

**Reclaiming the image
Béla Tarr's world of 'inhuman' becoming: an artistic and
philosophical inquiry**

Elzbieta Buslowska

School of Media, Arts and Design

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RECLAIMING THE IMAGE.

Béla Tarr's World of 'Inhuman' Becoming: An Artistic and Philosophical Inquiry

ELZBIETA BUSLOWSKA



Béla Tarr, *Sátántangó* (1994), 419min

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the
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abstract:

The thesis entitled 'Reclaiming the Image' is an artistic and philosophical enquiry. It aims at a radical re-thinking of the concept of the image outside the accepted notions of realism and representation by opening up the photographic real in the process of bringing together photography and cinema, stillness and movement, life and art, aesthetics and politics. It involves a thinking and writing *with* Béla Tarr's cinematic imagery *through* Gilles Deleuze's philosophical concepts. Its objective is not to illustrate Deleuze's ideas with Tarr's images, nor to read Tarr's cinema through Deleuze as such, but to think with images philosophically, in the hope of opening up the area of theory to the creative 'powers of the false'. I wish it to be seen as an aesthetico-ethical experiment which, rather than developing an overarching theoretical argument, constructs a critical and creative assemblage of different ideas and voices. On the one hand, the project seeks to creatively re-think Deleuzian concepts while thinking 'about' still and moving images, in relation to the real as affect and thought. On the other, to 'continue' films' images by opening their thinking further. The project of reclaiming the image as re-thinking in non-representational terms of immanent becoming will engage the Deleuzian- Bergsonian- Nietzschean concepts of time, life and aesthetics, and Tarr's intensely felt image-world in the series of encounters – affect-thoughts – that will undermine the normative notion of reality. The two modes – critical and creative – are not constructed separately but weaved together throughout what is 'enacted' as filmsophical "free indirect discourse" – a poetic coming together of film, philosophy and writing (as art).

It is hoped that this will enable the potential for opening new areas of thinking and writing about/ with film/ photographic imagery outside the main discourses concerning theory and practice, the critical and the creative.

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author's declaration:

I Elzbieta Buslowska, hereby state that the material contained within this thesis is all my own work.

...films are our only means of authenticating our lives. Eventually nothing remains of us except our films – strips of celluloid on which our shadows wander in search of truth and humanity until the end of time. I really don't know why I make films.

Béla Tarr

He who has attained to only some degree of freedom of mind cannot feel other than a wanderer on the earth—though not as a traveler to a final destination: for this destination does not exist. But he will watch and observe and keep his eyes open to see what is really going on in the world; for this reason he may not let his heart adhere too firmly to any individual thing; within him too there must be something wandering that takes pleasure in change and transience.

Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human All Too Human*

The virtual structure of art and concepts bares only the potential to make us come in contact with the virtual forces of the world, which then makes us, or make us want to, become in some sense.

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*

prologue:

*Throw away lights and definitions
And say of what you see in the dark ...*

Wallace Stevens¹

It was some time ago during one of my undergraduate tutorials, that the encounter with the films of Hungarian director Béla Tarr (1955-) began; virtually then, and through my own photographic practice. It was an invitation to see his films that started a journey leading eventually to this doctoral thesis. What stayed with me, and 'forced' me to go back to Tarr's films again and again, was the 'photographic' or 'photo-cinematic'. An image-sensation that is real in a very particular way – linked to the world but neither of the world as a copy, nor about the world as representation. Somewhere between reality and fiction, the real seemed to be created outside of recognition and referentiality or, better still, rendered 'visible'.² It resonated intensely with my own photographic work, along with some black and white films I saw as a child, to which I could not put a name, and whose titles (and most of the stories they contained, but not the 'image', or rather, the sense of it) now escapes me. It was the overwhelming sensation of the visual, a strangely felt aesthetic in a sense, and the 'real' that I have already started pursuing in my own photographic practice – the real that existed somehow through or alongside the image, rather than in it. It was the desire to 'speak' about this intensity in the intuitive mode, and the necessity to find a new language to invoke what I now can refer to, with Deleuze, as the 'time-image'. I felt that in order to search for this nagging real, it was necessary to abandon all the 'realities' that the Western philosophical tradition offers as "image of thought": phenomenological, realistic, and idealistic.³ Amongst so many images that seem to

¹ Wallace Stevens, 'The Man With the Blue Guitar', in *The Palm At the End of the Mind: Selected Poems and Plays* (Vintage Books, New York, 1990), p. 149.

² Rendering visible invisible forces is the Deleuzian motif adopted from Paul Klee, describing the nature of art. As Deleuze asserts, after Klee, the object of painting (art) is "not to render the visible but to render visible." Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, trans. Daniel W. Smith, (Continuum, London and New York 2002), p. 39.

³ 'Image of thought' is an expression developed by Deleuze which refers to the tradition of Western philosophy, in which philosophy or thinking has been regarded as a timeless pursuit of truth, reason or universals: "An image of thought called philosophy has been formed historically and it effectively

adhere to the dialectic imperatives of what is accepted as real, positioned against virtual or fictional, Tarr's cinema appeared so refreshingly and challengingly new – a real 'food for thought'. He seemed to 'liberate' the photographic of cinema from representation, realism and its affinity to storytelling; creating an image 'in itself' – a pure cinema or non-cinema, depending on the discourse at hand.⁴

Difficult and demanding, Tarr's work sits uncomfortably between categories and styles, fleeing from positioning and naming, powerfully and uncompromisingly resisting conventions of mainstream cinema and yet neither 'avant-garde' nor popular, an art outside the opposition of high and low. Black-and-white, all shot on 35mm celluloid film, with no actors or ready scripts, with very long takes edited mostly 'within shots'⁵, the very long films he creates are neither realistic/ naturalistic nor formalistic; in a sense neither documentary nor fiction; a strikingly distinctive creation. A "heroic violation" of conventional cinema, Susan Sontag wrote after seeing *Sátántangó* (1994); "first exposure to his work punctures all conventional expectations of cinematic time and space", notes Fionn Meade.⁶ A particular sense of the real is evoked within each immaculately constructed shot, and runs throughout Tarr's work, which he sees as a single project. It is "getting close to life", and "a vision." What is happening during each filming could only be described as creating *with* life, or alongside it; as a somewhat almost impossible combination of the director's 'vision' and what Tarr describes as "living in the situation."⁷ The kind of

stops people from thinking" asserts Deleuze in the conversation with Claire Parnett. Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues II*, trans. Hugo Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Continuum, London and New York, 2006), p. 10.

⁴ At times Tarr refers to his work as 'pure' cinema, while critics talk about the 'end of cinema'. This resonates with both the early perception of cinema as a predominantly visual (image based) medium (Antonin Artaud, Jean Epstein, Germaine Dulac), and André Bazin's remark at the end of his essay 'Bicycle Thief': "No more actors, no more story, no more sets, which is to say that in the perfect aesthetic illusion of reality there is no more cinema." André Bazin, *What is Cinema?* Vol. II, trans. Hugh Gray (University of California Press, London, 1972), p. 60. Tarr's particular approach however, is his own paradoxical univocity of image-reality in the combination of elements that will be discussed throughout this thesis.

⁵ Béla Tarr talks about the editing (or not editing) of his films as something that happens during filming, and not in the editing studio: "This is happening in front of me, because it happened in front of the camera." His co-director and editor, Agnes Hranitzky, is always present during the shooting where all decisions are made: "Our collaboration with Béla is a little bit different, because I was always present at the shooting. We are always looking at the shooting on a monitor." Nicolas Rapold, 'In Auteur's Swan Song, an Ode to Survival', <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/05/movies/bela-tarr-says-the-turin-horse-is-his-last-movie.html>.

⁶ Fionn Meade, 'Béla Tarr: Interview', <http://bombsite.com/issues/100/articles/2909>

⁷ This relates both to Tarr's practice of pre-production, when he spends some time living in the places of filming, and to his principle of not directing those involved; the non-actors. Mostly he works with

filming that demands a very particular execution: an 'attentive perception and very particular reception: an attentive 'non-recognition'.⁸ Thus, a radical challenge to the way we see, feel and think, Béla Tarr's image-making compels different viewing of, and different thinking about, life, art, and aesthetics.⁹ His films do not comment or illustrate philosophical ideas; they 'do' philosophy; they think.

It was not the lack of a cinematic vocabulary that made it difficult to write 'about' Tarr's films, for as an art and film theory student I was well equipped with this lexicon. It was more to do with the desire to find a way to articulate the visual intensity and affect within the photographic 'thinking', outside the structural and psychoanalytic models which proved limiting – and remain so – within the theoretical framework set up in this thesis. Yet, it was the felt conviction about the urgency and importance to articulate this cinema in terms of affect and of the real, philosophically and creatively, finding ways in which the non-oppositional difference might be thought of outside the dialectics of aesthetics versus politics, form versus content. This required not only considering a different way to re-think the concepts, but to critically and creatively engage in writing *with* them. The difficulty in finding the language to do so within existing models, compelled me to risk constructing my own. The fact that very little has been written in relation to Tarr's work made this attempt even more challenging.¹⁰

I found that I could engage with Tarr's imagery through Gilles Deleuze's philosophical writings, and his conception of the 'time-image' in particular, which provided the concepts as well as the vocabulary and tools for opening up the area of theoretical inquiry. Moreover, they presented the way in which thinking and theory can, and perhaps must, engage with what he calls 'the false' rather than with truth, **and** both in

the same crew; close friends who often acquire exchangeable roles. Both music composer (Mihály Vig), and the writer (László Krasznahorkai) are also 'actors'. Erika Bók, who began as the character of Estike in *Sátántangó* at the age of ten, has been in Tarr's films throughout his work since.

⁸ Attentive non-recognition or misrecognition is a play on the Bergsonian concept of attentive recognition, which will be discussed later during this thesis.

⁹ As Peter Hames asserts, Tarr "really does want us to re-see and re-experience the world in both social and perceptual terms. The revolutionary quality of the films rests in the fact that these objectives are seen as part of a single project." Peter Hames, 'Melancholy of Resistance: The Films of Béla Tarr', in *Kinoeye: New Perspectives on European Film*, <http://www.kinoeye.org/01/01/hames01.php>.

¹⁰ Béla Tarr has been making films since 1997. However, his demanding and uncompromising attitude towards the specificities of his practice has resulted in a limit on the number of films he has been able to produce.

relation to 'discourse' and to the style of writing.¹¹ Intuition instead of knowledge, duration instead of chronological time, and sensation instead of representation, were the ways new thinking and writing with the image has become possible. For Deleuze, thinking, and by extension philosophy, is not about re-formulating old concepts but about diagnosing and creating anew. Thinking is not something we can define once and for all, and not something that we do but which happens to us from without.¹² "Lying out, inventing and creating constitute the philosophical trinity – diagrammatic, personalistic, and intensive features," he writes with Guattari in *What is Philosophy?*¹³ Constructing and experimenting are for him the real conditions of life and art and are inseparable from the experience of immanence (the expression of an at once infinite and finite material plane on which everything happens). Daniel Frampton's "Filmosophy" proposes writing and thinking with (rather than about) what he calls a "filmmind", and Yve Lomax's theoretical-creative project of "writing the (photographic) image", further encouraged the following project. Frampton suggest the model of "filmosophical writing" or "filmosophical interpretation", which instead of applying existing concepts to films, consists of writing *with* the film-mind.¹⁴ Such an approach, motivated by a more open form of philosophical writing, is based on the assumption that films think affectively through style, and as such invites a different, performative or poetic 'translation of this film-thinking. He writes:

Heidegger's poetic language, Kirkegaard's textual voices, Nietzsche's stylistic perspectivalism, Wittgenstein's ordinary language and Derrida's notion of philosophical writing, all lead us to see that film writing, to become filmosophical, needs to recognize its own rhetoric and embrace a performative

¹¹ Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2. The Time-Image*, trans. Hugo Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Continuum, London, 2005).

¹² Claire Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze*, (Routledge, London and New York, 2002), p. 38.

¹³ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, trans. Graham Burchell and Hugh Tomlinson (Verso, 1994), p. 77.

¹⁴ Daniel Frampton, *Filmosophy* (Wallflower Press, London, 2006).

There have always been (since the invention of the cinematograph) a philosophical interest in the cinematic and photographic image. Henri Bergson, Siegfried Kracauer, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, André Bazin, Stanley Cavell, Gilles Deleuze among others. For Frampton, who attributes film image with its own mind, film can think and therefore 'is' philosophy. John Mullarkey brings his own view to a number of theories from mainly Continental but also Anglo-American traditions asserting that "cinema thinks, but in a non-philosophical way," (p.215), moving away from thinking towards emotion. John Mullarkey, *Refractions of Reality: Philosophy and the Moving Image*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2008. Since the publication of Frampton's *Filmosophy*, the discussions of film and philosophy have taken form of the online 'film philosophy salon' with conferences organised every year in the UK.

nature if it is to get as near as possible to the very experience of the moving image.¹⁵

Yve Lomax's project of "writing the image" also developed out of the desire to bring writing (about images) into the repertoire of the visual arts. Her "adventures in writing and theory" situate the process of writing and theory within both a philosophical and creative/ poetic framework of (art) practice. Crossing the boundaries between writing, photographic practice and spoken performance, she endeavours to question presuppositions held within theory and practice as well as in speaking and seeing.¹⁶ Following on from this, writing with Tarr's imagery would not be possible as a discourse 'explaining' the work in philosophical terms, but as co-creating philosophically alongside it. Thus the style and the method of this thesis will acquire the 'logic of expression', which means bringing out sensations without dissociating from the material; an a-signifying semiotics of 'ands'.¹⁷ It is not so much turning language into expression, but allowing expression as an outside force to materialise through the 'language' imperceptibly, in-between words and images. My objective is to "'bring out 'another language in its language' through a kind of repetition freed from the phantoms of identity, and productive of difference."¹⁸ Through mistranslation or distortion, to force the sense of the image, to bring out the very force that inhabits and empowers it, that is, to think with it as an affirmative and joyful passion.¹⁹ Following

¹⁵ Frampton, *Filmosophy*, p. 179.

¹⁶ Yve Lomax, *Writing the Image* (I B Tauris Publishers, London 2000). Her other works include *Sounding the Event: Escapades in Dialogue with Matters of Art, Nature and Time* (I B Tauris, London and New York, 2005), and *Passionate Being: Language, Singularity and Perseverance* (I B Tauris, London and New York, 2009).

¹⁷ This kind of analysis does not start with an a-priori signifier. It does not have a credo to follow, but in engaging with the 'material' it carries on the movement of immanence, where, in the 'spirit' of Deleuzian 'proposition', it takes the shape of (dis)connecting 'ands' rather than a defining 'is'. And when the verb 'is' is used it is to take on the force of being in becoming, as something happening in the process, and as one of many other 'beings'.

The logic of expression that Deleuze finds in Spinoza is a logic of univocity, where things are thought in their being. As Pierre Macherey writes, expression in the Deleuzian - and the Spinozan sense - has nothing to do with designating or representing anything, since what is expressed cannot be dissociated from the act by which it is expressed. It is a logic of power and a logic of movement which is different from the logic of representation based on identity. Pierre Macherey, 'The Encounter with Spinoza', in Paul Patton (ed), *Deleuze: A Critical Reader* (Blackwell Publishers, 1996), pp. 146-7.

¹⁸ Ibid, p. 148.

¹⁹ Passion is used here in the Spinozan sense of affection, which cannot be explained by the nature of the affected individual, but originates outside of the individual. Its nature is to fill our capacity for being affected. There are empowering passions of joy and disempowering passions of sadness. The passions for Spinoza are the question of choice and of ethics. As Deleuze writes: "Ethical joy is the correlate of speculative affirmation." Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, trans. Robert Hurley (City Lights Books, San Francisco, 1988), p. 27-29.

the ethos of creation, my approach will reside not in commenting, communicating, or analysing, but in expression through vibration, resonance and "forced movements."²⁰ Conceptual and aesthetic thinking/ writing alongside the vibrant (vital) rhythms of Tarr's films, possible with the aid of Deleuzian tools, will therefore take the shape of a critical and creative intervention. The theoretical crux of the thesis will consist of re-thinking the photographic image, both still and moving, in relation to its visual – 'cerebral' and affective – significance, not in terms of oppositionist dialectics, but as a radical immanence – *the real*. This would be an aesthetico-ethical experiment where intuitive thinking opening up the problems will merge with poetic expression as art. The two modes – critical and creative – are not constructed separately but weaved together throughout the thesis in a kind of "free indirect discourse"; a poetic coming together of different voices, in an aesthetic figure of what Deleuze calls the conceptual personae that would carry the movement of the concepts.²¹ Its aim, rather than proceed from, or towards, a pre-determined goal, is to construct a discourse not of my own, but born out of encounters with and between films, images and philosophical/ theoretical openings. The real of the image and the real of thinking would sense and tease out the impersonal expression – a conceptual persona, or a 'dancing star'. Thus, thinking will be a process where the concepts are (re)created alongside writing as art. Here "dialogical" (Kristeva) rather than discursive/ symbolic encounters with words, sounds and images, sensing their coexistence and interrelations, hope to resonate with the films' crystalline narrative and wa(o)nderous aesthetics:

Performative gestures weaved in the fabric of a theory-thinking which would work to undo the frames of contents and forms, meanings and significations. Unconsciously at times, coincidentally and by singular encounters.

²⁰ Ibid, p. 146-7.

²¹ Free-indirect discourse is the term coined by Deleuze after Pasolini (free-indirect-style), and describes the operation of cinematic imaging where the director's 'vision' and the non-human camera's point of view come together as something new, which is then rendered 'visible' through the character's 'speech-act' or through the virtual percepts.

The conceptual persona, as discussed by Deleuze and Guattari in *What is Philosophy?*, is the figure of thought which gives a concept its specific force, life; what animates a concept. It is something that 'happens' to the thinker/ philosopher and it is essential for the practice of concepts. Conceptual personae are neither psycho-social types (p. 67), nor the philosophers themselves (p. 64), but are like concepts created. They are related to the plane of immanence. Descartes' idiot, or Nietzsche's Zarathustra, Dionysus, the last man, are such personae. It could be argued that conceptual persona in a sense creates (writes) itself.

Thus, neither discursive, nor philosophical in the traditional sense, writing with and alongside images and concepts will undertake the Deleuzian challenge of becoming with the process, in the style of 'to-ing and fro-ing' in-between ideas and sensations. Immersed in the rhizomatic fusion of immanence (intellect and emotion), and starting from the middle, the writing will proceed through stutters and hesitations. The thinking of (and with) the *photographic*, or what I would call photographic thinking, will be positioned in the (unstable) middle, fragmented and fractured, 'contemplative' and non-hierarchical, and proceed alongside the borders; orphaned, homeless and nomadic. With time, in an attempt to overcome the opposition between an instant and duration on the one side, and with space as "any-space-whatever"²² not opposed to time but with(in) it, and as virtual force of the outside, on the other, it will move in a non-linear fashion of questioning and creating, advancing and regressing, in stutters and hesitations. It will move directionlessly, bringing together the philosopher and the filmmaker whose ideas concerning life, art/cinema, and philosophy, which are also critical to this thesis, resonate with an uncanny intensity. Deleuze asks for an immanent faith in this world through the possibility of creating new forms of life. Béla Tarr restores this belief excruciatingly and beautifully. Remaining with Tarr's strategy of thinking about his films as a single project, of imaging with the world, there will be no methodology of 'differentiating'/ distinguishing between each film within the discussion here, but rather sensing and experimenting with the visual material.

It is not within the scope of this project to contribute to existing theoretical or philosophical discussions around the film/ image, but to open up thinking for new encounters. The aim of the thesis would not seek to establish or develop an argument in the conventional, linear sense, but to propose a set of expressions, or what Deleuze (and Guattari) would call *blocks of becomings*, that dialogue with each other in a polyphonic, aberrant movement of 'filmosophical' writing/thinking – listening to the films.²³ It sojourns in the conviction that this is the only way, perhaps failed from the

²² The concept of any-space-whatever will be addressed in Chapter/ exposure 3.

²³ "A becoming is always in the middle; one can only get it by the middle. A becoming is neither one, or two, nor the relation of the two; it is the in-between, the borderline or line of flight... If becoming is a block (a line-block), it is because it constitutes a zone of proximity and indiscernability, a no-man's land, a non-localizable relation sweeping up the two distant or contiguous points, carrying one into the proximity of the other - and the border-proximity is indifferent to both contiguity and to distance."

start, for the imperceptible, virtual power of the aesthetico-ethical effect of such complex and intensely 'difficult' imagery as Béla Tarr's, to render itself 'visible'. In the belief that something new and unforeseeable may 'express' itself in the process.

- Shall I just listen? Or observe? Silently watch you show me some [shapes]?
- Both once again or rather between the two. I'll have you observe that reading proceeds in no other way. It listens in watching.²⁴

Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Continuum, London and New York, 2003), p. 293.

The idea of filmosophical writing as listening to the films is inspired by Daniel Frampton's project of combining philosophy and film in an attempt to develop a new way of thinking about film: not to illustrate philosophical ideas through films' narratives or apply films to philosophy, but to be sensitive to films' own affective thinking. Frampton, *Filmosophy*, p. 181.

²⁴ Jacques Derrida, *Memoirs of the Blind: The Self-Portrait and Other Ruins*, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (The University of Chicago Press, London, 1993), p. 2.

exposure 1:

(Re)creating the Real. By way of introduction.

*Expression is always on the move, always engrossed in its own course,
overspilling individual experience, nomadically evading responsibility.*

Brian Massumi²⁵

*I make, remake and unmake my concepts along a moving horizon, from an
always decentred centre, from always displaced periphery which repeats and
differentiates them.*

Gilles Deleuze²⁶

As Constantin V. Boundas writes, intensity – and I would add the real, understood as such – is a key notion in Deleuze's philosophical project:

It manifests itself as the intensive virtual of his ontology; as the affirmative and creative desire of his ethics and politics; as the affect of his aesthetic theory; as the motivation for his methodological decision to opt for transcendental empiricism; and as the guarantor of a theory of difference (different/ciation).²⁷

Intensity is also the affective-thinking force of Tarr's cinematic imaging. Intensity too, will be the main concept running through this thesis, resonating with and vibrating

²⁵ Brian Massumi, 'Introduction: Like a Thought', *The Shock to Thought: Expression After Deleuze and Guattari* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. xxi

²⁶ Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (Continuum, 2004), p. xix.

²⁷ Constantin V. Boundas, 'Intensity', in *The Deleuze Dictionary* (Edinburgh University Press, 2005), p. 131.

Deleuze uses the concept of intensity as pure difference: a form of ontological difference that gives rise to 'actual' entities. As qualities, intensities are virtual but real. They cannot be directly perceived in the quality they give rise to.

through the ideas of expression, immanence, and becoming. As a conceptual tool it will enable me to re-think the ideas of stillness and movement, inside and outside, abstract and material, through the expression of an impersonal, pre-subjective movement of sensation (percepts and affects).²⁸ As a creative apparatus, it will adopt a style of becoming understood as an affective transformation, which is a result of an encounter.

Perhaps the photographic imaging, the stillness and silence of photography once proposed as a process of 'breathing a life to', as something that linked us to the world in a 'very special way', has been rejected too soon on all sorts of accounts.²⁹ As we became trapped in a speed of perpetual motion of appropriating, critiquing, deconstructing, and commenting on, had/has its 'real' potentiality as difference no chance to come forth, and is the ability to 'think differently' with it in danger of disappearing in the race towards progress?³⁰

²⁸ According to Deleuze and Guattari, percepts are not perceptions, and affects are not affections or feelings, but virtual, pre-personal, non-subjective intensities. They are 'beings' whose validity lies in themselves and exceeds any lived experience. *Affects are precisely these nonhuman becomings of man*, just as percepts [...] are *nonhuman landscapes of nature*. Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p.169.

²⁹ I refer here particularly to the understanding of analogue photography, where the image is 'inscribed' by light onto the light sensitive emulsion, and which is now being replaced by the new digital technologies. In *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, Deleuze displays ambivalence towards photography, which is too easily treated as an immobilised truth and a direct reification of the representational modes of thought and practice he devotes his oeuvre to overturning. Deleuze repeatedly associates photography with cliché, drawing on the double meaning of the word in French as both stereotypical thinking and a snapshot of reality. Cliché marks a mechanical and instantaneous act that requires little effort or thought, and results in a temporal freezing and spatial sectioning of an image of reality from its virtual and durational context.

Many theoretical debates, and photographic practices, are still positioned around the question of digital versus analogue as a value/ ideology judgment. There are filmmakers and photographers who use analogue/ celluloid film and work outside the of oppositionistic dialectics, seeing the use of the medium in terms of what it can do rather than it being ideologically or technologically pertinent; as in the case of 16mm film, which has recently been brought to attention by British artist Tacita Dean. Béla Tarr also refers to his preference of working with celluloid film as a personal choice that is as valid as the choice of more 'advanced' digital technology. Some of the above concerns were expressed in the catalogue accompanying Tacita Dean's projection of 'Film' at the Tate Modern (October 2011 – March 2012). Nicholas Culinan (ed.), *Tacita Dean: Film*, The Unilever Series, Tate Publishing, 2011.

³⁰ 'Potential' will be used here in the Deleuzian sense, which is not the same as possible. Possible for Deleuze is the condition that somehow 'pre-exists' the (representational) real. It is something that can be 'realised'. Potential, on the contrary is a virtual force (a difference) which can not be either foreseen or realised. Rather than awaiting realisation, the potential *is* real, and can only be actualised (not represented).

The project of 'reclaiming the image' aims at re-thinking the concept of the image in non-representational terms of immanent becoming. It seeks to engage critically with the ideas surrounding the real, and particularly the photographic (as) real through the understanding of the image as being its own reality, neither a unit in a chain of narrative, nor a language, but a correlate of a-signifying signs, as both form and content.³¹ This means questioning the ideas of documenting, realism, and truth associated with the real, but also distancing from the oppositionistic model of 'virtual reality'. It means opening up the space for thinking the real, through Deleuze, as being both actual and virtual, as material-abstract, as still-moving, creatively.³² Here, rather than replacing one model by another, the project calls for a radical rethinking of old and new, history and progress, aesthetics and politics. Thus, 'reclaiming' does not imply looking back nostalgically to what is lost, but by resisting both the dialectics of the 'avant-garde' (old and new) and de-constructive strategies of so called post-modern (re)appropriation, it opens the image's real(ity) towards its unknown and unrealised potential in virtual coexistence of past, present and future.

