalistic subjugation, Guattari invites an ethical, aesthetic, and political community, in which he recognises a mutating function, to experiment with subjective and processual creativity¹⁶: an ontological heterogenesis located at the level of aesthetic affects, able to produce “existential foci” that no reference can determine *a priori*. These are the stakes of a “machinic” filiation that is simultaneously in touch with the flows of material,

¹⁴ “The affects of vitality, the first of the ‘categorical’ affects (sadness, joy) designed by the terms dynamic and kinetic, are characterised by music and dance” (Stern 1989: 77-90).

¹⁵ “The new aesthetic paradigm has ethico-political implications because to speak of creation is to speak of the responsibility of the creative instance with regard to the thing created, inflection of the state of things, bifurcation beyond pre-established schemas, once again taking into account the fate of alterity in its extreme modalities” (Guattari 1995: 107).

¹⁶ “...an ontological heterogenesis all the more vertiginous when combined, as it is today, with the proliferation of new materials, new electronic representations, and with a shrinking of distances and an enlargement of points of view” (Guattari 1995: 96).

technical, and political reality, and subjective representations not submitted to molar dominants, but constantly injecting a relationship with desire of another order, an infinite humour, the strength of a creative subjectivity.

How is music renewed?

As we have glimpsed, the musical field called upon by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari is engaged in “the great conceptual breakthroughs” introduced after the war, and it is largely the result of the experiences of contemporary music over the course of the second half of the 20th century. Experimentation is privileged, not for the sake novelty itself, but for the manifestation of possible enunciations and for the formidable semiotic inventiveness deployed at the borders of sound and meaning, space and movement. Far from imitation, re-interpretation of the past, and academicism, the individuations of music are raised to the level of their non-signifying semiotic enunciations and their capacity to develop paradoxical space-times—a position essentially turned towards the tension of the present, in a process of creation. And beyond the aesthetic categories, the most diverse signs of the sonorous register are concerned: from noise to cry, from animals to machines, from the natural to the urban. What is targeted is a semiotic heterogenesis, in which the autonomisation of signs and their re-chaining in new continuities function to question the limits of perception.

By moving the specific effects of music towards the potentials of concrete machinic assemblages, Deleuze and Guattari situate music in its relation to the world, returning it to its constitutive exteriority. And while appealing to its particular apparatus of thought, they restore the relationship that music entertains with the outside world, as well as the specific modalities of its subjective enunciations. None of this concerns music alone, but rather a space for a new subjectivity, in relation to forces of the cosmos which remain to be made perceptible. How does the *refrain* and its becomings concern the living landscape of affects, the forms of time and of life in which we move? Because it's rooted in a pre-material relationship with the territory, one which is characterised by the overlapping of the subjective, the intensive, and the material, music is grasped in its relation to the outside and the multiple and is situated in a direct relation of *material-forces*. And as we have seen, its diagrammatic materials are associated with the temporal forms of the event, with speed regimes, with intensive differences that are independent of any prior form. Musical and sonorous processuality would therefore seem to be brought into a transversal field, beyond any established definitions, and the stakes become enlarged perception, the very purpose of art, which breaks with memory and with any principle of identity: “Music demands an extension of perception to the limits of the universe” (Deleuze 2006: 296).

What does this “transcategorical” overlap of musical-thinking have to do with the imbricated fields of politics, perception and assemblages of life? Deleuze and Guattari's analysis of

the semiotic context to come (and already present in the 1980's and 90's) pushes them to consider an intense heterogenesis at the heart of an increasing complexification of spatial and temporal modalities and their various modes of control¹⁷. Beyond any established or instituted musical style, the capacities of music to produce individual and collective subjectivations also concerns the possibilities of moving away from the regulatory grips of signs—whether financial, administrative, moral, or political—the possibilities of constituting free enunciations, autonomizing practices of signs. So, the impersonal challenge of deterritorialization arises along this ethical, transversal, and transcategorical axis of heterogenesis, an axis that passes through the milieu, and hence no longer belong to any one domain or another, but concern, rather, a *processual vector*. This challenge arises for music, for the other arts, and likewise for all domains in which individuations occur.

What Deleuze and Guattari have left us induces a reflection on the notion of apparatuses, assemblages, and the materials of thought that would be capable of addressing what they have called direct *material-force relationships*. How do the transcategorical tools thus developed interrogate music today, in terms of its techniques as well as its subjectivating modalities? A necessity arises to put movement, energy, and modes of sensible subjectivation in space and time into question. These modes of subjectivation would pose the question of bodies, of the mobility of affects, and of the polyvocality of signs; they would include transversal apparatuses supported by the event, that redistribute hierarchies, and experiment with diverse modes of listening; as well as new forms of relation to the *socius*, likely to put back into question the form of the event and of the concert, and of the definition of a work. And certainly, this would contribute to the experience of the new forms of relation that Deleuze and Guattari invite us to think, and of which they suggest to us the subjective, multiple, heterogeneous experience.

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¹⁷ Deleuze and Guattari analyse how "modern power is not at all reducible to the classical alternative 'repression or ideology' but implies processes of normalization, modulation, modeling, and information that bear on language, perception, desire, movement, etc., and which proceed by way of microassemblages" (Deleuze & Guattari 1987: 458).

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