For Walter Benjamin, looking at Daguerreotype portraits, it was the photographic 'aura' of the long exposure that captured a life now lost, nostalgically.³³ For Barthes, the unspeakable affect piercing through the 'mad image' where time disappears in "[t]his will be and this has been."³⁴ Perhaps what was 'captured' in the photographic was a life that opens up the space; a potentiality in its embryonic state rather than nostalgic loss. Perhaps through the (inhuman) camera, positioned between the world and the photographer, something has passed with light; a virtual fleeting line/life leaving its trace not in the image as such, but 'through' it, and through the viewer; a

³¹ For Deleuze, cinema is not a universal or primitive language system: "It brings to light an intelligible content which is like a presupposition, a condition, a necessary correlate through which language constructs its own 'objects'. But this correlate, though inseparable, is specific: it consists of pre-linguistic images, and pre-signifying signs." Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 262.

The image is not representation or a copy of existing reality, but another 'plane of immanence'; its own world.

³² The actual is not opposed to the virtual, but both coexist as real. The virtual is what has not been actualised yet; what could have been. In cinema this is conveyed by the time-image, or crystal image, where the virtual image becomes actual, yet not directly. The actual in this context would be that which renders visible or incarnates the virtual imperceptibly.

³³ Walter Benjamin, 'A Small History of Photography', in Walter Benjamin, *One-Way Street and Other Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott and Kingsley Shorter (Verso, 1998), pp. 240-258.

³⁴ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, trans. Richard Howard (Vintage 2000), p. 96.

line that keeps shimmering through imperceptibly. The time-image, brought to the surface as stilled "fixed shot."³⁵

Still the question poses itself: Is it possible to reclaim such an image from its (de)constructivist dialectical 'death sentence', and is it necessary or desirable at all? And if it is, how does one escape the confines of the canonical Image of thought and liberate 'what is' with the unforeseeable 'not yet', with time uncontrolled and space non-confined. For Deleuze, and for Tarr, this is 'trying out', always on the move, always on the lookout for the chance; "a new logic," of the sensible, characterised by a principle of encounters and experimentation in thinking and in relating to the world.³⁶ Of course, as Yve Lomax reminds us after Francois Lyotard, there is no security here, only the process.³⁷ This is the challenge of thinking which, always in becoming, has no pre-judged assumptions, and which resists the dogmatic itself. Experimenting is always that which is "in the process of coming about."³⁸ "Would it be too much to say", Lomax asks, "that through experimenting thought gains the means to become an act of resistance to what is?" "I hope not", is her answer.³⁹ And would the resistance to 'what is' not take us outside the opposition of 'what is' and 'what is not'?

In experimenting, and keeping the present in question, we expose ourselves to an unimaginable 'not yet', and doesn't the exposure make us open to having something unknown pass through us that, in effect, shows us the limits of – and makes us become strangers to – our times and ourselves?⁴⁰

Is this not that what the photographic 'is'?

³⁵ Deleuze refers to the time-image as a "fixed shot" to emphasise its difference from the movement-image. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 21

³⁶ John Rajchman, 'Unhappy returns: John Rajchman on the Po-mo Decade (Writing the 80's)'. <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Unhappy+returns%3A+John+Rajchman+on+the+po-mo+decade.+%28Writing+the...-a0101938549>.

Just as Deleuze found new ways of thinking and experimenting with 'old' philosophers, Belá Tarr took up anew the challenge of the real with celluloid film and black and white photography.

³⁷ Yve Lomax, 'Thinking Stillness', in David Green and Joanna Lowry (ed.), *Stillness and Time: Photography and the Moving Image* (Photoworks and Photoforum, 2006), p. 57.

³⁸ Deleuze, Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 111.

³⁹ Lomax, 'Thinking Stillness', p. 62

⁴⁰ Ibid.

The real (both material and abstract) – a concept inspired by Deleuze's philosophical theory of immanence, is a core concept of this thesis, and an underlying force behind my investigation into 'the image' of (the photographic) image. Neither phenomenological existence, nor psychoanalytic lack (the Lacanian Real), yet both actual and virtual intensity vibrating immanently in-between presence and absence, stillness and movement: "a fugitive being."⁴¹ The underlying aspect of the concept of the real would be the link to this world, developed through Deleuze, and what it is for us and for cinema now. It would be traversed by means of Tarr's imagery, not as a reading in the historical or cultural contexts, but as an investigation into what he calls 'vision', constructed throughout all of his work in the same manner.⁴² It is also a methodological question of creating with images; that is, constructing the thinking and writing as both questioning and expression. The project will not adhere to any particular film theoretical discussion but will look at the image from the perspective of relations and assemblages; a network of becomings and possibilities. As philosophical writing, far from analysing or interpreting films in the traditional way of imparting meaning, it will move between categories and definitions, seeking to open up areas for future concerns. Drawing on Deleuze's idea of the time-image, it proposes an 'image' of image as haptic and thinking, cerebral and material, affective and conceptual. Here Bergson's conception of perception and memory, Spinoza's concepts of affect, and Nietzsche's proposition of force and becoming will stipulate the discussion. Inspired by Daniel Frampton's method of 'filmosophy', as mentioned earlier, and by Guillian Bruno's etymological reading of wandering as 'error' (implying rumbling, roaming or even going astray), this thesis will adopt the methodology of intuitive thinking with the image, which will take the form of creative questioning rather than aiming for a determinate outcome. Referring at times to earlier writings about film (Siegfried Kracauer, Antonin Artaud, André Bazin), which are more attentive to the cinematic image, and its own, separate reality, also facilitates the focus on how the image is constructed, what it 'does' rather than what it represents. As photographic thinking, the process will be carried through exposures, repetitions,

⁴¹ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 299.

⁴² As already mentioned earlier, Tarr emphasises in a number of interviews that he makes the same film; getting closer to life, again and again, getting better each time. Furthermore, getting closer to life is an aesthetic/ visual choice of 'no more cinema', but 'pure reality' - what Bazin suggested in relation to De Sica's films, or, on the other hand, getting closer to the 'pure image' (which is the same as getting closer to life for Tarr), by re-claiming the cinematic or photographic of cinema from the burden of narrative and story telling.

constructions and re-constructions bringing forth the experience of the "real-as-Identity."⁴³ The visual examples used throughout will come from Tarr's trilogy: *Damnation* (1987), *Sátántangó* (1994), and *Werckmeister Harmonies* (2000).⁴⁴

The question is how one can engage critically and conceptually with something that wants to defy definition, to fall outside realism and representation, and that moves away from structures of identity to 'expressions' of becoming.

I will focus on the photographic image (moving and still) as that 'inherently endowed' with the conception of the real: by its relationship with 'outside reality' – the indexical aspect, and by the 'aura' of affect – its 'psychological' aspect, by the way of re-thinking both, by distancing myself from both phenomenological and psychoanalytical models, in pursuit of an aesthetical real. Objective and subjective, still and moving, invisible and visible, the "pure optical and sound situation", as proposed by Deleuze, will enable the 'existence' and experience of the real through the 'interrelation' between the physicality/ materiality of the image and its movement in space-time; to view cinema as an assemblage of photographic images and cinematic motion as parallel to movement of time, life, and becoming. A particular type of image, the time-image or a "pure optical and sound situation", enables the 'existence' and experience of the real through an immanent intertwining of the physicality and materiality of the image, its movement in space-time, and the virtual outside. It will extend Deleuze's understanding of the time-image from being exclusively 'cinematic' to becoming photographic.⁴⁵ Thus, the discussion will risk proposing indexicality as a (non)relation to 'this world' but freed from referentiality (according to Deleuzian re-working of Peirce's theory of signs⁴⁶), towards a particular ('optical') intensity, and the

⁴³ François Laruelle, *The Concept of Non-Photography*, trans. Robin Mackay (Urbanomic, 2010), p. 37. For François Laruelle, photographic thinking is a 'mode' of new thinking based on its relation to the real (a photo for him introduces an experience of Identity as an experience of immanence) in a way that could be understood together with the Deleuzian virtual-actual immanence. The concepts of assemblage, fragmentation and repetition are also embedded in the idea of photographic thinking.

⁴⁴ The rationale behind the choice of this particular filmic examples lies in the fact that the 'character' of what can be called the 'trilogy' is most closely related to the ethos of this thesis.

⁴⁵ Overcoming the opposition of stillness and movement, as well as the associations of the still image with photography, and movement with cinema.

⁴⁶ Charles S. Peirce, *Peirce on Signs: Writings on Semiotic*, edited by James Hoopes (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991). Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, pp. 24-29

'photographic (un)conscious' as liberated from its affixation to the Lacanian Real.⁴⁷ Here the photographic still image, in a sense liberated from its immobilized position of spatialised time and its Euclidian perspective, would be perceived as a 'time-space' (in its embryonic state of potentiality), which, growing in dimensions, "never stops reconstructing the identity of image and object."⁴⁸ Stillness (or 'stilling') is thinking when it is "a *construction* of a (uncontrolled) time for thought."⁴⁹ The photograph can also be thought of as a 'plane' of different relations where "everything is connected to everything else" (Béla Tarr, *Sátántangó*) in a fragmentary cosmic web of 'world-memory', and as a 'rupture', in-between of 'no longer' and 'not yet'; a 'terrifying meanwhile'.⁵⁰ The 'time-image', on the other hand, can be perceived as a 'moving photograph' that fills the image with a temporal flow of 'pure contemplation': "The mental and physical, the real and imaginary, the subject and object, the world and I."⁵¹ As such, the image will take a form of embodied space, actual and virtual, where the (e)motion⁵² of wanderings and encounters will enable the possibility of rethinking images in terms of stillness and movement, aesthetics and politics, materialism and abstraction, reality and illusion, bringing together photography and cinema in the photographic immanent "in the last instance."⁵³ Thus, as linked to this world (indexically by proxy, alongside the world) and pensive (virtual but not the traumatic real) the time-image of my investigation will embrace life, with Deleuze and Tarr, "at the point where the being of the sensible reveals itself in the work of art, while at the same time the work of art appears as experimentation."⁵⁴

⁴⁷ It is the intensity André Bazin discovered in the photograph when he compared it to the snowflake in 'The Ontology of the Photographic Image' (which is neither of referential nor representational quality), and the optical (un)conscious that Walter Benjamin found while looking at the earliest daguerreotypes (which might not be read as nostalgic or traumatic). Benjamin, 'A Small History of Photography'.

⁴⁸ As Lomax, in *Writing the Image*, has pointed out, the idea of photography as spacializing time has been rejected for some time now. Photography has not, however, been entirely freed from its representational (and realistic) attributes (in relation to analogue photography in particular).

⁴⁹ Lomax, *Thinking Stillness*, p. 57.

⁵⁰ 'A Terrifying meanwhile' is an expression Yve Lomax uses in relation to resisting the present (what is), and as time 'in-between' that is also the unknown (the Outside). Lomax, 'Thinking Stillness', p. 57.

⁵¹ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 15. Contemplation refers here to sensing and intuiting from without, rather than to its conventional understanding. Here the image (as "instances of pure contemplation") bring about the identity of the real (the mental and physical, the real and imaginary, the world and the 'I').

⁵² Motion produces emotion, writes Guiliana Bruno, referring to the Latin root of the word 'emotion', which speaks of 'moving force'. This is a two way process - creating: making sensations felt, and viewing: the shock of the 'unrecognisable'. See Guiliana Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion Journeys in Art, Architecture, and Film* (Verso, New York, 2002).

⁵³ François Laruelle, *The Concept of Non-Photography*, p. 40.

⁵⁴ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 68.

The distinction between film and photography, based on the difference between simultaneity and succession, between reality and illusion, between present and past, has been a subject of many debates. The desire to move away from oppositional thinking led me to suggest that this particular kind of 'moving image' (a long, disconnected shot of modern cinema) has in a sense 'freed' the still image from its immobilized position of spatialised time, and repositioned it within the area of immanent becoming. Here the time-image has brought the photographic image (as indexical art) to the surface, and as a surface allowed it (as the invisible trace of heterogeneous becomings between the camera, the photographer, the viewer, the image and the outside) to live in a space of movement and change. In this sense, the photographic image could be perceived as a 'space-time' in its embryonic state of potentiality. The photograph can also be thought of as a 'plane' of different relations or plane of composition which connects with the outside. A thinking through to the relationships between inside and outside, surface and depth, past and present is pertinent here. The 'time-image' on the other hand can become a 'moving photograph' that fills the image with a temporal flow of 'pure contemplation': "The mental and physical, the real and imaginary, the subject and object, the world and I." By means of these long/still hypnotic images we can in a sense see what we feel.

Close attention will be paid to how images (films) look and sound and how they make us feel, rather than to their 'hidden' or other meanings; not to what the image necessarily is but what it does in terms of experience and affect-thought, which cannot be translated in representational, or deconstructive terms, only assessed in terms of their power to affect.⁵⁵ Most of all, the image is perceived as its own reality and its own thinking. It is an area of film but also art and philosophy, where each plays off and informs each other through expression. As a pure optical and sound situation, the image co-exists with other such images in a non-linear, disconnected narrative of machinic assemblage, no longer defined by continuity or montage, but by irrational cut. No longer linkage but interstice, a gap between and within images opens to the Outside, where the virtual images/sensations, affects and percepts, are 'waiting' to be

⁵⁵ As Deleuze writes, an existing mode is defined by a certain capacity for being affected: "By affect I understand affections of the body by which the body's power of acting is increased or diminished, aided or restrained..." Spinoza cited in Deleuze, *Spinoza*, pp. 49-50.

actualised, and thoughts to be thought.⁵⁶ Not confined to the 'sensory-motor' logic of the narrative, outside realism and representation, such an image – never stable, never frozen in time – 'becomes' rather than is. It is a divergence from linear forms of movement (in-between stillness and movement) that participates in (rather than captures) processual reality, and as such renders it unrecognisable.⁵⁷ It constitutes of a plane of composition, an immanent space-time which is also an aesthetical field where virtual sensations are created.⁵⁸ As such, the image-world functions as a radical opening which is not a figure of a metaphor but the real of becoming; a living, rather than an intellectual, concept. It thinks via intuition.⁵⁹ Thinking such an image on the other hand would require the aptitude of wa(o)nder, an opening to unknown and unforeseeable forces. Spaces, milieus, zones, maps, labyrinths. Wanderings, returnings. Connections. Formations of worlds, constellations of universes, landscapes.⁶⁰ My aim is to 'investigate'/ to think and create with this real as affect-thought, as a style of expression that is aesthetic.

Objects on screen, Virginia Woolf wrote,

have become not more beautiful in the sense in which pictures are beautiful, but shall we call it (our vocabulary is miserably insufficient) more real, or real with a different reality from that which we perceive in daily life? We behold them as they are when we are not there. We see life as it is when we have no part in it. As we gaze we seem to be removed from the pettiness of actual existence.⁶¹

⁵⁶ The Outside for Deleuze is the virtual force that is not opposed to the inside but is neither a rational Whole. It is an open whole, an interval where the common sense perception or understanding of things is suspended. As this virtual force can only be 'felt' through the shock (encountering something intolerable or too beautiful) it 'provokes' new thinking. In the time-image cinema this is what Deleuze calls the "irrational cut", where the chain of events and edited images is broken in favour of the aberrant movement of disconnected events. See Deleuze, *Cinema 2*.

⁵⁷ Unrecognisable does not mean abstract or estranged but impossible to comprehend from the standpoint of commonsensical, habitual laws of perception. It is the case of virtual intensities and imperceptible sensations (a-synifying signs), modes of 'seeing' not attached to the human eye Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze*, p. 32.

⁵⁸ Plane of composition as a concept will be discussed later in this thesis, particularly in relation to the still photographic image in Chapter/ exposure 3.

⁵⁹ For Deleuze through Bergson, 'connecting' with the (real) outside requires not intellect – knowledge or commonsensical, sensory-motor perception - but a vital intuition that brings liberated senses into direct contact with time and thought. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*.

⁶⁰ Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 28.

⁶¹ Virginia Woolf, 'The Cinema', in Michael O'Pray (ed), *The British Avant-Garde Film 1926 to 1995: An Anthology of Writings* (The Arts Council of England), 1996. p. 135.

The real is important here as a link to the world, on the one hand, and as a mechanism for accessing a kind of beyond to everyday experience.⁶² It is not something opposed to the fictional or the imaginary, but where the imaginary is construed as imaging (bringing forth images); what Deleuze calls fabulation, not representing. "Cinema," Deleuze writes, "does not just present images, it surrounds them with a world."⁶³ It is actual, not realising or reproducing but rendering visible, and virtual, not transcendent but immanent outside. "It is as if an image is a mirror, a photo or a postcard that came to life ..."⁶⁴ The real's ontological 'entanglement' with the image cannot be separated from the 'domains' of perception and aesthetics, where the question of perception and aesthetics is taken outside of the perceived and the sublimated. It is a question of both. An art.⁶⁵

The concept of perception that is required here is the Bergsonian, 'pure perception' which happens outside of the sensory-motor reactive moment of survival, and outside one subjective point of view; a consciousness as something rather than of something outside realism and idealism. According to Bergson, matter exists in itself just as we perceive it; it is a "self existing image."⁶⁶ Thus, as Quentin Meillassoux pointed out, human perception is the selection of only one of the rhythms of a matter-image, which contain each and every one of them.⁶⁷ Extending this to Deleuze's theory of the time-image, this indeterminate perception would be a question of impersonal affects, percepts and concepts, 'blocks of sensations' which cannot be 'read' but experienced directly, including thought. It 'forces out' a particular attention (suspension of normal motor activity): a condition that allows us to slow down; a break in habit, an opening of the "vacuoles of non-communication,"⁶⁸ which then enable a polyphony or

⁶² This is particularly 'evident' in early writing where the cinema was thought of as a predominantly visual, and not as a language (as mentioned earlier). It later returns with Bazin's writings on Italian neorealism, and Deleuze's *Cinema* books.

⁶³ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 66.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 67.

⁶⁵ For Deleuze, "no art or no sensation have ever been representational." Deleuze, and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 193. This is where cinema meets art.

⁶⁶ Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans., Nancy Margaret Paul and W. Scott Palmer. (Zone Books, 1991), p. 10.

⁶⁷ "The thing in itself is all the points of view it is possible to take on that thing: from the most intimate, those of its finest details, to the most remote." Quentin Meillassoux, 'Subtraction and Contradiction: Deleuze, Immanence, and Matter and Memory', in *Collapse III*, http://blog.urbanomic.com/urbanomic/Publications/Collapse-3/PDFs/C3_Quentin_Meillassoux.pdf, p. 86.

⁶⁸ Deleuze, *Negotiations, 1972-1990*, trans. Martin Joughin (Columbia University Press, New York, 1995), p. 175.

multiplicity of different selves, without the restriction to the Symbolic Order of the sameness, which frees consciousness from the fixed habits and utilitarian concerns, and from which something new emerges. This would be opening out (going out of one self) to the multiplicity of human and non-human durations in time that produce difference. Contemplative, neither passive, nor active in the normative sense, but a potential to immerse oneself in the image, which exceeds the terms of control either of or by the image.⁶⁹ A certain state, we might call love, or a powerful, non-organic vitality that is beyond or outside particular bodies, but which allows for the body to be affected and to affect. Paraphrasing Bergson, I will call this attentive misrecognition.⁷⁰ It hovers outside and within the flesh(y) encounters; hesitantly, unknowingly. In imaging this would be a result of both the director's vision and the non-human eye of the camera, and in the case of viewing, the viewer's emotion (memory' and thinking) which come together as the power of the false.⁷¹ Thus, the 'real' perception will be that of pre-personal, non-subjective, and non-human (co)creative encounter; an event of time, not representation. And the aesthetic – an affective 'offspring' of that encounter, not a judgment. That is why linguistic or psychoanalytic approaches are misleading: there is nothing to be looked for on this side or the other of the filmic images, no exterior structure that would prescribe their forms. With this in mind, cinema is not/ cannot be a language, but an event of affect-thought, a living concept of the real. Accordingly, aesthetics moves from judgment/theory of beauty towards creative 'framing' of irrational intervals where commonsensical and habitual recognition is shattered and the possibility of rational synthesis destroyed; an 'intensive construction' that is image's 'soul'. Here the emotional rapture puts the viewer in a situation where the liberated from perception

⁶⁹ As Maria Walsh writes, in the interrelation between the stilled - yet diegetic - image, and the spectator, who is also both still and moving, a disjunctive engagement between the parameters of stillness and movement occurs, generating associations and emotions that are not predicated on content. Maria Walsh, 'Against Fetishism: The Moving Quiescence of Life 24 Frames a Second', in *Film Philosophy*, 10.2, 2006, p. 6. This is one of the many unforeseen outcomes of the encounters with the cinematic.

⁷⁰ As mentioned before, the attentive recognition comes through recollection images. However, when attentive recognition fails, when we cannot remember, the present optical perception does not link up with either the motor image or a recollection image, but enters into relation with genuinely virtual elements, feelings of *déjà vu* or 'past in general', dream images, fantasies. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 52.

⁷¹ For Deleuze, the false is not opposite to truth but it is a different kind of truth, the false which is the artistic power that puts the 'philosophical' Truth into question; which replaces and supercedes the form of truth. Deleuze *Cinema 2*, p. 127.

senses are confronted with the non-thinking.⁷² As it is not a domain of a subject, but pre-personal and pre-linguistic affect, the 'interpretative' objective also deviates from the traumatic Real as proposed by Lacan, which is not to say that the concepts of unconscious processes and irrational gestures do not come up as necessary constituents of the image. In this sense, the real moves away from representation altogether, towards what Bracha Ettinger called the encounter-event. For Deleuze (and Guattari) this would be a non-Oedipal sense of (un)conscious creating and thinking through desire.⁷³ An aesthetics of affect-thought. Thus, what will pierce through the image is life vibrating with its own rhythms, an abstract yet real movement of matter. It will be an image seen as an aesthetic event – an instant of rhythmic time shimmering through all. Above all, it is presented as the processual creative 'network' that happens between the work of art, the viewer, and the 'outside', which is folded in time and 'consists' of (e)motion. Thus sensed, the real falls between the categories of oppositional dialectics of inside/outside, subjective/objective, reality/memory. It sits in-between and within all sorts of connections and pathways, in the maze of interrelations of indexicality and imagination, of reference and art, of materiality and illusion. It escapes interpretation, appropriation, and categorisation, becoming instead the web of vital cells vibrating in-between the 'object' and 'I' in the flesh of the world folded in time; a construction-expression where the meaning is emptying itself. As a folding and unfolding process of imaging, it grasps and repels the viewer in virtually 'reciprocal' encounters. It would be an image-world, the moving force that 'frames sensation', the move towards gesture rather than meaning, and a space-time of thinking with affect – mind and body; an immanent life of becoming where art, life, and thinking come together as tragic aesthetics.⁷⁴ This thesis will

⁷² Following Artaud and Blanchot's idea of the 'impossibility of thinking', Deleuze argues that real thinking starts precisely on its very impossibility: 'The impossibility of thinking that is thought'. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 161.

⁷³ Bracha Ettinger developed the concept of the encounter-event as encounter taking place at the borderline of 'I' and non-'I', outside the phallic structure, which is an inter-subjective 'engagement' with life, not a consequence of non-representable (that which cannot be represented) repressed trauma/ death drive. For her, this forms specific aesthetical and ethical accesses to the Other. Bracha L. Ettinger, *The Matrixial Borderspace*, (University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 2006). I will extend the use of the concept to the pre-subjective, non-personal encounter outside the psychoanalytic model, towards the Deleuzian (and Guattarian) understanding of the outside and the unconscious as an immanent space of desire that is not dependent on the familial structure/ drama; a kind of productive orphaned space. Gilles Deleuze, and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane (Continuum, London, 2004), and *A Thousand Plateaus*.

⁷⁴ The idea of a poetic gesture will be explored in following Chapters/ exposures in relation to speech (sound), and in relation the characters/ figures. Tragic aesthetics will be discussed in the context of Nietzsche's idea of tragedy in Chapter/ exposure 5.

speak of the image that is alive, in its embryonic state of 'enormous' life-force, bringing out the vital sensation as intensity, an excess rather than lack. The concept of aesthetics, on the other hand, will be thought of in its original, pre-Kantian realm of the 'creation' of sensations, but with the Deleuzian proposition of its impersonal, pre-subjective and non-human aspect. As sensations do not correlate of any subject but are veritable *beings in themselves*, endowed with an autonomous existence, they 'live' outside the scope of judgment and representation.⁷⁵ Aesthetics not as a theory of beauty but intensity, and a rapture between perception and emotion. As Deleuze proposed, it is neither a theory nor a reflection exercised on previously given objects but a creative activity, and in this activity it finds its own dignity.⁷⁶ The real "is that with which our relation is always alive", wrote Maurice Blanchot in *The Gaze of Orpheus*.⁷⁷

Such is Béla Tarr's real cinema, the main focus of my 'adventure' into the real.

There are certain elements of its imagery – difficult, often problematic – unfamiliar, somewhere on the borderline between the still and moving image, between revealing and concealing, absence and presence, memory and forgetting, which do not lend themselves to a 'unidimensional' interpretation or analysis, and as such embody what this real is. Beautifully filmed, with extremely long takes and very little editing, Tarr's films are like a collection of old, black and white photographs of a forgotten time where 'nothing happens'. People walk, dance, get bored, drink, and muse on the universal order or disorder of the world. The same scenes are repeated from different angles, and action – or rather, the lack of it – co-exists curiously with the monotonous, insistent soundtrack. All this appears to be going on for an eternity. This is the cinema of time and experience, where the images are dense and "time is out of joint."⁷⁸ Optical and sound images, infested by the senses.

The absence of a storyline, non-professional actors, found locations, and long shots uninterrupted by editing, all informed by the reality of post-communist Hungary

⁷⁵ Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*.

⁷⁶ Paola Marrati, *Gilles Deleuze: Cinema and Philosophy*, trans. Hartz Alisa (The Johns Hopkins University Press, English-language Ed, 2008), p. 95.

⁷⁷ Maurice Blanchot, *The Gaze of Orpheus and Other Literary Essays*, trans. Lydia Davis (Station Hill, 1989), p. 213

⁷⁸ Deleuze uses Hamlet's formula "the time is out of joint" to describe the non-linear, disjointed character of non-chronological time in *Kant's Critical Philosophy: The Doctrine of the Faculties*, Trans. H. Tomlinson and B. Habberjam, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984) p. vii, and refers to it throughout his writing, including *Cinema 2*.

might be pointing towards a realism or naturalism similar to that of Italian Neorealism, or John Cassavetes's films. On the other hand, this is a very painstakingly choreographed imaging based on the novels of László Krasnahorkai.⁷⁹ However, it is neither realistic nor an idealistic/fictional representation but "a sum-total of dealings with the world" – which is real – both imagined and very concrete; the "cinema of wonder" (John Orr), and the "cinema of damnation" (Tony MacKibbin).⁸⁰ The vision Tarr is creating alongside and from/with(in) the world is uniquely its own. Brought out by the director, this image-world sees and thinks itself. Not objectively perceived reality, nor a metaphysical beyond, it is rather a strange presence, both actual and virtual, in the process of creating and re-creating itself.⁸¹ It is art and life, where the director does not give us access to a given reality, but creates a cinema with a sense of its own 'radically ambiguous and open' reality where it no longer merely signifies the real but becomes real.⁸² It is a thing in itself, a different world and different reality that is 'immersed' in the stuff of life, and which restores the link with the world by rising above the everyday, the accepted, and the compromised, outside judgment and outside commentary. Art, which does not tell us how to live, but might 'force' us to think by the power of affect; a non-personal, difficult and 'unknown' space of becoming. Here the image does violence to the 'world', and thus thinks. Accordingly, by affecting the viewer, it compels him/ her to think. I call it the cinema of the real, or real cinema, where the affirmative aesthetics keep the 'reading' outside of positive or negative dialectics of oppositions. Following on from this, such provoked 'reading' is construed as a 'personal' journey (experiment) into the experience of this image-world, as a poetic coming together of a philosophical, performative, and inquiring free indirect discourse that would sense and tease out expression-concepts.

⁷⁹ All three films discussed here are the result of Tarr's collaboration with writer, László Krasnahorkai. They are loosely based on Krasnahorkai's novels (a short story in the case of *Damnation*) which have been turned into ideas for the films. I do not use term script in line with Tarr's emphasis on working without film script.

⁸⁰ The expression of "sum total of dealings with the world" is adopted from Alain Resnais, cited by James Monaco, in *Alain Resnais* (Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 17.
John Orr, *The Art of Politics of Film* (Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2000).
Tony McKubbin, 'Cinema of Damnation: Negative Capabilities in Contemporary Central and Eastern European Film'. http://archive.sensesofcinema.com/contents/05/34/cinema_of_damnation.html.

⁸¹ "The psychical state,... 'my present,' ... both a perception of the immediate past and a determination of the immediate future." Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, p. 138.

⁸² For Bazin it was the ambiguous and open reality that was most important for the cinema of Italian Neorealism.

The analytical (and methodological) approach to those films' reality will function on two levels interacting with each other, and operating between creation and perception, thinking and experimenting. As presented by the director, it is a world 'informed' by the post-communist reality of Hungary; a consciously constructed image of 'misery and moral decay', a 'state of amnesia', where the characters seem to be condemned to repeat the past, the life of the tragic or tragicomic, as might be the case; immobility, in a hopeless search for something, or somebody, to liberate them. On the other hand, there is a "collection of sensations", the indescribable 'something', stored in the subconscious of the film, reaching our innermost feelings, bringing up some obscure memories and experiences, "stirring our soul like a revelation that is impossible to interpret in any particular way."⁸³ An experience to which finding a strictly appropriate language is not possible, and which constantly undermines any attempt at constructing a meaningful whole. The state of amnesia and the virtual becoming will intertwine and exchange places, undoing the symbolic as well as the narrative structure.

Béla Tarr is making images, and thinking with images, which are difficult and intense. They are difficult on two levels: emotional – we do not quite know what to feel, or how to react, when put in contact with often morally 'ambiguous' imagery⁸⁴; and formal – constant rain, repetitive 'music', hallucinatory, dark, depressive imagery, affective rhythm. These cannot be easily defined or 'justified' by either normative ethical or aesthetic standards. Neither of Beauty nor the Sublime, the encountered (e)motion does not take us away from a dull and uninteresting life into the realm of a 'dream', nor does it purify in redemptive self-recognition; not a cathartic relief, nor a conventional shock. It sits opposite our transcendental capacity to make sense, in our minds-bodies. It drags out of the most 'deeply concealed' feeling the sense of the unknown, and the force of thinking. Real, nagging, provoking emotion we do not often recognise, it is a 'silent' emotion of creative longing as a potential.⁸⁵ It is the

⁸³ Vlada Petric, 'Tarkovsky's Dream Imagery', in *Film Quarterly*, v. 43 (Winter 1988/99), p. 32.

⁸⁴ A sequence in *Sátántangó* (1994), in which a child tortures and poisons her cat, led to difficulties in getting the film shown in the UK, for example.

⁸⁵ The term 'longing' refers here to the immanent impersonal force rather than nothingness in the transcendental sense (as for instance in Heidegger). For Agamben, this would be an abyss of potentiality - Agamben 'Bartleby, or Contingency', *Potentialities: Collected Essays in Philosophy*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen, (Stanford University Press, California, 1999); for Bergson, it would be time as invention, *Creative Evolution*, trans. Arthur Mitchell, (Cosimo Classics, New York, 2005).

intuitive 'longing' that pulsates behind our own personal story; a certain *durée* or an 'aura' of not so much nostalgic reverie but the virtual, pre-personal, non-subjective space of imagination and intuition. It is a realm of thinking emotion or feeling thought from 'the unthought' outside, which is not the same as a shock of 'the new', but a potential for difference, an affect emerging from material, sonorous and visual singularities. It also acquires a different sense of beauty:⁸⁶ percepts and affects emanating through the image, not necessarily what we normatively (with 'human eye') accept as beautiful. An intensely felt physicality of the crumbling and depressive world stretched in time and forgotten by history, as will become apparent in the last chapter, paradoxically affirms life in the way of the Nietzschean tragic aesthetic. As such, images are no longer recognisable in the ordinary/ habitual sense of perception but form a space of creative encounters; all sorts of encounters: memory and imagination, desire and loss, reality and dreams, all 'entangled' with each other and brought onto the surface. The real, embodied material physicality that is 'presented' (played with, tried...) by the style of contradicting points of view or non-point of view framings (movable frames), is at the same time the realm of the 'imaginary', pre-symbolic, creative space of invention where art and life can embrace each other in non-violent, yet non-compromising, power-less politics of feeling and thinking. It dwells in between all of the connections, passageways, in the maze of interrelations of indexicality and imagination, of reference and art, of materiality and illusion. Ephemeral or elusive in the sense that it escapes interpretation and judgment, positioning, meaning and categorisation, it vibrates in the web of vital cells in-between the objects and the 'I', in the flesh of the world enfolded in time.

Style, on the other hand, enables the film to 'think the unthinkable', and philosophically.⁸⁷ As creative construction, a 'happening' through both chance and necessity, less involved in making sense of the world and more in opening the senses to time as duration, in exploring the possibilities of perception as vision outside the

⁸⁶ For a discussion of the different understanding of the idea of beauty in art see Claire Colebrook, 'Beauty as the Promise of Happiness: Waste and the Present', in O'Sullivan Simon, Zepke Stephen (ed), *Deleuze, Guattari, and the Production of the New* (Continuum, London, New York, 2008)

⁸⁷ The term 'philosophically' is understood here by what might be called 'doing' philosophy rather than utilising philosophical ideas, which resonates with Deleuze's interest in what something can do or how it works, in creating or experimenting. It also resonates with some of the latest discussion of philosophy as non-philosophy, as going away from its tradition as thinking within itself. For example, Laruelle's ideas around non-philosophy, and photographic thinking as non-standard aesthetic.

observing 'I' (eye) and outside the symbolic meaning making 'theoria', it is not a structure but an event. It belongs to an aesthetics of duration – a style, 'controlled' by the rhythm of cerebral and haptic visibility, determined by what Deleuze calls the 'camera consciousness, and the 'art of description'.⁸⁸ Obsessive framing, low light, and stark black and white photography are the means that endow the image with the intensity of the real and the space of encounter; the power of the false. Here, the poetic meandering in a transsubjective dimension that underlies the individual unconscious and impersonal universal outside, puts Truth into crisis, becoming a web of multiple possibilities; encounters-events open to chance and the unknown. In a momentarily suspended gesture of in-between, the real is hesitant, paused. The already and not yet, past and future, coexist in 'time', enfolded in thought, both duration and instant. It is a process of a conglomeration of perception, memory, and sensation, through particular attention outside recognition. Experiential and experimental. Outside structure, symbolism, and appropriation, it is a realm of opening up; an ethics of creation.

Thus, my question again is, how is it possible to embark on such a journey without falling into generalities? How, to borrow Yve Lomax's words, is it possible to engage with "time that brings us the surprise of the unexpected without which life suffocates from banality", without becoming too nebulous or too elusive? How "can we enable chance and the unforeseen to be given a chance?"⁸⁹ In what way can writing become a 'theory' without falling to significations and ideologies of representation? How can it be experimental and creative, creating new pathways and concepts without falling into meaningless idiosyncrasies? How can one write and create within a paradox of nonsense, without imposing the meaning and yet creating new meanings. How does one form thinking as a provocation, a questioning and not a 'critique', resisting the 'master' entrapment of judgment? How does one engage with what is critically without criticizing? How does one resist 'what is' without a negating or antagonistic dialectic, and yet think of new, different modes of being and 'creating'?

⁸⁸ The camera consciousness for Deleuze is defined no longer by movement but by mental connections it is able to enter into. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 22.

Description as a particular stylistic concept of 'filming', as adopted from Robbe-Grillet's concept of the New Novel and from Svetlana Alpers's 'definition' of 17th century Dutch painting, will be developed later in Chapter/ exposure 2, and exposure 3.

⁸⁹ Lomax, 'Thinking Stillness', p. 56.

My writing is 'theory' only in the sense of it being a processual, experimental engagement with the (photographic) image in the hope to (re)discover the real as a matter from which new concepts might arise. This would be a theory where the form becomes the content and the content 'images' itself into the form of alive, dynamic exposures. Thinking philosophically in duration, it seeks neither to convince nor to 'give voice', but to radically open 'what is' by creating a rapture in what might have stagnated into familiar/I icons, to become a 'seer' rather than a viewer, a thinker rather than a moraliser. To create not a figure of metaphor but the real of becoming (not an intellectual but a living/ thinking concept); communication of the image that bypasses knowledge. To think and write photographically in instants and pauses; in exposures and screens. Capturing expression. The 'argument' of this thesis will take only one 'assumption' that will resonate throughout: the movement of life that is also thinking, is everywhere and constant (the only one that does not change), and that it enfolds all life – life, art and thought in time-becoming.⁹⁰

Indeed, in the face of the injunction to speed there must be a 'revolt' that produces an interruption in which thinking can construct a time that is its own. It is in this time that thinking obtains the chance to 'throw the dice' against the obsession with calculating security.⁹¹

What is an image?⁹² Image as depiction and imagination, construction and intuition. An image as art and image of thought, it gives rise to much long-standing disarray. Image-world, its own space-time, vibrant matter of time-space – immanence. How many words are needed to describe the non-representational image or the image that wants to become non-representational, both art and thinking. In so many words-sensations it seems to be-coming to 'defend' itself within the familiar/I structures of discourse, repositioning the majoritarian narrative of representation. Not patriarchal or matriarchal, it desires to prevail, orphaned, parentless and nameless creative space of

⁹⁰ "And the question is still what it was then, how to view scholarship from the vantage point of the artist and art from the vantage point of life." Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, The Birth of Tragedy, trans. Shaun Whiteside (Penguin Classics, 1993).

⁹¹ Lomax, 'Thinking Stillness', p. 57.

⁹² The image here is referred to as that which is 'made visible' (as imaging), which at the same time serves as an underlying 'factor' of thinking about image.

make-believe, an inhuman and imperceptible plane of composition.⁹³ The photographic image – time based – thus is nothing stable or defined, an 'expression' in passing where space coexists with time, and time is unhinged. Unforeseen and 'ungrounded', it will remain, with Deleuzian proposition, its own reality and its own thinking.⁹⁴ Perhaps 'what is an image?' is the wrong question altogether. The answer, or no desire to answer, falls outside the 'desire' to know, and moves into the area of hesitating/ hypothesizing without presupposition: linking and unlinking, folding and unfolding, in the movement of thinking in/ with time unhinged; a non-linear process of creation. It is not within the scope of this project to define the image or position it within pre-existent models (psychoanalytical, structural, philosophical) but to open it to thinking, to set image-thought in motion through the fragmentary encounters with the sensations it produces; to "reweave our fabric of belief and desires."⁹⁵ Not outside of Being or Nothingness but in the meanwhile of an "amazing wait", or a 'trace' of a rollercoaster that went in the 'wrong' direction into the unknown. Perhaps what I'm after, to suggest with Yve Lomax once again, is

something which is better than being or non-being which is being's correlate, its other, its twin. I'm not denying the existence of something. To be or not to be? – that is not the question.⁹⁶

Ours is a civilization of image, and a civilisation of cliché, Deleuze asserts: "We are besieged by photographs that are illustrations, by newspapers that are narrations, by cinema-images, by television images. There are psychic clichés just as there are physical clichés – ready-made perceptions, memories, phantasms."⁹⁷ Throughout history, image has been constructed and deconstructed, 'brought' forward' in the iconical representation of truth, rejected as an exploitative medium of occulacentric

⁹³ To bring out the sense of an anonymous, impersonal process of creating, I will draw on Deleuze and Guattari's proposition of desire as the productive impersonal becoming, rather than the repressed other.

⁹⁴ "By 'ungrounding' we should understand the freedom of the non-mediated ground, the discovery of a ground behind every other ground, the immediate reflection of the formless ..." Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 67. It also relates to the process of merging the ground and figure, content and form.

⁹⁵ Richard Rotry cited in *Filmosophy*, p. 188.

⁹⁶ Lomax, *Writing the Image*, p. 154.

⁹⁷ Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 61.

regime, and disappeared under the simulacrum of denigrated vision.⁹⁸ We now find ourselves in the dialectical circle of oppositions of what is rejected or accepted, as aesthetics or as politics. Is it possible to 'unravel' the conundrum of what something called an image is? Of what is art and what is not? Is it possible to recover image aesthetically and 'authentically' from the avalanche of so many interpretations, appropriations, and judgments (from intellectual critiques to 'popular cultures'), without the negative dualisms, and without falling into what Benjamin called the 'aesthetisation of politics'?⁹⁹ Is it possible to bring together art, life, and thinking in the Nietzschean-Deleuzian sense of affirmative ethico-aesthetics? With the visual arts moving away from 'image-making' towards more conceptual and research based practices – which often comment on, conceptualise or contextualise, rather than create – it is perhaps cinema ("when it is good") that takes on the 'notion' of the image in a very 'real' sense (of belief). It can, as Deleuze hoped, bring us closer to life by intuiting new, unforeseen ways of existence from within this world.¹⁰⁰

In the regime of 'cliché', images are owned, used, narrated, illustrated, de-constructed, put into context or out of context, judged, and rejected either in the name of aesthetics or politics. What would happen if we think of the image not in terms of representation, ideology, or deconstruction, but as a production of affect (a catalyst or expression) and thus a space of transformation?

Deleuze began the process by looking at image/ art in terms of its affective and thinking power.¹⁰¹ If we were capable, as Deleuze suggests, of creating an image, the

⁹⁸ For a discussion on the Western emphasis on the image as privileged, and its critiques, see Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth Century French Thought*, (University of California Press, 1993).

⁹⁹ An idea first coined by Walter Benjamin as being a key ingredient to Fascist regimes. Deleuze also noticed how the vocation of cinema as an "art of the masses", and its emancipatory or revolutionary power, has been used in the service of propaganda and manipulation by the state "in a sort of fascism that united Hitler with Hollywood and Hollywood with Hitler", Deleuze, *Cinema 2*.

¹⁰⁰ "The power of thought gave way to an unthought in thought, to an irrational proper to thought, a point of outside beyond the outside world, but capable of restoring our belief in the world." Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 175.

¹⁰¹ Art, science and philosophy "cast planes over the chaos" (p. 202), each in its own particular way. Philosophy brings forth events (plane of immanence), art erects monuments with its sensations (plane of composition), and science constructs states of affairs with its functions (plane of coordination). All three relate to and correspond with each other. The concepts are created, and art can 'think'. The planes interfere with each other. Art, philosophy and science become indiscernible in bringing forth the "people to come" – "mass-people, world-people, brain-people, chaos-people – non-thinking thought." (p. 218). Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*.

image alone would be enough to restore the 'thing in itself', in its excess of beauty or horror, and it would thus liberate a seeing whose power is still unknown to us.¹⁰² This image, the time-image or thinking image – a 'pure optical and sound situation' – he found in modern cinema, such as Italian Neorealism, French New Wave, the films of Ozu, or American independent cinema of 1970s. It was not so much a social content, or the discovery of an enigmatic, dispersed reality yet to be deciphered (Bazin) that was important for Deleuze in this cinema, particularly in Italian Neorealism. Rather, it was a new kind of image, that surged up in situations in which perception, instead of prolonging itself into action, is absorbed by the object or the situation, no longer representation but direct presentation of time.¹⁰³ Such an image, not confined to the logic of cause-effect narrative, and never 'frozen in time', 'becomes' rather than is with the non-human eye of the camera and the movement of film. Moments of rupture, hesitation, or prolonged duration, replace the sensory-motor action, "uniting image, thought and camera in a single 'automatic subjectivity'."¹⁰⁴ It is now the 'any-space-whatever', linked to other images by the 'irrational cut', which creates the space for 'seeing' and thinking. The characters that are no longer "actors" but seers, witness a world that has become unthinkable because it has become intolerable, as intolerable in its tremendous injustices as in its daily banality. Accordingly, the link between humans and the world is ruptured. When this happens, the special relation between the viewer, the world, and the 'image' opens up, frees vision, and stimulates unpredictable responses. Here, seeing could not be confined to the observing/ judging 'I', but becomes a 'free-indirect-vision'. What was most important now, is that the image and the vision was no longer tied to a transcendental beyond but became immanent this-world-image, an actual and virtual real. Its reality was now contained in an assemblaged machinic body of 'vibrating matter'. Buildings, landscapes, objects, and beings, are no longer 'recognised' but perceived, as it were, for the first time. The familiar fades away, and the objects of the world acquire a new face, revealing an existence previously unnoticed, that calls for their attention and absorbs them. The image and the world becomes one, beginning the process of rendering visible, of

¹⁰² Deleuze, *Cinema 2*.

¹⁰³ Neorealism never makes reality the servant of some pre-existing point of view. It prefers open, 'natural' settings, it asks the actor to be rather than to act, and above all, it requires the narrative to respect the actual qualities and duration of the event.

¹⁰⁴ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 53.

imaging "not yet incorporated to a viewpoint or ordered into line of time."¹⁰⁵ No longer perceived, but consisting of sensations, percept and affects, such an image-world could not be 'interpreted' through known authoritative (molar) discourses. As such, as Marrati stated, it opened the path for the future cinema, giving art the task of *believing* and *producing* belief in this world.¹⁰⁶ Instead of old hopes for a better world still to come, or for another world beyond this one, we need a belief that addresses itself to this world, the only one we have, and where the potentiality of what is yet to come lies. With no more future to justify the present, Deleuze emphasises, the necessity of believing is critical; of a belief more difficult than the old one – without a horizon of redemption, purely immanent, with no other object than the possibility of creating new forms of life, of re-establishing the conviction that we can inhabit the world, which is not the same as owning the world.¹⁰⁷ Thus, by moving away from the dualistic form of transcendence (the belief in some other world to come, be it the American new civilisation or the Soviet socialist dream of the proletariat), we (and the cinema), Deleuze suggests, can find immanent powers of life, which hold hope and pose the challenge of creating new links between humans and *this* world.¹⁰⁸ As Deleuze writes:

[It] is possible that the problem now concerns the one who believes in the world, and not event in the existence of the world but in its possibilities of movements and intensities, so as once again to give birth to new modes of existence, closer to animals and rocks. It may be that believing in this world, in this life, becomes our most difficult task.¹⁰⁹

The real of this cinema 'reveals itself' not as representation of reality or realism but as a style of expression, a style that is also a belief that was so uniquely important to such different filmmakers as Rossellini, De Sica, Fellini, and Antonioni. Neither a personal nor cultural vision, but an expression of matter, this was not the question of

¹⁰⁵ Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze*, p. 53.

¹⁰⁶ Marrati, *Gilles Deleuze*, p. 85. Belief, Deleuze writes, is no longer addressed to a different or transformed world: "Whether we are Christians or atheists, in our universal schizophrenia, *we need reason to believe in this world*." It is a transformation of belief: to replace the model of knowledge with belief. But belief replaces knowledge only when it becomes "belief in this world as it is." Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 166.

¹⁰⁷ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 108.

¹⁰⁸ Marrati, *Gilles Deleuze*, p. 89.

¹⁰⁹ Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 74-75.

formalism but a way of restoring day-to-day events in their material physicality as the way of getting back to the world.¹¹⁰ By taking away the familiarity of perception and affection, they imagined new worlds; the unknown virtual potentiality not possible to conceive from the a priori of judgment. This, however, required a style in order to bring the unfamiliar and this belief to the surface. Thus, here aesthetics take on a different face – that of the 'bringer'/ creator, not the bearer of 'beauty'.¹¹¹ For Deleuze, art is not a way of representing experiences and memories that we might 'recognise'; it does not show us what the world is, but 'imagines' new worlds. What is at stake in art, he asserts, is never "reproducing the visible but rendering visible"¹¹² By moving away from both the abstract universal and the 'flesh of the world', the experience is embedded in the time-space which 'forces' us to think.¹¹³ What is experienced on the other hand, Deleuze writes, is not an object of recognition but "a fundamental encounter" that "can be grasped in a range of affective tones."¹¹⁴ This kind of aesthetic requires a different type of politics; what I will explore later as powerless politics and "passive vitalism"; no longer aesthetics versus politics, but aesthetico-ethical experimentation.¹¹⁵ Here morality will be replaced by ethics (Spinoza), and the resentment of judgment by *Amor fati* (Nietzsche). Following on from this, creating/ thinking/ 'interpreting' is not about re-producing a world we already have but creating a new one: an intensive and physical image-world constructed out of encounters and assemblages of bodies, buildings, rocks, winds and moods; an indexical convergence without referentiality of representation/ copy, a non-signifying sensation of photographic sign.

¹¹⁰ For it allows us to think a type of relation but not any concluded set of relations. With expression, we no longer imagine a world of substance – that which remains the same. "There is no substance that *then* expresses itself in different styles." Rather, there are stylistic variations or expressions that are the domain of potentiality, where substance unfolds itself infinitely in an open series of productive relations. The world is not an object to be known, observed, or represented, but a plane of powers expressing different potentials of life. Claire Colebrook, 'Expression', in Parr (ed.) *Deleuze Dictionary*, p. 94. Expression is in the world.

¹¹¹ Marrati, *Gilles Deleuze*, p. 107.

¹¹² As already quoted on p. 1, Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 39.

¹¹³ For Deleuze and Guattari, phenomenology's relation to art is still about transcendent ideals like Humanity and the Beautiful, which in the end only recreates doxa, which is incapable of forming concepts that can handle non-human percepts and affects beyond cliché. Alluding to Merleau-Ponty, he asserts that "the flesh is too tender" and too catholic. Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 149-50, 178-9.

¹¹⁴ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 139.

¹¹⁵ As Claire Colebrook writes, Deleuze differs from vitalism, historicism, or philosophies of life, for he is always insistent that there are certain events of life – such as the work of art – which transform and re-create the very potentiality of life. Colebrook, *Deleuze for Perplexed* (Continuum, London and New York, 2006), p. 108

According to Deleuze, if movies think, such a power of thought expresses itself through the very images themselves: it depends neither on the content of the narrative nor on an exterior structure that cinema would then translate. This process is a conglomeration of perception, memory, and sensation. This is its own world and its own mind, its own imagination, different from human ways of thinking and perceiving; a film-mind.¹¹⁶ As Daniel Frampton has pointed out, "the filmmind is not an 'external' force, nor is it a mystical being or invisible other, it is 'in' the film itself, it is the film that is steering its own (dis)course."¹¹⁷ Film is a 'vision', a different thinking and perceiving, not through its ideologies but through a new (non-human) expression. Thus, as Frampton proposes, its 'challenge' moves from the politics of establishing a particular historical or social order, to the experiential poetics of the event, where thinking and creating happen simultaneously, opening new and unforeseeable encounters. This means, rather than thinking in terms of events, making thinking its own event by embracing the rich chaos of life with the uniqueness and potential of each moment.¹¹⁸ Furthermore, as Claire Colebrook has suggested, the time-image, which expresses the force of cinema's potential, might be so rare as to be only thinkable in its pure form, but never fully actualisable.¹¹⁹ Thus, thinking with film-mind, with the photographic, imaging will replace the interpretative discourse and become an intuitive, affective filmsophical event.¹²⁰

What can film do? "What is the good of film experience?", Rodowick asks through Kracauer.¹²¹ What does it mean to bring ethics and cinema together as a philosophical problem? Kracauer does not want to know if a particular film or filmmaker is "ethical", nor is the question the basis for making moral judgments of artworks and their makers. He asks, rather, how do we evaluate our experience of the movies; meaning, in what ways do the movies offer themselves as a medium for an

¹¹⁶ Many, particularly in earlier writings on film, have referred to film as its own 'image' and its own mind.

¹¹⁷ Frampton, *Filmosophy*, p. 7.

¹¹⁸ Stiff Stagoll, 'Event' in Parr (ed.), *The Deleuze Dictionary*, p. 88.

¹¹⁹ Claire Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze*, p. 47.

¹²⁰ Frampton, *Filmosophy*, p. 184.

¹²¹ Rodowick, 'The World, Time', in *Afterimages of Gilles Deleuze's Film Philosophy*

interrogation of ourselves, of our relationship to the world, and to other beings?¹²²
Rodowick writes,

As in philosophy, the question of life (how do I live?) in cinema demands a reflexive examination of self, in its possibility of knowing itself and others and in its openness to change or not. [...] In this way, an ethics is distinct from the usual sense of morality. Morals refer ordinarily to a transcendental system of values to which we conform, or against which we are found lacking. An ethics is an immanent set of reasoned choices. In ethical expression, we evaluate our current mode of existence, seeking to expand, change, or abandon it in the effort to achieve another way of living.¹²³

The ethical question is also inseparable from an aesthetical one. The 'experience' of life (*philosopein*) is, simultaneously, expression and existential choice – "the medium and idiom of a life, the mode of existence and its style."¹²⁴ The film style, its image, can thus be seen as a link to perceiving and thinking anew (a 'new kind of thinking'), and here, in the poetical transformation, may lie the key to change. In Deleuze's Nietzschean and Bergsonian perspectives on cinema, the concepts of movement and time are related as expression of belief in the world and its powers of transformation.¹²⁵

Tarr is making images that are 'unique' in their ability to 'shock' us out of familiarity, into a state of thinking where the image is no longer 'recognisable'. His rainy image of Hungary is stored in long takes, deep focus photography, "any-spaces-whatever", characters' faces, 'architextures' of settings, and sound.¹²⁶ The material, earthy physicality, intertwined with the careful, precise construction of 'elements', that are a

¹²² Ibid., p. 97.

¹²³ Rodowick, 'The World Time' p. 97-8.

As Rodowick emphasises, for Deleuze aesthetics 'means' the production of sensitivity in two irreducible domains: transcendental and empirical.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Rodowick, 'The World Time', p. 98.

¹²⁶ The expression 'architexture' was discovered in Giuliana Bruno's *Atlas of Emotion* after having coined it myself.

result of director's vision, the way he 'sees' the world,¹²⁷ and with the eye of the camera, create a set of multiple machinic assemblages; moments lasting for minutes, repeated from different points of view scenes, and monotonous, insistent image-sounds. Tarr's films think with long takes, wandering movements and 'stills', black and white and in-between. A style that produces affect and thinking through creation; an aesthetics of duration – a style, 'controlled' by the rhythm of cerebral and haptic visibility – works through imaging that enables the actors to live, the landscape to 'breathe', and the light to 'persevere', rendering the film with a cosmological significance and the viewer with a space of affect and thought. Details of everyday, mundane chores, enveloped in the process of description and experimentation, recording and imagination, refuse to lend themselves to any moralistic or theological judgments. In the inevitable 'life' of the process, and of the new, of becoming, of time, of the outside, of becoming lost, of uncertainty and paradox, and of (im)possible time as everything.

... a cinema of the body, which puts all the weight of the past into the body, and cinema of the brain, which reveals the creativity of the world, its colours aroused by a new space-time, its powers multiplied.¹²⁸

The affirmative, tragic aesthetic of Tarr's Nietzschean project weaves the story of an inhuman life asserted through 'amnesiac' virtual becoming. Incredibly intense, 'earthy', real and felt, it is the tangible experience of duration, the sense of timeless (en)during, as if the process of imaging was a result of an 'artistic' wrestling with the power of a vital, formless, and chaotic force, an unknown nomadic becoming. This is the language of affect, an affective assemblage of visual 'utterable' tending towards indiscernibility; an expression neither subjective nor objective, stored in images' cells and brought to the surface. Tarr's images do not lend themselves to 'interpretations', as they invite instead to be lived with, in, or through, which is different from that which

¹²⁷ Tarr talks about having the images in his mind before filming as well as about the way he (and the films' crew) 'sees' the world. Above all, referring to the process of filming in plural (we) it is a collaborative event rather than an 'author's' vision.

¹²⁸ Deleuze distinguishes between the two types of image making: cinema of the body, which he sees for instance in Chantal Ackerman's *Jean Dielman* (1975), and cinema of the brain as seen in Resnais' work. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*. Tarr's cinema is thought of as both cinema of the body and cinema of the brain.

is proposed by 'spectator theory'.¹²⁹ Uncertain, affective and real; this is where life and thinking come together with art: "a pure contemplation without knowledge."¹³⁰ By means of these long/still hypnotic images, we can in a sense see what we feel. No longer a question of recognition, of 'what is', but of a sensory becoming with 'what is'.¹³¹ It is a time-space in-between: cognition and emotion, the thought and reality, the frame and the outside, viewing and creating: "that unforeseeable nothing which is everything in a work of art."¹³²

This nothing that takes time, and "time is invention or it is nothing at all."¹³³

The aim of this thesis is not to illustrate Deleuze's ideas with Tarr's images, nor to read Tarr's cinema through Deleuze as such, but to think with images philosophically, in the hope to open up the area of theory to the 'powers of the false'. On the one hand, the project seeks to creatively re-think Deleuzian concepts while thinking 'about' still and moving images, photography and cinema, in relation to the real as affect and thought. On the other, to 'continue' films' images by opening their thinking further through various encounters between film, philosophy, and my own (e)motion towards unexpected and unforeseen outcomes. A number of concepts related to immanence and becoming will enable me to set the thought (of) the real in motion, not only to un-ground the image from its politics of subject and object, form and content, inside and outside, but to 'intensify' its virtual power (of the false). They will be weaved in a kind of labyrinthine fashion into a tapestry of fragmentary encounters created alongside Tarr's imagery, or 'played with' (a Nietzschean proposition) as an aesthetico-ethical experiment. 'Positioning' around, or rather, in the middle of the time-image, and inseparable from it, the concepts of life, art, thinking and affect will (in)form this uncertain film-philosophy project. It is not my intention to theorise or 'explain' concepts, but whose sense I hope to evoke creatively through expression, where signs as events will flow from the real, not signification, not real as system, but the powers of image-world.

¹²⁹ I'm thinking here about the films theoretical 'interpretations' based either on identification with the image or on the critical distanciation.

¹³⁰ Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 213.

¹³¹ The suggestion of becoming with (rather than something) is here a further opening into the potentiality of resistance as proposed by Deleuze; by not reacting against but resisting within.

¹³² Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, p. 370.

¹³³ Ibid.

Stanley Cavell points out in *The World Viewed: Reflections on the Ontology of Film*, that cinematic experience could be said to be comprised of nothing but remembered and misremembered moments.¹³⁴ We are always in the process of constructing the image projected before us, linking it to other images, whether from the history of film or from the films we replay endlessly in the forms of memories and dreams.¹³⁵ It is this strange created memory of something we have not seen before that is possible in cinema, an encounter-event or event of an encounter. It is a space of thinking with (e)motion – mind and body. In linguistic, structural, psychoanalytic and cultural frameworks (reception theory), film theory has failed to break away from ideological/meaning based treatment of film as a representative mode of some external reality. Film practice and theory predominantly 'oscillate' within the polarising forces of form versus content, aesthetics versus politics, outside versus inside; where the film is regarded as an object, framed and projected for the subject's/ viewer's reception and interpretation. As Vivian Sobchack points out, through many processes of 'coding' and 'de-coding', film and its viewing became enclosed in the metaphors of the frame – formalism, the window, realism, and the mirror – in contemporary critical theory, where the binary 'poetics' of the relevant concepts of perception, expression and representation were firmly established.¹³⁶ Cinema, with its ideological implications, has been seen either as a process of registration or as a language. As a result, political cinema distinguished itself from art (as 'purely' aesthetic) cinema, relinquishing the importance of aesthetics for reflexive and anti-illusionistic strategies in the form of Brechtian critical distancing. Similarly, the spectator's engagement with film has been seen either as cognitive participation or corporeal reception, holding firmly the distinction between mind and body.

On the other hand, the advent of cinema, as Claire Colebrook writes, might give us a form of transversal becoming: not a becoming that is grounded in a being and which simply unfolds itself through time, but a becoming that changes with each new

¹³⁴ Stanley Cavell, *The World Viewed. Reflections on the Ontology of Film*, Harvard University Press Cambridge, 1995

¹³⁵ Marrati, *Gilles Deleuze*, p. 122.

¹³⁶ Vivian Sobchack, *The Address of the Eye: A Phenomenology of Film Experience* (Princeton University Press, 1992).

encounter.¹³⁷ Thus, we can transform our whole way of becoming through the encounter with what we are not; in this case the camera, and its non-human perception. This can happen, however, only if we encounter the cinema not as something we already know but as something that challenges us. It is this challenge of the 'old' way of perceiving and thinking, the creation or the new, that is the most potent and 'inspirational' aspect of both Deleuze's *Cinema* books, and his philosophy itself. With cinema at its greatest moments, the "turn of experience" is capable of undoing that which our habits, needs, and laziness have done, in order to make visible what the human eye is not made to see. "Only with cinema can we think of a mode of 'seeing' that is not attached to human eye."¹³⁸ The "inhuman" task of philosophy and cinema, as of every art and every science, always consists in the fact of looking elsewhere than to that which is frozen in our habits of perception, sensation, and thought.¹³⁹

Cinema sees, not a world of things, not even a distinct world, but the movement of imagining from which any perceived world is possible.¹⁴⁰

If we think of film as an assemblage, as Deleuze does, as a 'collection of images' or a "processual state of immanence", then we can discover a different mindset of the aesthetics of film through a wider range of vocabularies outside of signification, semiotic, or psychoanalytical explanations.¹⁴¹ This can happen not only within the ontology of film but in recognising the intricate relationships between the viewer, the cinema, and the world, as well as their context. As Paul Patton suggests, the possibility of cinema lies, for Deleuze, in the shift from the metaphor to the "reflective judgment"; where "nothing is given from the standpoint of the active faculties"; where there is no pre-existent context but rather "free and indeterminate accord" between all the faculties.¹⁴² What it means, Gregory Flaxman writes, is the end of divine or structural mediation; learning to think without Law, without Father, to develop an absolute ethics that begins where symbolic-moral mediation leaves off and an

¹³⁷ Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze*, p. 47.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p.29

¹³⁹ Marrati, *Gilles Deleuze*, p. 41.

¹⁴⁰ Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze*, p. 51.

¹⁴¹ Gregory Flaxman, 'Introduction', *The Brain Is the Screen*, p. 47.

¹⁴² Paul Patton, *Deleuze: A Critical Reader* (Blackwell Publishers, 1996), p. 49. For Deleuze, the complex relationships between 'faculties' of science, art and philosophy might be apparent in cinema.

aesthetic experience of non-relation begins"¹⁴³. Thus the power of cinema lies in the capacity to exile us from familiar conceptual terrain by extracting the dynamic nature of life always in the "process" of creating, thinking, like the process we undertake each time we return to the cinema. Deleuze's aesthetic theory is not a theory of reception, an analysis of the spectator's judgments, but a theory of aesthetics written from the point of view of creation. Like the 'truth', which is not something out there to be discovered or found, "but something that must be created [...] as a *processus in infinitum*", philosophy for Deleuze is the process of constructing, creating, and inventing concepts.¹⁴⁴ Thus, cinema allows us to engage with and to re-think the concepts of life, art and thinking, in both aesthetic and ethical terms.¹⁴⁵ The time-image, distinguished from cliché, is both art and life that demands a great 'thinking'/creative effort from art as well as from life. In this sense, it will be possible to move from the fixity of meaning towards a movement of possibilities, thus undoing the stability of accepted structures, not through ideological underpinnings or deconstruction, but through 'affective rapture'. Theory, accordingly, must be thought of as a creative 'experiment' (Brian Massumi), a process or activity parallel to the work rather than attempting to explain or interpret it. Intuition: intellect and imagination, as Massumi remarks: "It is the edge of the virtual, where it leaks into the actual, that counts. For that seeping edge is where potential, actually, is found."¹⁴⁶

Béla Tarr's films are modernist and the director frames his images in a very distinctive way. It is not a question of formalism as it is already known however, but an experiment with form; a style, which is more than an exercise in 'style'. It is the way for the image to stay outside of clichéd and accepted ways of perceiving and thinking. It is 'there' to make the image strange, unfamiliar, and difficult; to allow for new possibilities. Despite the accusation of elitist or modernist choices of films he uses in the *Cinema* books, Deleuze's insistence on the real thinking and experimenting image is vital to thinking about the image, and his strong rejection of judgment in a sense

¹⁴³ Gregory Flaxman, 'Introduction', *The Brain Is the Screen*, p. 47.

¹⁴⁴ Daniel Frampton, *Filmosophy*, p. 18.

¹⁴⁵ As Colebrook notes discussing Deleuze's film philosophy project which takes cinema outside the human subject perception, "confronting cinema will open us up to a new philosophy, and it will do so not because we apply philosophy to films, but because we allow the creation of films to transform philosophy." Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze*, p. 29.

¹⁴⁶ Brian Massumi, 'The Autonomy of Affect', in *Deleuze: A Critical Reader*, ed. Paul Patton (Oxford, Blackwell, 1996), p. 236.

overthrows the arguments concerning the oppositions of elitist or populist. In order not to be assimilated into the 'cliché', the image has to be intense and difficult. It means being impossible to approach with the same, familiar, everyday logic of habitual response. The image, which is nagging, intrusive, visceral, disabling, ineffable, is enfolded in the time-space of 'untimely meditation'. Here, the lived experience, a sensation embodied in space, is 'captured' by a style that is not communication but expression, and expression outside of the oppositional dichotomy of thinking, both objective and subjective; a 'shared' de-subjectified affect. The difficult and unfamiliar imagery creates time-space of events and encounters, productive interactions between all kinds of forces; a chance of /for change; blocks of becoming. Becomings, desires come together by the power of nomadic thinking, creating the image that cannot be hijacked – or not so quickly – from itself, in order to serve the aims of the regime of cliché.¹⁴⁷

Tarr's unique imagery, complex and intensely difficult, fleeting from both intellect and sensation as good sense and common sense, resonate with Deleuze's thought of radical immanence, where the 'singular' difference rather than a chain of contradictions 'prevails', and where concepts are not defined within the doxa of binary thinking but created from "without", in the middle. Transcendental empiricism, "disjunctive synthesis," "double becoming" are the expressions that expose the paradoxical nature of Deleuzian philosophical concepts. Tarr creates a world perversely, so to speak, in-between, out of entropy, pain, endurance and excruciating beauty, resisting both judgment and nostalgia for the lost time. The dense, earthy materiality of his visionary world, teasingly balancing on the verge of real and imaginary, provokes a disorientating response, both haptic/visceral and impersonal/asubjective, in the form of hallucinatory becoming with the image. For Deleuze cinema is a living brain that works by "irrational connections," a machinic assemblage which is capable of thinking and intuiting new modes of life. It is also a cinema of the body, as well as a cinema of the brain, being in becoming where the image-world thinks with the brain as well as with the body, and feels with the body as

¹⁴⁷ This will be an approach from the position of a minoritarian work, not in terms of cultural 'identity' or of national cinema, but in terms of new ways of thinking and perceiving as thought proposed by Deleuze in his conception of nomadic thinking. Tarr's images can be thought of as 'minor'; not in a geographic or cultural way, but in an aesthetic and ethical sense.

well as with the brain.¹⁴⁸ Both are aspects of the time-image where the sensory motor link of either/or between the world and the image is severed and ‘replaced’ with the logic of irrational interval, of both/ and. Here, time as a plane of immanence in which everything happens, affirms all. At the same time there is no longer association of the whole but non-commensurable relations and relinkages which put thought into contact with the unthought outside. A brain is now only an interval, a void between stimulus and response,¹⁴⁹ a hallucinatory space of undecidability (of the body), between perception and action. As Deleuze tells us, “we no longer believe in a whole as interiority of thought, even an open one; we believe in a force from the outside which hollows itself out, grabs us and attracts the inside.”¹⁵⁰ Throughout *Cinema 2* we encounter moments of indiscernibility – of actual and virtual, real and imaginary, subjective and objective, inside and outside, in the ‘structure’ of crystalline narrative and irrational cut. The outside of judgment - “any-space-together” and interstice - replaces the dialectics of transcendent value. “We no longer believe in an association of images – even crossing voids; we believe in breaks which take on an absolute value and subordinate all association.”¹⁵¹ The body-brain-thought structure of affect-thinking fashions belief in this world through contact with the virtual outside. Tarr’s ungraspable and unspeakable imagery, unfamiliar and often problematic – on the edge and in-between – still and moving, revealing and concealing, absence and presence, memory and forgetting, is a polyphonic composition of material, detailed reality and the outside, constructed through the style of waiting which shatters the commonsensical ability to comprehend, and ‘thinks’ the impossible. The long enduring shot where nothing happens, where the imperceptible expression dwells in the image and pierces forth, puts truth into crisis. Here, the diagnosis and affirmation come together in the persistent sensing of the irresistible power of life as creating. The virtual power breaks through the cracks in the peeling walls, derelict buildings, and empty spaces. Non-personal (a) life lingers in the exhaustion of bodies and in devastated, barren landscapes. The ‘textured’ rhythm of delirious dance ‘envisage’ people to come and communities other than (hu)man. The tactile, material quality of light, shapes, and the physical intensity of wasteland-scapes, de-frame the image into

¹⁴⁸ There is no less of the concrete and abstract on the one side than on the other: there is as much feeling or intensity, passion, in a cinema of the brain as in a cinema of the body. There is as much thought in the body as there is shock and violence in the brain. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, op.cit., pp. 198-196.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p.203

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 204.

¹⁵¹ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, op.cit., p. 204

strangely clairvoyant vision. Everyday domestic chores - insistent, present and enduring, intuit both the (un)known and (un)homely. The accumulation of materiality, unremarkable quotidian moments, and black and white textures wrest a life more (or less) than human, more (or less) than organic, irreducible to either realism or representation. They reposition photographic 'indexity' from its 'status' as a copy to the creative coexistence of the image and the world, not as a double of the imaginary, but as multilayered facets of impossible coexistences – multiple becomings. From material to virtual and back, the nonhuman becoming is the overcoming of human through embracing the human (condition) where dogs, walls, and weather also have their stories, and where stupidity, baseness and malevolence are part of life. The 'problem' is not defined in terms of goals and means but is "dispersed in a 'plurality of ways of being present in the world', of belonging to sets, all incompatible and yet coexistent".¹⁵² An expression of immanence as at once finite and infinite material-virtual plane on which everything happens.

The tensions within Deleuze's thought 'formulated' around paradoxes and oppositions are (non)resolved in the one-multiple sense of imperceptible becoming. Tarr's tragic aesthetics wrest the invisible forces and intuit new worlds. In order to enable Tarr-Deleuze encounter, to be faithful to both modes of expression, the two contradictory readings of Deleuze's philosophy – that 'of the body' and that 'of the brain' – have to be maintained throughout the thesis through the 'understanding' that the seeming contradictions in Deleuze's philosophy are not contradictory as such.¹⁵³ Not resolving Deleuzian paradoxes and embracing Tarr's hallucinatory vision demands embracing both. The strategy of maintaining the contradictory readings stems from the way Tarr images (with) the world, where close to earth, material physicality creates a unique vision, a kind of hallucinatory 'sensing' demanding a certain attention to do with delay and uncertainty. Here the non-thinking of the mind and undecidability of the body come together in a mind-body-thinking - thinking

¹⁵² Cinema 2, p. 196

¹⁵³ Deleuze's (and Deleuze's with Guattari) philosophy of life, revolving around oppositions and paradoxes, provoked two contradictory readings within the Deleuzian theoretical community; a split between those who focus on corporeal/ organic vitality (John Protevi, Laura Marks, Steven Shaviro), and those who choose to engage with incorporeal/ virtual aspect of life (Dorothea Olkowski, Patricia Pisters, or James Williams). Despite the seeming contradiction within Deleuze's work itself, the acceptance of the contradictions might be misleading from the point of view of his philosophy of radical immanence.

through the gap - where neither the apriori systems nor decisive conclusions are possible; a process of wo(a)ndering desire. Thus, the nature and aim of the project is not to resolve, define or arrive at final conclusion but to bring oppositions into (irrational) contact in the hope that new concepts can be created and new problems opened be up. Here haptic and cerebral, mind and body, outside and inside, being and becoming, (non)communicate on the plane of intensity-composition through “irrational connections”. To write with Tarr’s imagery is a desire to stay outside binaries of either/or and to be ‘faithful’ to the Deleuzian spirit of difference through singular encounters. Thus, creative questioning - methodology of intuitive thinking with the image, philosophical, performative, and inquiring - come together as free-indirect-discourse that would sense and tease out expression-concept.

There is something peculiar to the medium of film (and photography), a very special relation to the world, its ability to 'capture' expression-matter photographically, while simultaneously transcending everyday materiality, to project both the presence and absence, as it were, of materiality. Capturing expression dismisses representation, identity, definition, and the thing. It restores the link with the world through the immanent power of existence, through the real that is virtual (mental, outside) and actual (creating its own reality). It restores belief in this world as it is through mental construction – creating new 'worlds'.¹⁵⁴ Thus, whatever – stillness or space, is traditionally opposed to time, in my analysis will leave the opposition of stillness (fixidity) and movement (the flow of time). Through thinking with Bergson's duration and Deleuzian/Spinozan univocity, it will proceed with this assumption that time is all, and therefore stillness and space can be perceived as immanent movement and change. Re-thinking stillness and movement through both the time-image and still photography, not as opposed but intertwined affectively and conceptually, within the time of in-between. Thus, fixity and flow, past and present, are interchangeable concepts creating movement and change.

As previously stated, my thesis will not be concerned with specific film or photographic theories but will look at the image from the perspective of relations and

¹⁵⁴ The relation to the world as photographic indexicality seems too complex and contingent to assume it the role of mimetic representation. It's 'reality' lies in-between multiple encounters between the world, the non-human camera, the photographer, and the viewer, in the never-ending process of differentiation rather than reproduction or repetition of the same.

assemblages; a network of becomings and possibilities. What is seen? Visible and invisible. The surface. Concealing and revealing. The screen as photograph. Materiality, physicality, embodiment. Expression outside expressionism, like form outside formalism, movable frames of theoretical discourse. The work consists of three levels running parallel and interacting with each other. One will attempt to discuss the (photographic) image in relation to theoretical findings and image aesthetics. Another will take up the challenge offered by Deleuze to create new links and images as conscious and necessary processes of thinking, where interpreting takes the shape of creative and reflective judgments of 'film thinking'; "a more *poetic* entry to the intelligence of films."¹⁵⁵ The third will enact a Tarr-Deleuze filmic, photographic encounter, from film to still photography and back. The main 'objective' of my research is to think the concept of the (photographic) image as art, and as an image of thought, as image of real or image as real or real as image. What I aim for is to reclaim the image from the 'vicious circle' of the aesthetical, as well as political two-dimensional oppositionistic thinking, and propose another that is neither and both; neither an investigation into nor against representation or realism. Further inspired by Deleuze's conception of aesthetics as a "condition of real experience", the thesis will take the form of 'individual' encounters with time-space, of image-ing understood as transformation in the sense of both creating and viewing.

... an encounter, becoming, or 'nuptials' that fractures the limits of a well-defined 'self' and identity as it invents, zigzags, passes or happens *between* the two.¹⁵⁶

The writing will 'vibrate' on various levels: as a project outside of dominant film/photography theoretical concerns, as 'performative' writing of experimental constructing, and as a means of finding a way of moving between categories and definitions, in a process of thinking with the image. As a rhizomatic mode of thoughts/images (non)related to each other in an independent construction that does not develop in terms of a certain point of illumination or external goal. As a work in process, it will engage with the philosophical and aesthetical processes in the following manner: with time and perception (history and memory) as concepts

¹⁵⁵ Frampton, *Filmosophy*, p. 8.

¹⁵⁶ Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues II*, p. 6-7.

encompassing movement, narrative and becoming, in Chapter/exposure 2; with a paradoxical nature of the photographic in terms of space (any-space-whatever), materiality and the outside, in Chapter/exposure 3; with the concepts of sound in relation to rhythm, refrain and resonance as territorializing and deterritorializing cosmic nomadic forces, in Chapter/exposure 4, and with aesthetics as a mode of life in Chapter/exposure 5.

Not adopting any specific philosophical or theoretical 'stance', the project will engage the arguments critically, as and when is necessary. By adopting the methodology of fragmentary framings and labyrinthine processes, it will proceed without a particular goal or end, in the chain of concrete expressions/ encounters offered by attention and chance. By interweaving philosophical writings from different texts, the 'text' of the films, and my own reflections, the work intends to embark on a poetical journey of cinematic experience as affective and thinking. By bringing the form and matter together, that a more poetic writing might be able to be produced, rather than by attempting to reproduce the experience of the real. Wondering through, the image is traversing amongst its elements; touching, sensing, seeing, and imagining, thus creating the rhizomatic cartography of the spider's web. The assemblage of 'connections' and impossibilities, weaving and severing, advancing, and regressing; in other words living with and through the image. Setting out on a journey without an end or particular goal; a creative endeavour; an experience.

Experience which is never limited, and it is never complete; [...] an immense sensibility, a kind of huge spider-web of the finest silken threads suspended in the chamber of consciousness, and catching every air-borne particle in its tissue.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ Henry James, *The Art of Fiction*, (BiblioBazaar, LLC, 2010), p. 69.

exposure 2:

The Moving Image: Tarr's Cinema and Deleuze's Time-Image. The Quest(ion) of W(a)onderous Narrative.

[C]inema is not a representation; it is an event of intuition which goes beyond the actually given to the Idea of the image. Cinema sees, not a world of things, not even a distinct world, but the movement of imagining from which any perceived world is possible. But it only achieves this in the time-image.

Claire Colebrook¹⁵⁸

The photographic exists somewhere in-between; it is a state of 'in-between-ness.'

Raymond Bellour¹⁵⁹

For Béla Tarr, reality and cinema is the combination of faiths, beliefs, interests and chance, polyphonic compositions of nature, landscape, faces, and light, in a process of creating. For Deleuze these "molecular productions of variations and selection of variants" are the indispensable condition of every creation that is real.¹⁶⁰ The sombre image of Hungary (this world) that sets and defines the mood and style of Tarr's films is not a realistic representation of the world but an event, a situation 'locked' in a wa(o)ndering movement in which anything or nothing can happen. The films refuse to tell a story, but their aesthetics move beyond that of social realism into the process of imaging from which any world is possible. Each is an event comprised of many

¹⁵⁸ Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze*, p. 53.

¹⁵⁹ Raymond Bellour, 'Concerning 'the Photographic'', in Karen Beckman and Jean Ma (eds), *Still Moving. Between Cinema and Photography*, (Duke University Press, Durham and London, 2008), p. 253.

¹⁶⁰ See Daniel W. Smith, Introduction, Gilles Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1997, p. xxiv. The molar is the level of the organised, where we might find the state, for example, whereas the molecular is the realm of desires. It is not a distinction of scale; it is qualitative rather than quantitative, and the question of multiplicity.

events, at times repeated, at times imperceptible, material, and indescribable, folding and unfolding according to their own rhythms of life (and art). The movement, rhythm, and texture of the films – intensely felt materiality – have the potential to restore the link between ourselves and the world by reaching the deepest levels of sense and thought.

Leaving aside the theoretical debates about cinema and realism, and drawing on Deleuze's proposition of time-image instead, this chapter will engage with the imagery of films in terms of the real (rather than realistic) and the creative or 'the false' (rather than fictional).¹⁶¹ A certain sense of 'realism' (with this world), or what Deleuze calls an "image-world", surfacing as photographic intensity, will come to view in the discussion of what I called the *amnesiac* reality – an immanent real of creation. This will not mean the depiction of an already existing, nor transcendental other reality, but a new image in the movement of becoming in-between memory and forgetting, actual and virtual, past and future. This will be 'written' in relation to a particular function of time (becoming) and the aberrant movement of what I will call a 'wa(o)nderous narrative'.

The conception of 'open reality' will be considered in relation to Bazin's vision of a 'lacunary real' (mimetically grasped by film) and Deleuze's proposition of the real as both actual and virtual. It will develop both as a sense of materiality/ physicality and of memory with regard to the notion of perception. It will consider materiality of the films as a sensation of becoming with the world¹⁶² and memory as the concept of 'pure past' (Bergson, Proust). It will also refer to 'amnesiac reality' as forgetting that would be a creative construction of the new rather than repetition of the old.¹⁶³ Consequently, the notion of immanence (Deleuze) and the idea of chance-necessity (Nietzsche) will explicate the sense of narrative and time in the construction of the moving image.

¹⁶¹ As mentioned earlier, the real for Deleuze is both actual and virtual in their movement of becoming something else, and 'the false', as it will be discussed later on, is the concept he developed in relation to artistic creation which, by constructing 'new worlds', undermines the philosophical transcendence of Truth, putting it into crisis.

¹⁶² As an affective transformation different from phenomenological reciprocal experience, and from nostalgic returning to the past.

¹⁶³ The two levels (amnesia resulting in entropy) and the director's 'vision' are conflicting and interacting, constructing order (new) out of 'forgotten' strata.

Rather than directing the event outwards towards another event moving into the future, as Stephen Marchant suggests, the director puts a simple, single event into repetition, ensuring that it is grasped in the concrete physicality of its occurrence rather than as a step in a chain of consequences.¹⁶⁴ Multiple points of view, what could be called encounter-events within the filmic reality, interact with each other in the false 'continuity' of the fragmented open whole. The world seems examined, approached and tried indecisively, as if aimlessly, displayed by the disoriented movement of the camera. This is no longer the social reality of a particular historical time – (post)communist Hungary – but any time of 'this world'; a time where, as John Rajchman put it, "the past becomes indeterminate, the present untimely and experimental, and the future unknown, unforeseen, and unthought."¹⁶⁵

The narrative consists of disconnected and aberrant movements, wanderings through what feels like any-spaces and any-times, lost in the potential memory of the future, immersed in the rhythms of walks, detours, and returns. Here reality and memory-past merge and exchange places in the crystalline narrative not confined to the cause-effect demands of action, but enfolded in extremely long, disconnected, and enduring moments, no longer images but thoughts.¹⁶⁶

The 'story' of the films does not refer to an ideal or a truth but becomes a 'pseudo-story', a poem, "a story which simulates or rather a simulation of a story"¹⁶⁷. This could also be thought of, following Deleuze's suggestion, as the "perception of an independent aesthetic consciousness" and the power of the false.¹⁶⁸ Both Tarr and

¹⁶⁴ Steven Marchant, Nothing Counts: Shot and Event in *Werckmeister Harmonies*, *New Cinemas: Journal of Contemporary Film*, Volume 7, Issue 2, October 2009, p, 143.

¹⁶⁵ John Rajchman 'Diagram and Diagnosis' in Elizabeth Grosz (ed.), *Becomings: Explorations in Time, Memory, and Futures*, Cornell University Press, 1999, p. 45.

¹⁶⁶ "What aberrant movement reveals is time as everything, as 'infinite opening', as interiority over all normal movement defined by motivity [*morticité*]: time has to be anterior to the controlled flow of every action, there must be 'a bit of the world that is not completely restricted to the experience of our motivity' and 'the most distant recollection of image must be separated from all movement of bodies'." Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 36.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

I refer to 'story' in singular (of all Tarr's films) here to emphasise Tarr's refusal to think of cinema as 'story telling', and his view of 'a story' as being "the same story" since the Old Testament. Instead he refers to lived 'pure situations': painful, joyful, touching, or moments where street corners and animals "also have their stories." "For me the movie is not the story, it is mostly rhythm, camera, pictures, sound, noises, and the human eyes." Fionn Meade, 'Béla Tarr: Interview'.

¹⁶⁸ Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 77.

Deleuze use the term 'situation' ('floating' for Deleuze) rather than story or narrative when talking about film-world. This is the 'story' of non-human becomings in the fragmentary 'narrative' of fabulation that is not a subjective or deprived matter, but a question of becomings and of visions, where life appears as immanent and released from its subjective, or objective (dis)attachments.¹⁶⁹ Thus, the functioning of the narrative will be approached mainly in relation to the idea of (e)motion as proposed by Giuliana Bruno in *Atlas of Emotion*, and Deleuze's concept of 'crystalline regime', a narrative of actual-virtual process in a chain of images (de)linked by the "irrational cut." This will be folded and unfolded within the idea of wa(o)nder – a certain movement, and a nomadic becoming of unknown 'outcome' where both affect and thinking are possible. The stylistic (formless as both form and content) 'architexture' – black-and-white photography, rain, the treatment of space as a time-space of affect dwelling in-between, and 'insistent pauses of framing' – will provide textual analysis of cinematic still-movement as wa(o)ndering image-thought.

*... wanted experience to lead where it would, not lead it to some point given in advance.*¹⁷⁰

A herd of cattle drifts out of a barn onto a muddy patch of open ground and wanders off to the left; the camera follows, first in a pan, then tracking past the houses of an apparently deserted village, before the animals disappear between the buildings. A grey, foggy ambiance fills the space. A ghostly, premonitory sound of wind and deep tolling bells accompanies the whole scene.

Futaki... it seems... is afraid of something. Early ... morning... startled... He was looking out ... the window. Futaki... is terrified... he's afraid of death. They'll kick off anyway. You too, Futaki, you'll kick off.¹⁷¹

The power of the false for Deleuze replaces and supersedes the form of the truth. It occurs in the cinematic time-image as something that "poses the simultaneity of impossible presents or the co-existence of not-necessarily true pasts" (p. 127), as forging in the Nietzschean sense (p. 296), as crystal (p. 128), as becoming and the will to power (p. 137), as false continuity (p. 138). Deleuze, *Cinema 2*.

¹⁶⁹ "Creative fabulation has nothing to do with a memory, however exaggerated, or with fantasy. In fact, the artist, including the novelist, goes beyond the perceptual states and affective transitions of the lived. The artist is a seer, a becomer." *What is Philosophy?*, p. 171.

¹⁷⁰ George Bataille, *Inner Experience*, Trans. Leslie Anne Boldt, State University of New York Press, 1988, p. 3.

¹⁷¹ *Sátántango* (1994)

The almost ten-minute opening shot of *Sátántangó* (1994) unfolds the time-image, a 'pure optical and sound situation' where 'nothing happens' takes time. The little time in its pure state.¹⁷² And while the cows continue their monotonous existence, and Futaki looks anxiously out of the window, the image-world of a small Hungarian town opens.

In the east the sky clears fast like a memory. At dawn, it leaves all red on the waving horizon. As the morning beggar trudges up the back steps to the church, the sun rises to give life to the shadow and to separate earth from the sky, man, and animal from the disturbing, confused unity in which they became inextricably intertwined.¹⁷³

Amnesiac reality verges on the edge of reality and artificiality.

This world, stricken by poverty and corruption, exists on its own, an image where history is replaced by time, and the 'story' by the wa(o)ndering movement of circuitous narrative. Derelict buildings, dark, empty squares covered by rain, swamped by harsh attic lights and muddy streets, rise up to the surface like old black-and-white photographs, where the utterances of forgotten worlds resonate. Nothing happens here. People seem stuck, and drenched under the persistent rain.

The habitants of *Werckmeister Harmonies* (2000) seem to have tragically fallen under the spell of a mysterious circus visiting the town. The main characters of *Damnation* (1989), longing to escape the mundane and senseless existence, traverse the empty streets or pass the time in a local pub. *Sátántangó* (1994) revolves around the slow decay of a small farm collective, where the dreams, weaknesses, and betrayals of its people are revealed in the slow rhythm of a tango. As András Bálint Kovács has pointed out, these wretched souls seem to have just arrived here somehow and cannot

¹⁷² This Proustian formula referred to by Deleuze in *The Time-Image*, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, and *Difference and Repetition*, is most resonating with the sense of bifurcation between the actual and the virtual, which Patrick Ffrench describes as "the point at which from the possible worlds, this world is drawn out." A point at which time divides, moving in both directions (past and future) at the same time. On this discussion of Deleuze's use of the Proustian 'truth' see Patrick Ffrench, 'Time in pure state: Deleuze, Proust, and The Image of Time', in Carolyn Bailey (ed.) *Time and the Time Image*, Manchester University Press, 2000, p. 166.

¹⁷³ *Sátántangó* (1994).

escape. We do not know who they are, what they do, how they got here, and when or where the story takes place. The characters "simply move toward their grim fates" as if they were no more "audacious than the lumbering cows of *Sátántangó*"¹⁷⁴. "They sit in the kitchen, shit in the corner and look out the window now and then. They just sit on the same dirty stools. Stuff themselves with potatoes and don't know what's happened." (*Sátántangó*) Disaffected black-and-white long takes frame this world, keeping the people living in it captive while they desperately try to escape, along with the viewer, while he/she endures many "trans-inducing hours."¹⁷⁵

The absence of a storyline, the non-professional actors, found locations, and long takes uninterrupted by editing, are somewhat reminiscent of the Italian Neorealist tradition where ideas or points of view are omitted in favour of being lost in the experience of reality (Bazin). As Tarr commented in an interview: "It is not like shooting a movie, it is like a part of life."¹⁷⁶ At the same time, the long takes and "painstakingly choreographed shots" based on the novels of László Krasznahorkai, are the results of meticulously considered directing.¹⁷⁷ Tarr weaves a 'tale' of life connecting objects, moments, moods, and people in a composition that is both untried and never finished. Now and again, he reminds his viewers that he is making the same film. One could argue, after Bazin, that reality here is filtered, not analysed or interpreted, but contains both a depiction of perceptual reality and more abstract qualities associated with time and the flow of life; qualities such as the fortuitous, the unexplained, and the ambivalent.¹⁷⁸ Neither realistic nor non-realistic representation, nor a presentation as such, but "a sum-total of dealings with the world around" is real – both, imagined and very concrete. The director does not give us access to a given reality, but creates a cinema with a sense of its own radically ambiguous and open

¹⁷⁴ András Bálint Kovács, 'Sátántangó', in Peter Hames (ed.), *The Cinema of Central Europe*, Wallflower, London 2004, p. 132.

¹⁷⁵ Cullen Gallagher in *The L Magazine*. *Damnation* lasts 120 minutes, *Werckmeister Harmonies* – 145 minutes, *Sátántangó* – 450 minutes.

¹⁷⁶ Eric Schlosser, 'Béla Tarr and Werckmeister Harmonies. Interview with Béla Tarr', in www.brightlightsfilm.com/30/belatarr1.html.

¹⁷⁷ As one of the reviewers has pointed out, in Tarr's films the sets and entire buildings are constructed. The ever-blowing wind is manufactured by wind machines; the wild dogs in the street are carefully released into the frame at the right time. Even the horrific "cat scene" in *Sátántangó* is one that was carefully staged; the cat was drugged and a vet was present on the set. <http://girishshambu.blogspot.com/2006/05/bela-tarr.html>.

¹⁷⁸ Siegfried Kracauer, *Theory of Film: The Redemption of Physical Reality*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997, p. 188.

reality, where it no longer merely signifies the real but becomes real.¹⁷⁹ The films are not of or about 'reality' or a world where the real is represented or reproduced but rather where real(ity) is "aimed at."¹⁸⁰ Theirs is the sentient, bottomless reality which transforms the way we see and the way we sense, an attempt to show the "intolerable" which resists the ready-made linkages of communication/ information and thus restores our connection with the world. Here the unexplained, the fortuitous, and the ambivalent would be a question of immanent virtual which is also real.¹⁸¹

As presented by the director, it is a world 'informed' by the post-communist reality of Hungary, not yet 'recovered' from the regime's consequences, and already disillusioned by the new reality of so-called democracy; a state of amnesia, where the characters are condemned to repeat the past, the life of tragic immobility, in a hopeless search for something, or somebody, to liberate them. It manifests itself in a consciously constructed image of misery and destruction. On the other hand there is a "collection of sensations", percepts and affects, "an intelligible material" given form through a "becoming art"; an "artistic volition." Both aspects are the result of the creative exploration of 'reality' (problems of life) and the creative mirroring of artistic process (aesthetics), that could be also thought of as becoming philosophy.¹⁸²

The already mentioned slow beginning of *Sátántangó*, the sluggish, automated motion of coal dumpsters suspended on cables, creaking around in a circuit above the town (*Damnation*), the semi-paralytic movement of the local drunkards' bodies

¹⁷⁹ For Bazin it was the ambiguous and open reality that was most important for the cinema of Italian Neorealism, and was something which Deleuze adopted to re-work the concept of real(ity) as both physical and mental phenomenon. See Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, pp. 1-2.

¹⁸⁰ At the beginning of his discussion of the real via neo-realist cinema Deleuze writes: "The real was no longer represented or reproduced but 'aimed at'. Instead of representing an already deciphered real, neo-realism aimed at an always ambiguous, to be deciphered real ..." Ibid., p. 1.

¹⁸¹ Stephen Zepke, drawing on Deleuze and Guattari's pragmatic philosophy, describes this condition as "mystical atheism", arguing that such 'mysticism' is "the experience of immanence, of the construction/ expression of the at once infinite and finite material plane on which everything happens." Zepke, *Art As Abstract Machine: Ontology and Aesthetics in Deleuze and Guattari* (Routledge, New York and London, 2005), p.6-7.

¹⁸² 'Deleuzian' cinema, as Rajchman asserts, is not a language, a narrative code or sign-system. It could be thought of as "becoming-art." An "artistic volition", he writes, starts with no given public, obeys no established "intersubjective norms" of judgment, reduces to no sociological or institutional definition, and can be contained or directed by no avant-garde with its pope-master. Percepts and affects, irreducible to the affections or perceptions, are the non-subjective, virtual entities, as proposed by Deleuze, equivalent to philosophical concepts. See John Rajchman, *The Deleuze Connections* (The MIT Press, 2000), pp. 119-121.

Cinema as becoming philosophy (in relation to 'problems of life') will be explored in the final chapter of the thesis.

choreographed into a working model of the universe by the film's hero János Valuska (*Werckmeister Harmonies*). Brilliantly portrayed opening scenes of Béla Tarr's cinema announce the wa(o)ndering character of the films. What follows are the endless walks and endless camera 'prowls'. They capture the spaces and the characters from every possible angle, even from above their heads and under their feet, in the narratives of disconnected and directionless events that concern no-one. There are figures walking away from the camera – into the far distance, and walking towards it in medium-shots and in close-ups for extended periods. The camera wanders alongside the characters and amongst them, touches the spaces or objects, and slides off the walls. The cameras are on the heels of Irimiás and Petrina, surrounded by rain, wind and cascading rubbish, or following the farmers walking down cold, desolate roads to their 'promised' town in *Sátántangó*. Two characters in *Werckmeister Harmonies* are accompanied in almost close-up, walking along for two minutes in absolute silence, with little indication of what they are doing or where they are going. Furthermore, the movements of isolated individuals are inscribed in the most memorable sequences. The mainly solitary manoeuvre of an old doctor in *Sátántangó*, lost in an 'alcoholic haze', lasts a full hour. The doctor staggers out into the field to refill his flask; breathing heavily along, he stops to take shelter with two prostitutes in a barn, after which nearly reaches the pub during the drunkards' dance. Fading in and out of visibility in the rain and darkness, he is at the very last moment led off course by a young girl and collapses in the forest.¹⁸³ Following Valuska's "nightly perambulations" through the village streets, or Karrer's aimless wanderings around the rainy town in search of his lover, the camera moves between spaces and characters, stopping for a while to 'think', or returns again and again to the same spaces and situations as if in search for some 'truth'. It returns to spaces like a film-loop, "glued by ambient tones."¹⁸⁴ The movement (walking-wandering) is not from one place to another, from point to point in a manner of progression, but a movement in itself; an 'internal' variation, and exhaustion of possibilities towards the unknown, the potential. This is the movement of a stroll that modern cinema adopted instead of the narrative. It does not forward the narrative causality, does not lead to any destination becoming

¹⁸³ Peter Hames, 'The Melancholy of Resistance. The Films of Béla Tarr', in <http://www.kinoeye.org/01/01/hames01.php>.

¹⁸⁴ Daniel Frampton, 'The Way that Movements Speak', *Film-Philosophy Journal*, Vol. 5 No. 10, March 2001, <http://www.film-philosophy.com/vol5-2001/n10frampton>.

(e)motion.¹⁸⁵ (E)motion on the other hand, as Giuliana Bruno proposed, is both a moving force ("a moving out, migration") and emotion, but also a memory.¹⁸⁶ In Deleuzian terms, this would be a matter of non-subjective affectivity, or as Blanchot put it, "infinite or discontinuous: relation always in displacement."¹⁸⁷ Furthermore, wondering of the wandering, would pertain to a nomadic movement without an end, in a whole that is never given, a 'space' where things are always starting again in the middle, assembling themselves in yet another way. Rather than an attitude of curiosity satisfying the knowledge through perception, wonder would flow with the movement of duration.¹⁸⁸ This is the logic of repetition that prevents any relation to before or after, and keeps moving, and thinking, alive – in the sense that it is new every time; a movement of becoming. Only when movement becomes automatic, as Deleuze points out, the artistic essence of the image (as imaging itself) is 'realised'.¹⁸⁹ *Werckmeister Harmonies*'s mob came out of nowhere and will never arrive, they 'happen' with the matter of the world, and the 'spirit' of the vision as 'multiple-one'.¹⁹⁰ The films' endless walking, "plodding along," seem to lead nowhere; the camera hesitates on the space, lingering a little longer after the characters have left. Independent, singular sequences tend to break free from the overall shape like polyphonic compositions, locked in a directionless, rhythmic 'structure' in which anything or nothing can happen. "[F]ormations of worlds, constellation of universes", landscapes.¹⁹¹ These are event-facts that cannot be represented or directed in advance.

¹⁸⁵ The stroll or ballade are the events of the optical and sound situations in modern cinema which replaced the sensory-motor link of the narrative. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 9.

¹⁸⁶ Bruno refers here to both the movement itself and the etymological meaning of emotion as migration, as well as to the "representation of life in motion," which resonate with kinetic movement of cinema. See *Atlas of Emotion*, p. 6 and p. 342.

¹⁸⁷ "... the never-subjected subject, is the very *relation* of the self to the other, in this sense: infinite or discontinuous: relation always in displacement, and in displacement in regard to itself, without anything that has to displace itself, displacement also of that which would be without place." Maurice Blanchot, *The Step Not Beyond*, trans. Lycette Nelson, State University of New York, 1992, p. 5.

¹⁸⁸ The distinction draws on Martin Jay's discussion of Heidegger's criticism of the dominant Western philosophical and scientific tradition based on "spacializing ontology"/ perception in favour of the early Greek attitude of wonder which lets things be rather than demands to know them. See Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes*, p. 270.

¹⁸⁹ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 151.

This is, as Colebrook suggests, the cinematic power which releases us from our tendency to organise images into an shared external world. Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze*, p. 32.

¹⁹⁰ This is not the question of Oneness as a unifying whole, but of an immanent plane of multiplicities, an open Whole, not opposites or dualistic double. It resonates with François Laruelle's "vision-in-one" radically immanent and universal Thought-World, "the most immanent and most real radical unity of man and knowledge." This is despite the fact that Laruelle argues that Deleuze's immanence (cinema and concept) as still dualistic in a sense of two parallel halves: the real and the concept. See Laruelle, *The Concept of Non-Photography*.

¹⁹¹ Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 62.

A fragment of concrete reality in itself multiple and full of ambiguity, whose meaning emerges only a posteriori, thanks to other imposed facts between which the mind establishes certain relationships.¹⁹²

A tractor pulling a large metal truck passes down the street at night as it is watched by János. Eszter looks into the eye of the cardboard whale, turns and walks away. Estike and her brother on their way to the wood nearby walk away from the camera until they disappear from view. In *Werckmeister Harmonies* there are thirty-nine shots and thirty-nine events. Each takes time. There is never-ending rain, muddy streets, cramped houses, wandering stray dogs, and, as Daniel Frampton has observed, half-empty packs of cigarettes.¹⁹³ At times an inanimate, dehumanised and somnambulistic dance sequence breaks the 'narrative', locking the characters and the viewers in a 'mad' perpetuation, providing a kind of 'circular dance' in which the walls, the rain and the dogs also have their stories. Locations have faces, in a certain kind of space, which Deleuze calls "any-spaces-whatever"; irrational, disconnected, aberrant, no longer obeying commonsensical causality. The characters, played by non-professional actors, do not obey any causal structure of story but become seers. On the other hand, the sound, camera, and landscape also become characters. Sometimes the 'autonomous', rhythmical, and 'otherworldly' sound endows the image with strangeness and reiteration. Outside, it is pouring with rain, and dogs wander by. Spectacular moments give way to the most banal ones and vice versa, or tragic to comic ones, without any sense of rational logic. In the end, the cinema's 'trip' into ambiguity is so overwhelming that the imaginary and the real become indiscernible.¹⁹⁴ Fragmentation, repetition, and no causal development, construct the "order of non-chronological co-existences or relations"¹⁹⁵ which resembles the 'structure' of a dream rather than narrative. The narrative of wander becomes a narrative of wonder.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹² Bazin, *What is Cinema? Vol. 2*, p. 37.

¹⁹³ Daniel Frampton, 'The Way that Movements Speak: London Film Report, 31 March 2001', *Film-Philosophy*, vol. 5 no. 10, March 2001, in <http://www.film-philosophy.com/vol5-2001/n10frampton>.

¹⁹⁴ Daniel Frampton, *Filmosophy*, Wallflower Press, London 2006, p. 68.

¹⁹⁵ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 108.

¹⁹⁶ Wonder – the unknown ontological 'drive' of existence. The idea of wonder as reality or reality as wonder is understood and exerted here as a concept of movement and thinking. It draws on the ideas of wonder as 'knowledge-less' knowing, sensing or intuiting rather than observing or examining (Heidegger), an instinct of 'play' (Heraclitus). See Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, and the Search for a New Ontology of Sight, in *Downcast Eyes*, pp. 263-329.

The long, slow, black-and-white time-image of Béla Tarr's world, verging on hallucination or déjà-vu, opens by re-evaluating the very category of reality.

What is this reality verging on the hallucinatory? A reality that seems to be positioned between and within both amnesia and memory (amnesia as a kind of memory); this 'state' that is an 'invention', and the question of displacement in time?¹⁹⁷ As a direct time-image it gives us access to that 'Proustian dimension', a (deeper or 'third') memory of the world, directly exploring time, reaching in the past that which conceals itself from memory.¹⁹⁸ What conceals itself from memory is the difference, not something once present that is stored as such in the past, and then actualised as a resemblance, but a pure "essence", that rises up as a haecceity, "untimely thisness." The invoked (by involuntary memory) 'thing' is something that is "absolutely new."¹⁹⁹ 'Unsolicited', independent, and disengaged from immediate action or perception, this is memory on a cellular level or even before that – and because it is folded in time, cannot stagnate into repetition of the same, into the 'heaviness of subjectivity' or identity. It exists as sensory becoming.²⁰⁰

The people of this 'film-world' seem to always find something above themselves, some greater faith, or promise that would save them from defencelessness and despair. As one of the reviewers observed, they form blind and autonomic allegiances to seductive false idols, such as the charismatically maniacal Prince in *Werckmeister Harmonies* or the messianic Irimiás in *Sátántangó*.²⁰¹ This keeps them locked in a

¹⁹⁷ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 37.

Deleuze sees the time-image not in terms of habitual or pure memory, but rather "the disturbances of memory and the failures of recognition", *Ibid.*, p. 55.

Donato Totaro, Gilles Deleuze's Bergsonian Film Project, http://www.horschamp.qc.ca/9903/offscreen_essays/deleuze1.html.

¹⁹⁸ "The Proustian formula 'a little time in its pure state' refers first to the pure past, the in-itself of the past or the erotic synthesis of time, but more profoundly to the pure and empty form of time ..." Difference and Repetition, 2004, p. 149, cited in Keith Ansell Pearson, 'Deleuze on the Overcoming of Memory'.

¹⁹⁹ Jakob Nilsson, 'A Crystal Matter: Virtual Structures and the Search for Belief', *Rhizomes* 16, Summer 2008 p. 20, <http://www.rhizomes.net/issue16/nilsson/index.html>.

A haecceity as a mode of individuation that is unlike a subject or a person, is defined by what Deleuze and Guattari call a thisness or an event. It is a happening or an event before it is a subject or form. For a discussion of haecceity see *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 260-265.

²⁰⁰ See David Gross, 'Bergson, Proust, and the Revaluation of Memory', *International Philosophical Quarterly* 25 no.4 (1985), pp. 369-380.

²⁰¹ *Béla Tarr*, Strictly Film School, <http://filmref.com/directors/dirpages/tarr.html>.

grip of repeating the same story, like the self-contained microcosms of 'any-people-whatever' behaving according to inherent, pre-programmed natures, forever longing for a better world.

[H]ere nothing's changed. The schoolmaster's still at home alone. Mrs. Schmidt with Futaki... You know, with the cripple. My sister's nuts, she spies on everybody... Mum beats her, but they still say she'll be nuts all her life. The doctor broods at home... Schmidt and Kráner are bringing the money for the cattle today... Everyone's been doing that since February.²⁰²

The 'unreal' statuses of petty criminals like Irimiás (to whom the story of the unchanged town is reported), and the endless destruction and misery, is etched in the hallucinatory mise-en-scene of blurred, and in places, what seem like out of focus long camera takes. In *Werckmeister Harmonies*, the camera's tenacious movements between the faces gathered in the Square give an impression of being lost in a nightmarish labyrinth. Does the visually stunning, apocalyptic walk in *Sátántangó*, with leaves, rubbish, and endless pieces of paper circling in the wind, conjuring up an "unforgettable sense of space and apocalyptic mood," only prolong the never-ending hopelessness?²⁰³ And does the incredibly beautiful pan against the dark silhouetted trees on the isolated, nightly landscape, seem to uphold the doctor's painful stagger stretching out through/into the night? The sense of unreality, strangeness, and reiteration endows the image with an illusion of slow motion or a dream. Like a strange repeated ritual, or implied dream that envelops the delirious dance and walks in the somnambulistic movement of not knowing what is happening, actions float in the situations.²⁰⁴

The direct presentation of the stifling, useless, and insurmountable time which haunts the characters, accompanied by a vast wasteland stretching in all directions, confers a feeling that the universe itself is out of joint. The distinctive, black-and-white photography is purposely leaden and, at times, oppressive. Enhanced by low lighting

²⁰² *Sátántangó* (1994).

²⁰³ Jonathan Rosenbaum, 'A Place in the Pantheon. Films by Béla Tarr', in *Chicago Reader*, www.chicagoreader.com/movies/archives/0596/05106.html.

²⁰⁴ According to Deleuze, in time-image cinema it is no longer a motor extension which is established between the reality of the setting or that of the action, but rather "a dreamlike connection through the intermediary of the liberated sense organs.", Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 4.

and high contrast, it creates the feeling of blurry half tones or 'half-rememberings'. In the long extended take, the circus caravan's headlights project a slow, sweeping swath of light onto the facades of the town's unilluminated and seemingly depopulated buildings, creating the sense of a shadow play mimicking the sinister 'premonition' of the circus poster. In one of the most 'hypnotic' scenes of *Sátántangó*, as Donato Totaro observed, the camera performs a 360-degree tracking movement across the sleeping people, returning again to the first sleeper, then continuing again in the same arc, again and again. The movement and the space covered create the impression of a slowly moving ceiling fan's 'point of view'.²⁰⁵

Although the films do not deal directly with memory, the past, or dream-states, they are created in such a way as to mimic the process of memory or dream. The reality settings, the hallucinatory world of the towns' lives, without beginning and without end, instead of providing a space for action, open out into thought and non-subjective, impersonal memory. Perception becomes overwhelming, hallucinatory, unbearably intense. Simultaneously, the screen itself becomes "the cerebral membrane where immediate and direct confrontation take place between the past and the future, real and imaginary, the inside and the outside, at a distance impossible to determine, and independent of any fixed point."²⁰⁶ The entropic *mise-en-scène* unfolds a style of repetitious, hallucinatory narrative. For Deleuze, this 'intolerable' landscape of modern cinema that sprang out of both an impossibility to connect with the world and the necessity to believe in it, endows the image with the potential for new ways of 'seeing' and thinking. No longer the recollection-image or 'attentive recognition', as he writes after Bergson, which gives us the proper equivalent of the optical-sound image, but the disturbance of memory and the failures of recognition.²⁰⁷ Is the visually 'dazzling marvel' and intensity of feeling only formal mastery of the long-lasting, perfectly executed shot? The aesthetics of artistic sensitivity or a matter of "lacunar reality"? The 'attentive misrecognition', where the displaced perception dwells in what seems

²⁰⁵ Donato Totaro, 'Sátántangó: And then there was Darkness', http://www.horschamp.qc.ca/new_offscreen/Sátántangó.html.

²⁰⁶ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 121.

²⁰⁷ Already mentioned in introduction, attentive recognition, "when it succeeds, comes *through* recollection-images." However, as Deleuze points out, Bergson also indirectly suggests that "attentive recognition informs us to a much greater degree when it fails than when it succeeds." When we cannot remember, sensory-motor extension remains suspended, while the actual image enters into relation with virtual elements, feelings or *déjà vu*, or "past in general", fantasies or theatre scenes. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 52.

like timeless enduring, demands the impossible. The time-image of long disconnected moments of intensive 'immotion' starts to think.

*Reality becomes "the memory, brain, superimposition of ages or lobes."*²⁰⁸

The long, exhaustively endless shots of spaces, or haunting repetitive sounds, create a sense of remembrance or déjà-vu, where the image is actualised from a virtual plane at the point when images become ambiguous – when we cannot tell what is real and what is imagined, what has happened in the past and what is happening in the present.²⁰⁹ As the cause-effect of 'action' gives way to the fragmentary "false continuity", the succession of chronological order no longer defines time.²¹⁰ Memory of films and the memory of the viewer interact with each other becoming something else, a set of 'mis'-represented 'moments', an assemblage of thoughts, feelings, and senses vibrating in the net of non-realised connections. For Deleuze, this kind of strategy endows the image with a creative, productive potential, inherent in the operation of memory, rather than linking it to the past. The past can never be just remembering or simple recollection because it is filtered through other recollections and experiences. Memories, Deleuze argues, are not old perceptions. Remembered things cannot be represented or 're-organised' as the same ones which were experienced in the past, because today's recollection is quite a different experience temporally and contextually from either the original experience or previous recollections. Thus conceived, memory is a creative power for producing the new rather than a mechanism for reproducing the same. The virtual is not imaginary but real in the sense that it is the reservoir from which thought draws in order to bring about the actual. Bergson believed that pure memory stores every conscious event in its particularity and detail. The perceptions of actual existence are duplicated in a virtual existence as images with the potential for becoming conscious, actual ones. As Deleuze writes:

²⁰⁸ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 121.

²⁰⁹ Gregory Flaxman, *The Brain Is the Screen*, p. 32.

²¹⁰ False continuity "is the method of BETWEEN, 'between two images', which does away with all cinema of the One. It is the method of AND, 'this and then that', which does away with all the cinema of Being = is." Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 174.

"between the past as pre-existence in general and the present as infinitely contracted past there are, therefore, all the circles of the past constituting so many stretched or shrunk *regions, strata, and sheets*: each region with its own characteristics, its 'tones', its 'aspects', its 'singularities', its shining points' and its 'dominant' themes. Depending on the nature of the recollection that we are looking for, we have to jump into a particular circle"²¹¹.

Thus, what we see on screen is already a memory in the way that the image that gives way to new images in the present is reflected and preserved in memory – a vast virtual reservoir of images, the recollection of which produces countless circuits: links between past and present. As Anna Powell puts it, the virtual image is not actualised directly, but appears in the form of another, different image, which "plays the role of virtual image being actualised in a third, and so on to infinity."²¹² How does this actualised image look? The actualised image cannot be confused with the represented 'real' of what is. Rather it is the creatively 're-remembered' past as a new image. Thus, the actualised is real not in the sense of a 'copy' of reality but as a plane of composed elements, here photographically, which are capable of rendering visible. It might be possible to say that photographically, actual images are, in a sense, becoming facts. Following from Bazin's discussion this would be "a fact in the order of reality" redeemed from the "spiritual dust and grime" of ordinary perception and human sensory experience.²¹³ Accordingly, the image, and its reality as 'fact', is endowed with the potential of 'all that might have been' and might be, the potential of transformative becoming of being.²¹⁴ Reality, writes Bergson, is a "global and

²¹¹ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 96.

²¹² Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 54, cited in Anna Powell, *Deleuze. Altered States and Film*, Edinburgh University Press, 2007, p. 23.

²¹³ This springs from Bazin's proposition of image-facts (a particular image which allows the viewer to creatively/ independently engage with the (screened) reality rather than being subjected to the 'clichés' of identification, and from Latour's etymologically inspired definition of fact (*facere*) meaning to make or to construct. Bazin writes: The unit of cinematic narrative in neorealist films like *Paisá* is not the "shot", an abstract view of a reality which is being analysed, but the "fact." A fragment of concrete reality in itself multiple and full of ambiguity, whose meaning emerges only a posteriori, thanks to other imposed facts between which the mind establishes certain relationships", Bazin, *What is Cinema? Vol. 2*, p. 37. This resonates with the Deleuzian-Nietzschean concept of the being of becoming as the eternal return of differentiation. Here the real world is the world of virtual variations that underlie any illusory identity. See Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugo Tomlinson, The Athlone Press, London 1983, pp. 186-94.

²¹⁴ Deleuze brings forward (with Nietzsche) Heraclitus' idea of becoming which affirms being and being is affirmed in becoming. There are two 'concepts' that affirm becoming: according to one there is no being, everything is becoming, according to the other, being is the being of becoming as such. Ibid., p. 23.

undivided growth, ...invention, duration: it resembles a gradually expanding balloon assuming at each moment unexpected forms."²¹⁵ Thus is the image-world. Therefore, remembering suspends sensory-motor extension and links actual image to virtual affective elements that include déjà-vu, dream images, fantasies, theatre scenes or 'the past' in general. What in classical cinema was always demarcated as past (through flashbacks), in modern cinema would overtake the present, or the present would almost lapse into the past. Different sheets of (real) past and past-present coexist in a non-chronological order. "From this point of view," Deleuze writes, "the present itself exists only as an infinitely contracted past which is constituted at the extreme point of the already-there."²¹⁶ This would 'create' the aberrant movement of discontinuity (no longer rational or sensory motor) where the past, present, and future merge in a (virtual) assemblage of 'impossible' attentive mis-recognition.²¹⁷ When Valuska reads a diary account of events at the end of the hospital massacre, there is a sense of confusion in relation to time, and to the way the events develop. Is the diary his own, or has it been found in the looted department store he finds himself in? And if the events have already been written down, what is it that we are watching now? In his analysis of the film, Jonathan Romney suggests the possibility of Valuska authoring the events (in a more oblique way), by a passive collusion with Tünde, not only reading the account of his own involvement.²¹⁸ The narrative of *Sátántangó* is constantly 'retold' by the doctor in fragments of information he scribbles in the notebooks, of details he chooses to focus on while observing the farm through binoculars, in repeating, moving-back-and-forth shots. This is 'repeated' once more towards the end of the film in the rather comical transcription of Irimiás's and Petrina's pseudo-poetical report of the farm's undertakings. The 'remembering' of the repeated instants happens simultaneously in a sense (we rarely know in advance in which time the events are unfolding). The temporal 'confusion' of the events and their 're-telling' put into question both the normative perception-cognition process, and the moral-political expectations. What happens next or before does not concern the 'narrative' any more. The past is neither remembered nor forgotten. It is suspended in a form of mis-represented 'moments' without before or after; the space of 'other'

²¹⁵ Bergson, *The Creative Mind*, p. 77.

²¹⁶ "[T]here is a present of the future, a present of the present and present of the past, all implicated in the event, and thus simultaneous and inexplicable." Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, pp. 96-97.

²¹⁷ This does not necessarily replace narration but, as Deleuze writes, "gives narration a new value, because it abstracts it from all successive action." Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 98.

²¹⁸ Jonathan Romney, *Outside the Whale. Werckmeister Harmonies*, Sight & Sound April 2003, p. 13.

thinking. As Deleuze noted, the cinema of time-image is not a case of psychological memory made up of recollection-images (flashbacks), but a case of purely ontological 'past in general' that is preserved neither in time nor in space. It has no psychological existence nor is it a case of successions of presents passing according to chronological time; rather, it is a collection of purely *virtual* images where the two modes of existence, 'actual present' and a 'sheet of past', are "combined in a circuit where the real and the imaginary, the actual and the virtual, chase after each other, exchange their roles and become indiscernible."²¹⁹ This ontological 'past in general' outside psychology, chronology, and representation is the photo(graphic) in becoming, the indiscernible identity/real in the last instance which knows itself as such.²²⁰

There is not present which is not haunted by past and a future, by a past which is not reducible to a former present, by a future which does not consist of a present to come.²²¹

"The little crystalline seed and the vast crystallisable universe: everything is included in the capacity for expansion of the collection constituted by the seed and the universe."²²² Above and beyond various actualities (memories, 'perceptions'), Claire Colebrook notes, there is a virtual whole composed of multiplicity of duration.²²³ "Memories, dreams, even worlds are only apparent relative circuits which depend on the variations of this Whole."²²⁴ That is where private memories and unofficial histories become 'universal', constituting a "universe of prehistory, not that of our ancestors, but a prehistory of consciousness at the birth of time and sin, when sky and earth, water and fire, good and evil are not yet clearly separated."²²⁵

²¹⁹ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 123.

²²⁰ The photographic view of things has been accepted as representation, or perception as a photograph taken and then 'developed in the brain'. For Deleuze still photography is also the representational medium which freezes time. For François Laruelle, who takes photography outside representation into the domain of thought, it is "an essence unto itself, "an existence, beyond the components of technology and image-production, of a certain specific relation to the real, one which knows itself as such." Laruelle, *The Concept of Non-Photography*.

²²¹ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 36.

²²² Ibid., p. 108.

²²³ Claire Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze*, Routledge, 2006.

²²⁴ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 78.

²²⁵ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 112.

The past/presentness of the cinematic image functions as a kind of two-way mirror. Non-linear relations, fragmentariness implied by the crystalline, the past/presentness of the cinematic image of a two-way mirror, splitting the screen into two heterogeneous directions – launching into the future and falling into the past. Such actualisation is the process of recollection in which the virtual differentiates itself by becoming something new.²²⁶

The richly orchestrated mise-en-scene functioning independently of narrative and subjected to long and detailed 'descriptions', provokes such involuntary memories. Microscopic details, like remnants of some cosmic memory of everyday gestures, insistent, intense, physically present, touching the deepest levels of existence from before all existence, in an image that has no point of reference. "Fragmented nomadic essences to each of which corresponds a viewpoint." The 'memory' of the image-world interacts with the cosmic 'anti-memory' of the universe becoming one of many, an infinite number of varieties, never stable, never presupposed. Memory and anti-memory, presence and absence, visible and invisible lose their attributed definitions and enter into new relations of unknown potentiality.

How do we make sense of this cacophony of different voices and visions? Is it the half-cynical confession of Karrer's monologue renouncing the story? The unstoppable entropy of alienated human condition? Or another dream? A map perhaps with different zones of speeds and slownesses, landmarks and roads, of curves and dead-ends, or a collection of nomadic singularities vibrating in the web of (dis)connections leading nowhere.

While real-time blends with 'Tarr-time', the minutes on-screen encapsulate something both intimately specific and profoundly universal, Cullen Gallagher suggested.²²⁷ Or it might be simply "time that film frees itself from the shackles of linearity."²²⁸

²²⁶ This process has two parts. First, memory is accessed by means of a 'leap into the past', enabling the most relevant plane to be located. Second, memory is brought to presence and given a new 'life' or context in terms of current circumstances. At this moment, psychology interacts with ontology in the constitution of the lived present, a special kind of synthesis that Deleuze considers to be essential to the flow of lived time. Memory, rather than merely redrawing the past, constitutes the past as a new present relative to present interests and circumstances. Cliff Stagoll, 'Memory', Adrian Parr (ed.), *The Deleuze Dictionary*, Edinburgh University Press, 2005, p. 161.

²²⁷ 'Shall We *Sátántangó*?' Cullen Gallagher in *The L Magazine*, <http://www.thelmagazine.com/TheMeasure/archives/2008/07/25/shall-we-satantango>.

And the living time in the time-image?

Time present and time past

[...] both perhaps present in time future,

And time future contained in time past.

If all time is eternally present

All time is unredeemable.²²⁹

In the hallucinatory world of the towns' lives, without a beginning and without an end, time has no 'meaning' – it is 'out of joint'. "The two clocks show different times. Both wrong of course. This one here is too slow. Instead of telling the time, the other one seems to point out at our hopeless condition," observes Irimiás while waiting outside the government office.²³⁰ In long, monotonous, and repetitive shots, past, present and future seem to merge or exchange, generating a sense of vertigo, or a dream. The somnambulistic group line dance recalls the image of the sluggish, automated motion of cable cars (*Damnation*), the long robotic march of workers on their way to the hospital (*Werckmeister Harmonies*) and the inanimate and dehumanised dance sequences echo the directionless, the seemingly never-ending nightmare. It brings to mind the automatic movement of Kantor's *Dead Class*' characters dragging along their childhood puppets/ selves.²³¹ The unredeemable time 'pointing to the hopeless condition' lasts forever, indifferently, 'inhumanly'.

Becoming...(is) *its own time*, the real time in which changes occur, becoming unknown to historical time. This time, which does not change but in which all changes unfold, is not a Kantian *a priori* form depending upon attributes of a particular kind of consciousness, but the time of production, founded in difference and becoming, and consequent to relations between internal and external differences. For Deleuze, the present is merely the productive moment of becoming. Rather than a product, final or interim, becoming is the very dynamism of change, situated between

²²⁸ Steve Erickson, *Brief interview with Béla Tarr*, <http://home.earthlink.net/~steeve/bela.html>.

²²⁹ T.S. Eliot 'Burnt Norton', *Four Quartets*, in T.S. Eliot, *The Complete Poems and Plays*, Faber and Faber, 2004, p. 171.

²³⁰ *Sátántangó*.

²³¹ Tadeusz Kantor, *Dead Class*, 1997.

heterogeneous terms and tending towards no particular goal or end-state.²³² Becoming 'moves through' every event, such that each is simultaneously the start-point, end-point and mid-point of an ongoing cycle of production. That is where the films stop being 'hopeless' and become 'real', with all the uncertainties and ambiguities, all that is life, the experimental and the spontaneous, an open process of transformation, "dispersive and lacunar reality" of aesthetic becoming. Reality in becoming, "meaningful, rich, beautiful and filthy."²³³ Sentient, bottomless. Time and memory is also forgetting, repetitions of labyrinthian paths. It is the condition of impossibility, the intolerable from which thinking arises. Deleuze theorises this productive cycle using Nietzsche's concept of 'eternal return', pointing out the potentiality and importance of difference, where what returns is never the same. In this way the amnesia of repetitious moral degradation becomes a repetition with the possibility of change. What returns with each repetition is difference. Thus the eternal return is not a repetition of a universal sameness but the movement that produces difference, inscribing change and becoming at the very heart of being.

We misinterpret the expression "eternal return", Deleuze writes, if we understand it as "return of the same." It is not being that returns but rather *returning itself* that constitutes being insofar as it is affirmed of becoming and of that which passes. It is not some one thing which returns, but rather returning itself is the one thing which is affirmed of diversity or multiplicity. In other words, identity in the eternal return does not describe the nature of that which returns but, on the contrary, the fact of returning for that which differs. This is why the eternal return must be thought of as a synthesis; a synthesis of time and its dimensions, a synthesis of diversity and its reproduction, a synthesis of becoming and of the being which is affirmed in the becoming, a synthesis of double affirmation.²³⁴

Thus conceived, amnesiac memory is a creative power for producing the new rather than a mechanism for reproducing the same.

²³² Stagoll, *The Deleuze Dictionary*, p. 21.

²³³ *Sátántangó*.

²³⁴ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 48.

The images are always surfacing from the past because, as Deleuze pointed out, quoting Federico Fellini: "We are constructed in memory; we are simultaneously childhood, adolescence, old age and maturity."²³⁵ Thus memory must be perceived not as something fixed that has been but as what Deleuze called an "anti-memory" or becoming, which is the result of duration, *durée* or Aion time: "at once an always-already and an always-about to be."²³⁶ It is not narrative that unfolds the space of memory but a style of 'inaction' that produces a collection of sensations, memories stored in images and, as such, perhaps paradoxically, opens up the space for active participation and change.

Reality and memory become one as virtual and actual in what Deleuze calls the 'crystal image'. The crystal image is a merged form of virtual and actual in its various points towards infinity. The self-reflexive crystal image involves a multilayered and infinite register of 'montaged' realities, where there is change, passage, becoming. But the form of what changes does not itself change or pass on. This is time in its pure state: a direct time-image, which grants what changes the unchanging form in which the change is produced.²³⁷ Crystal images are the pure and direct images of time, external representations of an image of/as thought. In *Sátántangó*, several of the film's inter-titles make reference to the spider, and the spider makes a physical appearance at the end of the long pub dance scene. In a long, lateral tracking shot of the drunken carousers, a spider can be seen briefly in the foreground, spinning a web between two glasses. The voice-over tells us that the spider will be spinning its web around the objects, and around the people in the pub ... The 'labyrinthian' shape of the spider web acts "the spider's function", linking the cosmic to the everyday, the durable to the changing, "one single and identical time as the unchanging form of that which changes."²³⁸ One can think of Velasquez's painting *The Spinners*: 'pure' time, real and virtual, all 'levels' of time reflected in crystal. The contest between a goddess and a mortal on one level and the works of spinning women on the other, folding and unfolding into each other opening the present to 'timelessness'.

²³⁵ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 99.

²³⁶ Ronald Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts*, Routledge, New York, 2003, p. 43.

²³⁷ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 16.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

And for the tender sound of accordion the spiders in the pub sewed loose webs on top of the glasses, the cups, the ashtrays, around the legs of the tables and the chairs. [...] They sewed a web on the sleepers' faces, their feet, their hands. They hurried back to their hiding-place, waiting for an eternal thread to move to start it all again."²³⁹

This is no longer the social reality of a particular historical time – post communist Hungary – but any time of 'this world'; not reality objectively perceived and independently existing, nor a metaphysical beyond, but rather a strange presence-sensation, both actual and virtual, in the process of becoming. In the interview, Tarr says that it is not his objective to tell a story but to get closer, "to understand everyday life."²⁴⁰ This 'understanding' takes the form of experimentation, a kind of "visionary aestheticism" where both the form and the content are indeterminate.²⁴¹ And it is 'a life' itself bubbling underneath the surface of the mundane and the everyday, which has been each time 'incarnated' into the image.²⁴² The director works closely with 'what is' in the locations, allowing the actors, the composer, the editor, and the non-human eye of the camera to 'live in the situation' while playing with variations of 'what is' and the singularities (modes) of encounters, at the same time resisting 'what is' through a very persistent 'vision-force'. Touching the deepest levels of existence from before all existence; image without any point of reference. Here the 'director's vision' intertwines with encountered objects, spaces, and situations in a composition of a labyrinth without the (Ariadne's) thread, in a series without common borders, in which all roads lead to the same point, and where every point finds itself on all roads,²⁴³ where 'politics'/ life means to endure entanglements (to follow through the thought of immanence immanent only to itself), to feel and to think according to 'demands' of singular encounters without compliance to a priori norms.

²³⁹ *Sátántangó*, dir. by Béla Tarr, Hungary, 1994, 419 minutes.

²⁴⁰ Hames 'The Melancholy of Resistance'.

²⁴¹ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 4.

²⁴² Life is understood here as both the material world and what Deleuze calls "a life" - non-subjective, impersonal virtual force of becoming which will be discussed further in the final chapter. It also resonates with the idea of life as both existence and thinking.

²⁴³ Jean-Clet Martin, 'The Image of Thought', in Ian Buchanan (ed.), *Deleuze Studies*, Volume 3, Number 1, 2009, p. 9.

It is also a 'mode of living, a style in the sense of Spinoza ("affective realism") which is a question of immanence and experimentation (a belief in this world as it is); "empiricist conversion," rather than judgment.²⁴⁴ It is life as it is felt, imagined, seen, encountered; an affirmation of all paths. An aesthetics of "(e)motion", and the ethics of encounter-event through affecting and affected bodies; a result of becoming with life, like a body thrown into the world which is un/known, un/tried, alien sometimes or stupid, 'ugly' or excruciatingly beautiful. Tarr's camera is in the world, immersed and distant, felt and invisible, seeing with its body. The images are earthy, real, non-nostalgic, bare in their material physicality, and familiar in their worldly strangeness. Empty spaces, bleak industrial landscapes, the oppressive and alienating environment, might reflect the desolation and spiritual lethargy of morally bankrupt protagonists. In Tarr's world, everything seems to take place in a crumbling, depressive world of mud, alcohol, and betrayal. Here,

*[m]atter accumulate[s] and become[s] blocked, a geology of elements, filth and treasures being created in slow motion.*²⁴⁵

Serge Daney, as Deleuze noted, saw the washed, sodden, heavy, translucent images characteristic (according to him) of certain Eastern European filmmakers (like Zanussi) as "a taste for heavy materials and dense still lifes."²⁴⁶ It might be the question of existential sensitivity brought out by the necessary 'clandestine aesthetics', but it might also be the case of the poet who "with the dredging net must haul up difficult things"²⁴⁷ pushing resistance and the intolerable even further.

It might be that beneath this film runs another film, a film whose character, as Pasolini would have it, is completely and freely expressive, independent of the director's intention.²⁴⁸ This is no longer the expression of subjective interpretation or representation, nor a question of an authorial 'voice'. What we have here perhaps is a

²⁴⁴ As John Rajchman points out, discussing Deleuze, it is a belief or trust placed in this world rather than another transcendent one. Deleuze, distancing it from religion (or catholic belief), saw this kind of 'conversion' in the time-image of post-war cinema. See Rajchman, *The Deleuze Connections*, p. 26.

²⁴⁵ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 283.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

²⁴⁷ Jeanette Winterson, *Art Objects. Essays On Ecstasy and Effrontery*, Jonathan Cape, London, p. 115.

²⁴⁸ Pasolini, 'The Cinema of Poetry', in *Movies and Methods. Vol. 1*, Bill Nichols (ed.) (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), p. 554.

director's vision which no longer belongs to the director, which flees from personal matters and universal (utilitarian) concerns, and which has been hijacked by the camera consciousness, unknown intensities, affects and percepts. The director no longer directs but creates the time-space where the intensities are brought out in a poetic framing imposed on sensation to give it a life (in form-force of image) neither objective nor subjective but both. In this sense the director is a visionary, and his/ hers is a free-indirect vision, the power of the false.²⁴⁹

Thus, despite the seemingly realistic portrayal of the world stricken by poverty and corruption, the reality constructed in the films is not that of social realism, nor is it the representation of historical events, but a creative exploration in the form of a thinking image, where the real is not a representation of reality and virtual is not a negation of the real. It is art and philosophy. In this sense the 'reality' pervades as past, present and future at the same time, not something that has happened but something that is 'happening' all the time. This is particularly prevalent in the films' aesthetics of long repetitive shots where the camera loops back to 'look' at some sequences each time from a different point of view. The fact that the clocks have stopped or show the wrong time in those films is no longer of any relevance. As such, the 'authentic' world-portrayal acquires its right to exist while standing on the border between reality and artificiality, in the hesitant movement towards the False. Reality is memory, film is memory. Reality in the film is fiction, however real-istic. And the amnesiac reality? It arises as an inscription of memory – one that remains open, one which changes in every moment, an inscription that depends, in order to be registered at all, on its propensity to change continually into what it is to be next, to remain ever unfixed.²⁵⁰

Moreover, the deglamourising, disaffected style, rather than being perceived as nihilistic or decadent appears to be the effect of "the powerful, non-organic Life that grips the world" and which, according to Deleuze, provides "a new kind of health, that the cinema is forced to discover in the nauseating, devastated, death-strewn landscape."²⁵¹ Here, the oppressive and alienating environment – landscapes of

²⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 144.

²⁵⁰ René Thoreau Bruckner, 'The Instant and the Dark. Cinema's Momentum', *Octopus: A Journal of Visual Studies* vol.2, Fall 2006, pp. 21-36. The idea of passive vitalism will be discussed in the last chapter.

²⁵¹ Flaxman, *The Brain Is the Screen*. p. 42.

identities – is dissolved in the any-spaces-whatever and brought back in the event of becoming something else, something that is at the edge of language as it is on the edge of the 'narrative'. The events and characters, somehow not quite 'real', existing in a non-hierarchical monotony of time, are not concerned with 'action', interpreting, or communicating, but weave instead the narrative of disconnected moments that may or may not exist. The two levels – amnesia resulting in entropy – and the director's 'vision' are conflicting and interacting, constructing (new) order out of 'forgotten' strata, a new kind of (real)ism impossible to prevail from the standpoint of what we already know.

This way is a nice family story. But it finishes like any other story. Because stories end badly. Stories are all stories of disintegration. The heroes always disintegrate, and they disintegrate the same way. If they didn't, it wouldn't be disintegration but revival. And I'm not talking about revival but disintegration. Irrevocable disintegration. So what's about to happen here, is just one form of ruin among the million that exist.²⁵²

This kind of 'realism' requires a different form of (wa(o)nderous) narrative. A narrative of disconnected and aberrant movements, wanderings through spaces and times, lost in the potential memory of the future. Narrative immersed in the rhythms of walks and returns. Narrative working according to the process of 'memory', and as remembering and forgetting at the same time. The narrative departing from the story (disintegration), and from the logical consensus of cause-effect. Out of anomalies, irregularities, and false continuity the crystalline regime develops narration. The elements of this (non)narrative – objects, character, sound – do not carry the story, or a discourse, but exist in their own right, and as parts of the image, intertwined with each other as fragments in 'sensational' composition of affect. The slow 'empty' tracking of beer glasses, the texture of the net curtain closely examined by the camera, or Estike's gesture of straightening her skirt (*Sátántangó*) as she lies down after taking the rat poison and the wandering dogs soaked by rain, "shade into each other"²⁵³ as a kind of reciprocal immanent engagement in the cosmic memory of the world. Everyday 'tidbits' and profound events, equally important moments, break the

²⁵² *Damnation* (1988).

²⁵³ Pier Paolo Pasolini, 'The Cinema of Poetry', p. 544.

continuity into imperceptible expressions. All are enfolded in the black-and-white 'reality' of the photographic time, challenging our perception and our cognition.²⁵⁴ When the camera stops or zooms on a detail, there is a sense of wanting to go beyond the frame, 'inside' the thing, but which is at the same time shattered by the surface so populated with opaque and mute expressions that the gaze somehow slips off into optical disarray. Relatively autonomous, image-expressions, while referring to each other, they nonetheless resist being reconciled into a whole. As a result, there is no totalisation of space in an organic image of the whole and no subordination of time to movement. Inside and outside, mind and body, mental and physical, imaginary and real, are no longer decidable qualities.²⁵⁵ The ordinary detailed bits become percepts and affects of those relations, an ensemble or set of relations that are in a state of continual transformation, without end and without message. Rain, peeling walls, wandering dogs, people sitting, drinking, walking or dancing. Specific and singular expressions/ events with no other purpose than occurrence; unique, unrepeatable instants, these elements enter into relations of unknown, chance encounters made possible by the style of multiple views. 'Restricted' neither by the logic of narrative continuity, nor by the norms of perception, they enter instead into the mad, 'schizophrenic' rhythm of potentialities, composed in impossible variations (composed and decomposed in an endless process of creation), tamed only by the style. The style frames, providing a kind of order (a "vision"); the order not so much of order versus chaos, 'sane' versus 'mad', but one on the verge, in-between, where the intensity of desire is able to sustain itself without breaking down.²⁵⁶ The order of the margins or the cracks in the surface.²⁵⁷ As such, the image, disconnected, aberrant, schizophrenic, does not point to anything in terms of actual 'change' or action. It has however more profound and important 'value' – that of realisation of intensity;

²⁵⁴ "For me it's a kind of naturalism, the colour movie. With black and white you can keep it more stylistic, you can keep more of a distance between the film and reality which is important." Fergus Daly, 'Waiting for the Prince – An Interview with Béla Tarr', *Senses of Cinema*, <http://sensesofcinema.com/2001/feature-articles/tarr-2/>.

²⁵⁵ David Norman Rodowick, *Gilles Deleuze's Time Machine*, Duke University Press, 2003, p. 5.

²⁵⁶ I refer here to Deleuze's idea of 'being drunk on water' or 'madness' without going over the edge, sustaining the force of 'creating' on the verge, between sanity and madness, sobriety and drunkenness. In *The Logic of Sense* Deleuze returns repeatedly to the problem of depth and surface, of Artaud's madness and senselessness and Carroll's humour and nonsense, of how to stay at the surface of the crack, at the incorporeal event without actualizing oneself in the quicksand and clamour of its body. For a discussion on the subject of depth and surface in relation to intoxication see Catherine Dale, 'Cruel. Antoni Artaud and Gilles Deleuze', in Brian Massumi (ed.) *A Shock to Thought. Expression After Deleuze and Guattari*, Routledge, London and New York, 2002, pp. 85-101.

²⁵⁷ The Deleuzian concept of the surface will be discussed in the next chapter.

intensity as a much more radical 'concept'; intensity, as a quality of life. The creative force of affect and 'pathological clinging to life' fold into each other in a moment of poetical co-poiesis.

Life for Deleuze, as Daniel W. Smith pointed out, is a power of abstraction capable of producing elements that are in themselves asignifying, acosmic, asubjective, anorganic, agrammatical, and asyntactic (singularities and events, affects and percepts, intensities and becomings) and placing them in a state of continuous variation. On the other hand, it is a power of invention capable of creating ever new relations between these differential elements (syntheses of singularities, blocks of becomings, continuums of intensities)²⁵⁸. Béla Tarr speaks of making the same film but always a little better.²⁵⁹ For him it is the combination of singular encounters where the new real will come forth within the actual and the virtual, in-between. The powers of the False.

In place of an argument or story we are presented with a series of events, which instead of creating an illusionistic space of judgment/ identification, offers a different space – that of encounter – where the film, the viewer, the world, and the outside are interconnected in the process of creative transformation.

Deleuze called this kind of (false) narrative, or rather the lack of it, the 'crystalline narrative'. Unlike the 'continuity editing' of classical cinema, continuity here is achieved by relinkages of independent images that are not extendable to each other. "Instead of one image after the other, there is one image *plus* another; and each shot is deframed in relation to the framing of the following shot ..."²⁶⁰ Images are delinked and deframed which severs the flow from any sense of predictability. This creates a new 'linkage' of dependency and unpredictability, what Flaxman referred to through Deleuze as a Markoff chain which introduces chance into the stream of images.²⁶¹

²⁵⁸ Daniel W. Smith, Introduction, in Gilles Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, p. li.

²⁵⁹ Eric Schlosser. 'Interview with Béla Tarr'.

²⁶⁰ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 206.

²⁶¹ As Flaxman pointed out, the delinkage of images and chance in the flow of images is not, according to Deleuze, a purely accidental process. The Markoff chain introduces a new relation between images based on improvisation, which needs to be constantly reinvented, rather than on randomness. This relation (the method of And rather than Is), on the other hand, allows for invention in thinking. Flaxman, *The Brain Is the Screen*, p. 45.

What links the seemingly disconnected images is a gap, an in-between space in which thought experiences its own duration. Here, "the outside or obverse of the images has replaced the whole, at the same time as the interval [*interstice*] or the cut has replaced association."²⁶² The way images are linked exceeds Eisenstein's dialectical synthesis of the shock as inducing thought. The shock is now produced by an encounter with the image that is unrecognisable and unknown, in a sort of directionless regime which fashions a kind of meandering that refuses resolution, and creates an enhanced sensitivity to time. The narrative becomes a form of the *ballade* where the film is "wedded to a wandering movement", a journey, the stroll, the ballad, or (e)motion of the events which concern no one.²⁶³ The spaces are disconnected, characters are no longer defined by their actions but by their visions and narration becomes, essentially, falsifying. Both the 'real-ism' and the 'story' are disposed of in favour of the false and its artistic, creative power, a 'pseudo-story', or a poem.²⁶⁴ The "perception of an independent aesthetic consciousness."²⁶⁵

Linear actions dissolve into the form of aleatory strolls. Events occur where it is no longer possible to act or react: situations of pain or beauty that are intolerable or insupportable; occurrences that are incomprehensible or undecidable. Since the linking of images is no longer motivated by action, space changes in nature, becoming disconnected or emptied. Acts of seeing and hearing replace the linking of images through motor actions. Fragmented narrative structure, false continuity, and irrational cuts are the strategies making time-image possible.

Tarr's characters, all with distinctive faces and 'personalities', seem to be matched by the scenery, weather, and time, creating the necessary tension with their faces, voices, and movements. Performing 'themselves', they become with the situation. There is neither eagerness nor resistance in a way the characters' bodies give themselves to the 'action'. (János in his kitchen preparing the meal, dance sequences). Just ordinary, concrete, attending to their chores – a sort of Bruegelian attention to gestures, faces, and movements of bodies – carries expression of 'a life'; intense looks and absent

²⁶² Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 206.

²⁶³ Flaxman, *The Brain Is the Screen*, p. 31.

²⁶⁴ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 149.

²⁶⁵ Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 77.

emotion. In the faces of actors – independent, alienated, subjected to the slow, penetrating 'scans' of the camera – madness and helplessness show the 'real'.

The characters of the (e)motion are 'weaved' in a wa(o)ndering movement of the *ballade*, taking on the movement of thinking. Assisted by the camera, they move within and between locations. They 'observe' closely, or from the distance, assisting in return the 'spectacle' of non-human perception; becoming 'seers' rather than 'actors'. Intertwined with textures, mud, dogs, rain ... "This is a cinema of the seer, no longer an agent", Deleuze tells us.²⁶⁶

Here the wandering of the narrative becomes the wonder(ing) of the false.

The camera is always moving among the characters but does not identify with any of them: their 'identities' are substituted with the director's aesthetic vision. In this way the character losing his identity "enters into a 'free indirect' relationship with the "poetic vision of the director" who affirms himself through him while at the same time distinguishing himself from him", allowing for objective and subjective to become 'one'.²⁶⁷ This is a "new race of characters", of a time-image cinema; characters who see rather than act, characters who are compelled to witness the world, yet who are entirely unsure of what they witness. These characters do not 'change' anything, do not forward the narrative; they 'flow' with time, registering, seeing, recording rather than acting or reacting. These characters of the trip/ ballad are unconcerned even by what happens to them. Their wa(o)ndering movement, on the other hand, not quite like the lumbering cows of the opening scene (*Sátántangó*), becomes the movement of thinking; not resignation but the ultimate affirmation of life. Not human but over-human.

Structured in twelve normatively overlapping, discontinuous chapters, *Sátántangó* replicates the visual rhythm, the six-steps-forward six-steps-back pattern of the tango. The rhythm of the film's forward and backward episodic movements, particularly evident in the circular, repeated narration of Futaki's perceived detection of the tolling of nonexistent bells at the beginning and end of the film, underscores the banality and

²⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 2.

²⁶⁷ Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 77.

Deleuze talks about the possibility of "knowing subjectivism" (Fellini) or "critical objectivism" (Antonioni) in the cinema of time-image, in *Cinema 2*, p. 6.

empty, ritualistic existence of the communal farmers resigned to a life of aimlessness, despair and passivity. The film's compositional principle is to present not facts, nor a story but a general process of unstoppable degradation, remarked András Kovács.²⁶⁸

However ...

As Steven Merchant observes, the director often puts a simple, single event into repetition, ensuring that it is grasped in the concrete physicality of its occurrence rather than as a step in a chain of consequences.²⁶⁹ Scenes which we have already witnessed repeat, but from different spatial and narrative points of view. At the beginning of *Sátántangó* several scenes are repeated later from the observing 'camera-eye's' point of view. The narrative voice is that of the doctor, and the film returns to him at the end as the narrative begins again.²⁷⁰ At the "most remarkable narrative crossover point", a girl stops by a window to watch the dance taking place within. The event is later witnessed from inside in its entirety in one long, slow-moving shot, interrupted only by a cutaway of the girl looking in from outside.²⁷¹ In *Werckmeister Harmonies*, the image of János walking away from his dwelling, watched by the shoemaker's wife, is repeated in exactly the same way as in the earlier scene when it was the shoemaker who watched him disappearing into the 'horizon'. In *Damnation*, the couple circle endlessly around in frustration and recrimination. The camera returns to the spaces outside the police station, the pub or between the blocks of flats to wait with Karrer. Fragmentary spaces come together in the last image, which is the mirror image of the first. The story ends at the beginning, with a vast any-space-whatever of Hungarian puszta. And, "as the film ends," Jonathan Romney wrote, "we are waking from a bad dream that is about to start again."²⁷² The films' wanderings, 'plodding along' lead to nowhere. There is only the framed 'image', and torturous emotion arrested in time.²⁷³ Neither spaces nor characters reveal anything, or point to anything

²⁶⁸ András Bálint Kovács, 'The World According to Béla Tarr', *KinoKultura* <http://www.kinokultura.com/specials/7/kovacs.shtml>.

²⁶⁹ Merchant, *Nothing Counts*, p. 7.

²⁷⁰ Hames, 'The Melancholy of Resistance'.

²⁷¹ John Adams, *Sátántangó*. DVD Review. http://www.moviehabit.com/review.php?story=sat_gv08.

²⁷² Jonathan Romney, *End of the Road: The Films of Béla Tarr*, in *Film Comment*, Sept-Oct, 2001.

²⁷³ The image is no longer restricted to what we "see." There are moments when discursive "hiatuses, holes or tears ... widen in such a way as to receive something from the outside or from elsewhere." This "something seen or heard" that seeps through this hole, Deleuze says, is called Image. Flaxman, *The Brain Is the Screen*, p. 12.

outside the situation itself. Instead the viewer is left to 'endure' the ambiguity of an open image. At every turn the hope for resolution is frustrated."²⁷⁴ The wandering of the characters becomes the wondering of the camera. Tarr's camera scrupulously follows the visual micro-dimension of characters' everyday routines ('describing' rather than directing), as the reality of social order and disorder is confusedly left behind and 'mixed up' with its own entropic and chaotic excess. However, the 'expressive' here is, not of the 'expressionistic' kind, of an individual/subjective self, but it 'creates' a kind of conduit through which 'life' and its force express itself. "It creates the real through the force of visual description," where the "knowing subjectivism is utterly objective," and "description tends towards a point of indiscernibility of the real and the imaginary."²⁷⁵ The camera tracks not through the windows /doors but alongside them, 'communicating' with the spaces beside. At a slow pace it curiously 'observes' through the doctor's binoculars, the old water tap, the wandering dog, or the prowling boar, returning to the same places again and again (*Sátántangó*). In one of *Damnation's* long tracking shots the camera moves along the pub's exteriors alternating between the groups of people at the open doors and the sections of textured wall. It glides now carefully like a 'typologist', examining, now like an absent-minded passer-by glued to the scene without particular interest. Accompanied by a pan, the concrete walls, drenched by rain, interchange rhythmically with 'group portraits' of what could be a kind of human 'cross-section' reminiscent of Bruegel, to the repetitive sound of the harmonica. What are we seeing? The camera wanders, framing the space and the characters in a complex web of movement. While the characters sit, drink, or walk, the camera is scanning: the space, the faces, the objects as well as the relationships between characters, spacing them apart, putting them 'on the edge'. The characters are etched into their spatial settings and the external spaces are the inner mental spaces of the characters. Man and space become one. At times, there is an 'insistent' or 'obsessive' framing, which makes the camera await the entry of a character into the frame. It waits for him/ her to do, or say

²⁷⁴ Flaxman, *The Brain Is the Screen*, p. 5.

²⁷⁵ Deleuze refers to the "theory of description" drawing on the ideas of *nouveau roman* as developed by Robbe-Grillet. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 7.

Svetlana Alpers also defines Dutch painting as the 'art of describing', as a kind of 'photographic seeing' before photography (the absence of prior frame and positioned viewer, the sense of the picture as surface, 'insistence on the craft of representation') setting it in opposition to the Italian tradition of narrative painting and Albertian perspective, in Alpers Svetlana, *The Art of Describing: Dutch Art in the Seventeenth Century*, University of Chicago Press, 1984. I will be referring to the concept of description throughout the thesis.

something, and then exit, while it continues to frame the space which has once again become empty, leaving the 'scene' to its pure and absolute signification as scene once more. It moves between spaces and characters, stopping for a while, hesitating on the space, lingering a little longer after the characters have left, or returns again and again to the same spaces, each time from a different point of view; as if searching for some truth. It never rushes into the depicted space, inviting the eye to linger on the surface and the viewer to remain on the edge.

Between one image and another, a gap opens, in which thought experiences its own duration. A new kind of montage that derails perception from its stable centre, a series in which each image is de-framed in relation to the image that follows it, producing a kind of space between images wherein thought lingers, oscillates, hallucinates ...²⁷⁶ While, as Deleuze proposes, the crystalline regime produces an increased sensitivity to time, the interval suspends the spectator in a state of uncertainty. Every interval becomes a "bifurcation point," where it is impossible to know or predict in advance which direction change will take.

Gaps, fissures, nothings: "on the one hand there is no longer a whole thinkable through montage, on the other there is no internal monologue utterable through image."²⁷⁷ There will always be in-betweens. The relation between images, no longer linked by the sensory-motor schema, becomes non-commensurable; a system of false continuity, an "irrational cut." What occupies the interval is an affect. This is a very special kind of cinema, Deleuze tells us, which has acquired a taste for "making the camera felt".²⁷⁸ The alternation of different lenses on the same image and the excessive use of the zoom, "doubles the perception."²⁷⁹

The waltz in Damnation – partially sentimental, partially 'longing', the voice of faraway void lost in the half shadows of the rainy afternoons, enters the space of

²⁷⁶ Flaxman, *The Brain Is the Screen*, p. 39.

²⁷⁷ Frampton, *Filmosophy*, p. 69.

This conception of the unthinking thought Deleuze noticed in Artaud's cinema. Gaps, fissures, nothings (the thinking of the unthought): "There is no longer any movement of internalisation or externalisation, integration or differentiation, but a confrontation of an outside and an inside independent of distance, this thought outside itself and this un-thought within thought." Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 278.

²⁷⁸ Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 76.

²⁷⁹ Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 77.

remembrance. The rhythmical pattern of a ticking clock, a whirring fan, the drone of a refrigerator motor, or the constant patter of rain, 'physicalise' time. The off-screen sound of balls on a pool table and the sound of an accordion accompaniment by the player at the bar, shift and confuse further the sense of foreground and background. Background is being rescued from the fate of uninteresting and unimportant. Silent whispers and background 'noise', usually pushed away into the unheard by the central action are brought forward by the stillness of attention.²⁸⁰ In the long opening shot of *Damnation* the black coal buckets move towards us, and we hear nothing but the running of the wire. The most 'deafening sound' of the massacre in the hospital scene is the silence that contains all the violence and unspeakable terror. Absurdity, polyphony, contrapuntal structure?

... it affects the visible with the fundamental disturbance, and the world with a suspension, which contradicts all natural perception. What it produces in this way is the genesis of an unknown body.²⁸¹

The viewer becomes lost in the fog of twilights, in the streets drenched by the rain, exhausted by the long and enduring 'non/adventure' in the history of the universe and the memory of existence. From scene to scene, from perspective to perspective, neither encouraging understanding nor providing emotional security. As one of the critics observed, comfort is one sensation never allowed us. And as we are waking from a bad dream that is about to start again, something happens, something that puts us on edge, throws in the gap of uncertain 'logic', outside perceptive and cognitive certainties. The point of view is not one of the 'knowing' observer, but hesitant, uncertain. Why? What does it mean? What does it say? This usual set of questions brings confusion and frustration if not irritation. These questions have no value here. We are left with the time and space of wa(o)ndering thought.

As multiple points of view inside the filmic reality interact, the same scenes being viewed from multiple perspectives, as the world is examined, approached, tried, indecisively, helplessly, it is our own position as a viewer that is at stake here.

²⁸⁰ See Yve Lomax, *Sounding the Event. Escapades in Dialogue and Matters of Art, Nature and Time*, I.B. Taurus Publishers, London and New York, 2005, p. 37.

²⁸¹ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 194.

According to Claire Colebrook this liberation of the sequencing of images from any single observer, so that the affect of cinema is the presentation of an 'any point whatever', is what makes cinema *cinematic*. "By maximising its own internal power, she writes, cinema frees images from the organising structure of everyday perception and thus chooses to follow life."²⁸² Things become pure sensations, composed of the "disjunctive synthesis of impossible points of view."²⁸³ In 'forgetting' the established perspective, amnesia does not repeat the past. We are not just given connecting points of view of different mobile sections, we are freed from viewpoint altogether.²⁸⁴ Béla Tarr's films are assemblages of images in the 'narrative' of time and aesthetic in a total reversal of values, a complete disruption of optics, perspective, and logic."²⁸⁵ In the rhythms of the camera's movements, in its circling, bending and turning, crossing and surrounding movements, in its slower or faster pace, there lies a hidden poetic ideal, *a non comprehensive thought independent of the story line*.²⁸⁶

The sense of an unreal, hallucinatory dream-like world is at the same time very real.

While the sleeping bodies (*Sátántangó*) are 'watched' by the camera 'gliding' above them again and again, the voice-over 'relates' everyone's dream. As the dreams are being told, the camera movement becomes the incredibly touching 'eye' revealing slowly and repetitively, the sleeping, vulnerable bodies, and their 'disembodied' dreams. The sense of surrealistic, dreamy imagery is the result of an arrangement of real elements, a kind of creative constructing, rather than what we accept as 'surrealistic imaging'. Nothing is 'artificial' in the way these images are constructed. At times, the viewer feels that something is 'wrong' with the way things appear on the screen, but is incapable of detecting sufficient proof to discredit the presented events on the basis of everyday logic. For Vlada Petric, this would be image "estranged" poetically in the tradition of the Russian Formalist poets and Constructivist artists, rendered obliquely in order to suppress the 'dramatic' meaning of the event, while encouraging the viewer to search for something beyond the image as an analogue of

²⁸² Clare Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze*, p. 31.

²⁸³ François Zourabichvili, 'Six Notes on Percept', in Paul Patton (ed.), *Deleuze: A Critical Reader*, Blackwell Publishers, 1996, p. 203.

²⁸⁴ Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze*, p. 53.

²⁸⁵ Frampton, *Filmosophy*, p. 62.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

reality.²⁸⁷ Or, as Erica Balsom wrote, it is the case where the spectator is left only with the interstices of events, engaged in probing the last tremors that emanate from something that remains unseen.²⁸⁸

The beyond, shining through the surface that is both inside and outside, is not an existential, human redemptive void and neither is it nihilism. In Tarr's world objects and things, to paraphrase Pasolini, appear charged with multitude meaning and thus "speak" brutally with their very presence. Physical, practical reality, "getting close to life", the mundane, everyday, boring chores evoke almost ritualistic presence of existence (different places are sometimes filmed to construct the scenes of what looks like the same place) which somehow intensify their experience, turning emotion to affect. An image "aimed at reality." "[And] there is more", as Pasolini continues: "there is an entire world in man which expresses itself primarily through signifying images: *this is the world of memory and of dreams*."²⁸⁹ For Deleuze, this is the moment of a virtual sign that makes 'actual' experience possible, the result of intensity and physicality of elements that have been given to time rather than perception. A 'world' of the virtual sign is not a transcendental 'other' reality but an immanent outside, a plane which is both inside and outside. It is an intuition that restores 'faith in the world' precisely by tapping into the intensity that creates it. Béla Tarr's response to the question of metaphysical dimension of his work is that of "always listening to life."²⁹⁰ Listening to life and the 'belief in this world' takes the form of a photographic 'index' devoid of referentiality and free from analogy.²⁹¹ In this sense, the image/ work of art is a 'vision', a real, an expression that not so much actualises these virtual affects but gives them "a body, a life, a universe."²⁹² It does not represent or interpret reality but is a 'catalyst' through which the expression becomes visible but not seen. The image as real is both actual and virtual (not as virtual reality but the soul, the spirit, time itself); not transcendental Ideal but an immanent plane of

²⁸⁷ Vlada Petric, "Tarkovsky's Dream Imagery, in *Film Quarterly*, v.43 (Winter 1998/99), p. 27.

²⁸⁸ Erica Balsom, 'Saving the image: Scale and Duration in Contemporary Art Cinema', *CineAction*, March 22, 2007, p. 150.

²⁸⁹ Pasolini, *The Cinema of Poetry*, p. 560.

²⁹⁰ Daly, 'Waiting for the Prince – An Interview with Béla Tarr'.

²⁹¹ I take 'index' here in the Pierceian way, detaching it from analogy and referentiality, as a semi-virtual sign of the photographic real resonating with Bazin's expression that photography "affects us like a real phenomenon in nature," like a snowflake for example; an in-between sign. This will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.

²⁹² Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. xxxii.

creation. Steven Marchant, finds a metaphysical dimension in Tarr's "richly happening sequence shot" which gives form to the nothing.²⁹³ However, this might be a question of the open whole which brings out the real, the thing in itself, as Deleuze writes, literally, in its excess of horror or beauty, in its radical or unjustifiable character, because it no longer has to be "justified", for better or for worse.²⁹⁴ Here, the nothing 'happens', taking away the negation and the lack from the productive 'uncertainty' of what becomes. Image as real is both actual and virtual. It might be also the question of what Deleuze calls *spiritual determination*, which is not the transcendental system of values to which we conform, but the potential in the choosing the mode of life alongside thinking.²⁹⁵ The extremely long, disconnected, and enduring moments, no longer images but thoughts, put us in contact with the real – the unclear and dispersive nature of the outside. It is this "hypnosis that reveals thought to itself", which requires a new thinking.²⁹⁶ By giving us enough time, films intensify our interaction with the world and thought by allowing us to relate to it intuitively and affectively, through both the movements of film and our memory.

It could be said that the films consist of long gliding thoughts that travel the length of streets or caress the interiors, becoming "questioning, responding, objecting, provoking, theorematising, hypothesising, experimenting, in accordance with the open list of logical conjunctions ('or', 'therefore', 'if', 'because', 'actually', 'although'...)." ²⁹⁷ For Deleuze, this interpreting, hypothesising camera is 'a sort of third eye, the mind's eye', which "frames the 'action' in a whole network of relation. Restoring the connection with the world as belief. Wandering, as Giuliana Bruno found out could be also understood as 'error' (etymologically) implying rumbling, roaming, or even going astray."²⁹⁸ Such narrative thus invites a wandering 'response' with the movement of/in the image, a different kind of attention. Cosmic rather than universal, and machinic rather than human. It requires a shift in perspective – from transcendence to immanence, from reaction to intuitive co-creation – that is at the same time an

²⁹³ Marchant, *Nothing Counts*, p. 152.

²⁹⁴ Flaxman, *The Brain is the Screen*, p. 39.

²⁹⁵ Belief as a possibility of choice rather than moral duty or acceptance of the absence of choice. A question of ethics rather than morality, and life as thinking. See D.N. Rodowick, 'The World, Time', and Ronald Bogue, 'To Choose to Choose – to Believe in This World', in D.N. Rodowick (ed.), *Afterimages of Gilles Deleuze's Film Philosophy*, University of Minnesota Press, 2010, pp. 97-135.

²⁹⁶ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 120.

²⁹⁷ Deleuze quoted by Daniel Frampton, *Filmosophy*, p. 63.

²⁹⁸ Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion*, p. 15.

affirmed 'resignation' to the new, imperceptible yet to come. A passive resistance and a choice. In this way the reality of the trilogy can be perceived as a process of creative transformation of becoming, and not representation.

Film is a construction, a world of its own, and an art.

As a work of art, it departs from the domain of representation in order to become an experience, "the science of the sensible" Realism is disposed of in favour of the false and its artistic, creative power. Lived experience, also the result of imagination, hesitation or chance, stored in long takes, deep focus photography, "any-spaces-whatever", characters' faces or sound is also the experience of universal and cultural memory as timelessness, both actual and virtual, real and imaginary. The world, as Deleuze puts it, is neither true nor real but 'living', because, 'a Life' is a force that persists over time as an experimental, spontaneous and open process of transformation. Artistic here takes on the power of life, the time and rhythm of becoming as co-poiesis of art and life.

*The camera movement itself becomes a rhythmical pattern.*²⁹⁹

The rhythm in Béla Tarr's films creates the 'narrative' and dictates the movement. It could be argued that it is time itself which directs the image. Distinctive, ongoing and resonant,³⁰⁰ the rhythm seems to be of different movements and different times. The fugal repetitions, the tango rhythm, the rhythms of the everyday chores and of cosmic forces.³⁰¹ "There is repetition in a way with this fugue structure. Something similar is coming back, albeit with a totally changed substance, so the meaning is quite different... This kind of monotony is very close to me" he comments in an interview.³⁰² There are varying rhythmical patterns that establish a constancy which

²⁹⁹ Donato Totaro, 'Sátántangó: And then there was Darkness',

³⁰⁰ "The music, the set, the landscape, and the actors work together. You cannot separate them. This is the rhythm." Fiona Meade, Béla Tarr. Interview, BOMB Magazine, <http://bombsite.com/issues/100/articles/2909>.

³⁰¹ Unlike Tarkovsky, for whom the rhythm is equally important as a driving force of filming, Tarr's rhythm is much more proximate to the 'ground'; it envelops the viewer by its intensive materiality which is also the materiality of the imagined (virtual). There is no crossing to the transcendent other worlds for Tarr, he dwells in 'concreteness' of immanence.

³⁰² Nora Demk, 'Béla Tarr: Filmmakers Behave Like Prostitutes', <http://www.cafebabel.co.uk/article/2552/bela-tarr-filmmakers-act-like-prostitutes.html>.

envelops us and heightens our sensitivity to change: a ticking clock, a whirring fan, the drone of a refrigerator motor, the patter of rain.³⁰³ The monotonous 'patterns' of existence, hesitance, waits and returns unfold the time in-between vision and hearing.

The rhythm 'experiments' with time and discloses new temporal relations. It is as though the viewer, as Ronald Bogue wrote, "was going for a walk through different points of time, as though he was amassing the future by turning to the past, in the process of which, the memory of the past becomes transformed into the memory of the future."³⁰⁴ This is the power of rhythm, which is more 'profound' than a vision, or hearing itself, Deleuze writes. Rhythm appears as music when it invests the auditory level, and as imaging when it invests the visual level. This is a "logic of the senses", which is neither rational nor cerebral. "It is diastole-systole: the world that seizes me by closing in around me, the self that opens to the world and opens the world itself."³⁰⁵ As dance which carries life, preventing the return of the same in each of the films, the rhythm is also a force that keeps real from realising. This lacunary reality of the world is also the lacunar of the mind.³⁰⁶ The rhythm of thinking is enfolded in vision, folded in the "pleats of matter,"³⁰⁷ and unfolding in sound (and silence). Connected to the outside in a web of encounters-events, image-sound is used in a way of moving beyond communicative 'language', and into affect. This is the language of amnesia, the background sound the mainstream cinema discards, which, according to Deleuze, puts "in continual variation all components", "that enters the service of a virtual cosmic continuum, in which even the holes, silences, ruptures, and cuts have a part."³⁰⁸ For this 'continuum' is neither structural, nor formed logically according to the common sense of progression, but that of forking, diversions, repetitions, and waitings.

All three of Tarr's subsequent features are the result of his collaboration with the writer, László Krasznahorkai. *The Melancholy of Resistance* (2002) is the origin for

³⁰³ Donato Totaro, 'Sátántangó: And then there was Darkness',

³⁰⁴ Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts*, p. 25.

³⁰⁵ Gilles Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, trans. Daniel W. Smith, Continuum, London and New York, 2002, p. 30.

³⁰⁶ According to Deleuze, neo-realism produced a formal or material 'additional reality' which was equally the mental or the 'thinking problem'. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 1.

³⁰⁷ Expression used by Giuliana Bruno in 'Pleats of Matter, Folds of the Soul', in *Afterimages of Gilles Deleuze's Film Philosophy*, pp. 213-235.

³⁰⁸ Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts*, Routledge, New York, 2003, p. 24.

Werckmeister Harmonies; *Sátántangó* is also based on a novel by Krasznahorkai of the same title, while *Damnation* was developed from a short story. The films abandon the language of 'continuity', in the fashion of the Resnais and Robbe-Grillet collaboration in French cinema, in favour of the "crystalline narrative."³⁰⁹ The language of Krasznahorkai's novels is already 'deterritorialised' – nonsensical, fragmentary, and full of "boring holes." In films the language of speech and the 'language' of images are intertwined in the 'non-sensical' assemblage that is the result of an immediate life which has no need of language in order to create a style.³¹⁰ What Deleuze calls collective utterances: a-signifying voice/ gesture/ of subjectless affects, neither an impersonal myth, nor a personal fiction, but an utterance expressing the impossibility of living under domination. It is an affective becoming passing between "people who are missing" and the "I" of the author who is now absent, releasing "a pure speech act." An autonomous, impersonal form setting itself up in "the midst of unliveable or intolerable situation."³¹¹ "There I was, plodding, plodding, plodding, and plodding along!" the conductor Kelemen repeats abstract Beckettian 'recitations' in his endless pub monologue in *Sátántangó*.

Language as a collection of signifiers is bypassed in favour of the 'logic' of utterance. The structure of narrative, by enacting what Daniel Frampton described as a trans-subjective film thinking, is tending away from the causal linear progressions of communicative speech/thought towards the extremity of a dream.³¹² Neither structured, nor deconstructed, dream is functioning here as 'chaotic', directionless, and immanent time-space. Imaginary, timeless floating of images: "a dispersive and lacunary reality ... a series of fragmentary, chopped up encounters."³¹³ Many of the trilogies' sequences are silent or without words. Silent scenes are the most powerful images in Tarr's 'story'.³¹⁴ And with the words, the most important are those that speak poetically through the images themselves, in disconnected monologues, fragmentary

³⁰⁹ There are certain characteristics of the French 'new novel' resonating with modernist cinema such as fragmentation, imaging, as well as the 'false' (where past is not necessarily true or where impossible comes from the possible) where the emphasis is on the image rather than on narrative (continuity), and its language and structure. This imaging (the time-image in cinema) does not suppress all narration but, as Deleuze argues, gives it new value: it abstracts it from all successive action. It could be said that it is the dissolution of the action-image through "wanderings, immobilizings, petrifications, and repetitions." Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, pp. 98-100.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 225.

³¹¹ Collective utterance, Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*. The speech-act, and the concept of free-indirect discourse will be discussed in the following chapters.

³¹² See Frampton, *Filmosophy*.

³¹³ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 212.

³¹⁴ The silence will be 'discussed' in more detail in chapter/ exposure 3.

dialogues, and 'visionary' speeches. This brings us to the second way in which the language of structure is given to the 'logic' of utterance. The monologue explaining the eclipse of the sun by János in *Werckmeister Harmonies*, the neurotic, 'inner' speech of the girl in *Sátántangó*, the cloakroom attendant's hollow recitation of religious scripture to Karrer in *Damnation*, all have an autonomous, fragmentary character, and tend towards silence (invisibility). Nobody is given a voice, and nobody speaks in the name of the other. There is no more "I" or "We" or "You", subject and object intertwine, dissolving in the matter of image-world.³¹⁵ Personal and collective merge. Language here seems like a resemblance of "inner speech", the adult survival of what Jean Piaget calls the 'egocentric speech' of the small child, preferring images to words, and treating words as images. Disconnected and incomplete, the mental image – an internal, drunken monologue, works through figures, metonyms, synecdoches, metaphors, inversions and attractions."³¹⁶ For Giorgio Agamben, this is a primary experience, before human becomes subject, *an infancy* – a 'wordless' experience in the literal sense of the term.³¹⁷ It is the free-indirect discourse of Pasolini and Bresson's models, a poetic language as experimentation, which Kristeva saw in gestural, disjunctive rhythmic of asemiotic elements; an internal vision, or language of sensation.³¹⁸ This is imagining and imaging the world of the 'whole' that consists of Visions and Auditions that no longer belong to any language. As Deleuze asserts, these visions are not fantasies, but veritable Ideas that the artist sees and hears in the interstices of language, in its intervals.³¹⁹ The child in *Sátántangó* is the character, which 'acts' most 'creatively', uncompromisingly, imaginatively (even if in the most tragic way), 'choosing to choose', as children often do. Beyond or outside reality/ fantasy negative structure 'imaginary' here is not a 'fantasy' (opposed to reality) but imaging which is experimental: creative exploration of reality and the creative mirroring of artistic process. Expression and Construction. What this 'infantile' broken 'language' seems to be doing is resisting further the "majoritarian"

³¹⁵ Deleuze writes: 'I is another' is the formulation of a story which simulates ..., which deposes the form of a truthful story." Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 148.

³¹⁶ Frampton, *Filmosophy*, p. 23.

³¹⁷ See Giorgio Agamben, *Infancy and History. On the Destruction of Experience*, trans. Liz Heron, (Verso, London and New York, 2007).

³¹⁸ Deleuze discusses in detail the poetic 'concept' of free-indirect speech developed by Pasolini, and Bresson's idea of model (instead of actor) in *Cinema 2*. Kristeva develops her concept of poetic language as a kind of 'schizophrenic flow', as different, 'dialogical' (rather than structural or dialectical) semiotics in *Revolution in Poetic Language*. The concept of poetic language in relation to free-indirect speech will be taken further in Chapter/ exposure 4.

³¹⁹ *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 5.

(Deleuze) discourse of art and politics, moving outside the Oedipal structures of familiarity.³²⁰ What is more, the child and the idiot, the 'seer' of wa(o)nderous narratives, resisting the symbolic norm might 'act' as becoming-child of philosophy.³²¹

Blurry in its meaning, loose in its movement, the image-narrative becomes in a sense pre-verbal content, like 'day's residues' – remnants of remembering, mental images, not necessarily visual but auditory, tactile, olfactory or kinaesthetic. Fragmentary sequences, often circular and repetitive, are formed from the elements real and imaginary no longer discernible or distinguishable. As Deleuze notes, Antonin Artaud suggested that the cinema resembles automatic writing, simultaneously conscious and unconscious in thought, a "spiritual automaton."³²² He attributed this kind of thinking/time-image with the character of memory, dream, or subjective 'vision' which puts us in contact with the unknown. The language of wa(o)nderous narrative is the language of affect-thought, a wordless potential for sense and sensation. This is the cinema, which resembles no language, but consists of "pre-linguistic images" and "pre-signifying signs."³²³ The language of cinema, as Pasolini states, is fundamentally a "language of poetry."³²⁴

Regardless of symbolic potency of the whale, the prince, and the repeated biblical references, Tarr's images resist interpretation because of a kind of poetic short-circuiting that eradicates any conventional symbolic reading. The big, 'mysterious creature' in the centre of the town's square is not a representation or metaphor but literal cardboard animal left decaying at the empty town square. It is a silent witness, as is János in the hospital of events that reveal nothing, that only, as Andrew Schenker pointed out, "tantalise us with the prospect of a higher meaning only to deny that

³²⁰ Here neither the 'cirmes' of vouyerism nor psychoanalytical models altogether make no sense.

³²¹ Acting here is used in Nietzschean sense of the tragic, which is not the same as the reactive action of the resentment, and is the result of encounter, both, chance and necessity. Becoming-child of philosophy will be referred to further in the last chapter.

³²² As Deleuze writes, "Artaud believes more in an appropriateness between cinema and automatic writing, as long as we understand that automatic writing is not at all an absence of composition, that a higher control which brings together critical and conscious thought and the unconscious in thought; the spiritual automaton (which is very different from the dream, which brings together a sense or repression with an unconscious made up of impulses)." Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p.160.

³²³ Frampton, *Filmosophy*, p. 65.

³²⁴ Pasolini, 'The Cinema of Poetry', p. 547.

possibility altogether."³²⁵ The sense of enclosedness, mystery has been enveloped not in meaning but in paradox, a reverse of 'universal' myth in the semi-ironic disappearance of a story of which there is no more to tell. The move from metaphor is a move away from a representational concept of language, towards a concept of language immersed in the world of things – a vision, intervening among them, forming new bodies with them, capturing and distributing intensities. The meaning of the film is incorporated into its rhythm just as the meaning of a gesture may immediately be read in that gesture: the film does not mean anything but itself.³²⁶ Tarr denies that his films convey any allegorical meaning – "film is always something definite – it can only record real things."³²⁷ His poetic vocabulary belongs to 'the art of description', which attempting the pre-symbolic grasp of agile reality leads not to the illusionistic depth, but to the "untimely meditation" of shape, light and texture, that begins again in order to obliterate its object, like the body in the world, neither fully conscious nor unconscious, erasing the opposition between subject and object. Ambivalence in which the same procedure creates and withdraws meaning, the wordless immediacy of the visible, it is the language of affect, a sensible or sensibility, which cannot be organised into meaning.³²⁸

Film of the time-image is neither a language system nor a language, Deleuze writes, "it is a plastic mass, an a-signifying and a-syntactic material, a material not formed linguistically, even though it is not amorphous and is formed semiotically, aesthetically and pragmatically.... It is an *utterable*."³²⁹ The director does not take his 'signs' "from a shrine, a protective sheath, or from some baggage, but from chaos, where they are nothing more than possibilities or shadows of a mechanical, oneiric communication."³³⁰

They constantly intertwine with each other, becoming one with another, one through the other, dissolving the subjective/objective division. Hallucinatory imagery (slow 'motion', rain, ambient light) and concrete physical reality (texture, embodied

³²⁵ Andrew Schenker, *The Turin Horse. Review*, <http://www.slantmagazine.com/film/review/the-turin-horse/5789>.

³²⁶ Frampton, *Filmosophy*, p. 101.

³²⁷ 'The Melancholy of Resistance'.

³²⁸ Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze*, p. 31.

³²⁹ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 28.

³³⁰ Pasolini, 'The Cinema of Poetry', p. 561.

presences) coalesce and interact in a chain of production (outside judgment and outside meaning), caught in the perpetual motion of the crystalline narrative.

This is the image that we cannot 'say', it is beyond words. We can go around it, with it, into it, we can sense, feel, perceive but cannot say what is. We can utter sounds but have no access linguistically to it as a symbolic structure. There is no signifier but encounter-event. The real of poetic (non)communication.

Can one 'progress' from symbolic to imaginary?

Poetic 'communication' is different from instrumental communication, it is non-communication, an expressive event. It can be 'sensed' as kind of muteness, the silence of speech between language and expression, language and experience. Gestures and 'brute reality', as well as dreams and the processes of our memories are almost prehuman events, or on the border of what is human. People, dogs, rain, moods, textures... neither particular nor universal but both (cosmic, entering into 'larger vision'). Forming molecular coupling they enter into a 'mad' dance of becoming.³³¹ They are pre-grammatical and even premorphological (dreams take place on the level of the unconscious, as do the mnemonic processes; gestures are an indication of an extremely elementary stage of civilization, etc.). The linguistic instrument on which film is found is, therefore, of an irrational type. Absurdity of situations and tragicomical gestures, at times diabolical and sarcastic. The messianic status of Irimiás (including his biblical name) and parodic role of Petrina as his confidant, accomplice, and kind of Cervantian squire. At the end of *Sátántangó*, the doctor comes to a church ruin at the top of a hill, climbs a set of stairs, and finally walks into the centre of the church trying to find the source of what seems like the church bells. The camera continues forward to an extreme close-up of this source: an old man rhythmically clanging a steel rod in lieu of the missing church bell, while repeatedly yelling "The Turks are coming, the Turks are coming." Who is this old man? Where are the Turks? The moment makes no sense but somehow, as Donato

³³¹ For Deleuze and Guattari (*A Thousand Plateaus* and *Anti-Oedipus*), the molar and molecular are two different (not opposed) modes of becoming or perception. Molar is the level of the organised and static i.e. the state, while molecular is the realm of singular desires (flux and flows) i.e. the multiplicity of the pack. In terms of perception 'molecular' refers to differences contracted by our perception. "Becoming-imperceptible is a molecular style of perception which transforms our notion of freedom." (Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze*, p.129).

Totaro points out, "it evokes an ominous and portentous atmosphere which is a perfect culmination of seven plus hours of similar tension-filled 'senseless' moments."³³² The verbal torrents of *Werckmeister Harmonies*, reduced to a chill autism might be closer, as W.G. Sebald has suggested, to Gogol.³³³ In fact the whole atmosphere of absurd 'situations' of corruptible worlds are like the characters of Gogol's *Dead Souls*. The profound and comical, this utterances are weaved in the fabric of life. The three men are looking upwards intently at whatever is in front of them. Irimiás looks especially moved by what he sees, and drops to his knees. Tarr underscores what seems like this religious vision with appropriate music. We finally cut to a point of view shot of what they have been gazing at: a gorgeous ruin encircled by slowly lifting fog. The shot cuts to the three men with their backs to the camera as they walk away. We hear one of the companions coolly ask Irimiás: "Haven't you ever seen fog before?" Here the intensity of paradox of humour (joy), horror or pathos produces a strange sense of play, a hide and seek almost-meanings which chase each other in the rhythm of a never-ending waltz. And,

the relentless rain merged Schmidt's swearing and Futaki's cheery, encouraging words as he repeated: "Never mind old man, you'll see we'll have a great life! A great life."³³⁴

There is more than the portrayal of human misery.

For Deleuze this has great potential in terms of the deterritorialisation of meaning and judgment as cinema's goal is to produce images (imaging) which bring forth expression: percept and affect in a language of sensations. Even with its verbal elements, this is neither a language system nor a language. It understands signification as a process, and thus 'transcends' the language as a system of signs, beyond syntax or signification.³³⁵

³³² Donato Totaro, '*Sátántangó*: And then there was Darkness'.

³³³ Jonathan Romney, 'Outside the Whale', *Sight and Sound*, April 2003, reprinted in <http://www.bfi.org.uk/sightandsound/review/1394>.

³³⁴ *Sátántangó* (1994).

³³⁵ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, pp. 24-28.

And whenever a language is submitted to such creative treatments, it is language in its entirety that is pushed to its limit, to music or silence, to becoming imperceptible.³³⁶

This is a space of haptic visuality, which sees the world as though it were touching it: close, unknowable. Outside of image's visibility, in the sounds and tastes, on the skin and inside, amnesia as past and memory of the senses persists. Intuited and sensed.

The formal and textual qualities: grainy, unclear images; the depiction of characters in acute states of sensory activity, close-to-the-body camera positions and panning across the surface of objects; changes in focus, under- and over-exposure, decaying images are the formal strategies that evoke the memory of the senses. The rain, mud, and vast landscapes, decrepit interiors of post-communist facilities (a hospital, a government office), black-and-white photography that might recall communism's grey, the play of light off bodies in bed, a drunken revelry of a dance fog ridden, unflattering greys of blocks of flats and desolate roads, empty streets with dogs wandering in the rain and a melancholic waltz running through the images. Intensity in excess of details, repetition, light and shadows, dark and earthy images of heightened sensation. The peeling walls, or the cardboard whale do not take us beyond the 'surface' to the other world (as in Tarkovsky for example), but bring us right back to the earth, mud, rain of this world, to feel it again closely, physically, and affectively.

Intensities skew or scramble the faculties.

Percepts as "independent of the state of those who undergo them", and affects not arising from but instead passing through subjects, "produce a shock to thought, communicating vibrations to the cortex, touching the nervous and cerebral system direct."³³⁷ Therefore, the percept is the images before us, and the affect is the "becoming other." Thus, images are always both multi-sensory and embodied. Pure memory does not exist in the body, but it is in the body that memory is activated, calling up sensations associated with the forgotten/ remembered event.³³⁸ Hence, every lived moment is both actual and virtual, with perception on one side and

³³⁶ Deleuze, *Essays Clinical and Critical*, p. 55.

³³⁷ Flaxman, *The Brain Is the Screen*, p. 19.

³³⁸ Laura Marks, *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment and the Senses*, Duke University Press, 2000, p. 73.

memory on the other – an ever-growing mass of recollections. But this operation is possible only if the sensation of a particular domain (here, the visual sensation) is in direct contact with a vital power that exceeds every domain and traverses them all. This is remembering without 'knowing' what we are remembering, connecting to the 'universal', a collective experience of life, from before collectivisms. Amnesiac remembrance. We do not edit experience, Frampton reminds us, and the film shows this when we follow the lead character of *Werckmeister Harmonies*, János, as he surveys the whale, or when we keep endless pace with Mr Eszter and János as they walk side by side, their faces "bobbing in front of us for a relative eternity,"³³⁹ when we 'endure' the long walk of people on their way to the 'promised' town, tired and drenched by the rain in *Sátántangó*, or wait for the protagonist of *Damnation*, Karrer, to finish shaving. It is not so much a matter of technique, real time or depth of field, but a function of remembering, a figure of temporalisation, which "gives rise to all kinds of adventures of the memory."³⁴⁰ All of us hold knowledge in our bodies and memories in our senses. As such, the 'Image' is not simply the visual image, but the complex of all sense impressions that a perceived object conveys to a person at a given moment. For Deleuze, art is not a way of representing experiences and memories that we might 'recognise'. Rather, the image as a collection of sensations – a "sensible aggregate", or what Deleuze will call a "sign" that we cannot simply recognise and that we encounter, as such, at the very limit of the sensible. Percepts and affects born on the edge, in the cracks of the surface, pre-personal, non-representable, unnamed intensities. Emotion, on the other hand, does not render a 'space' to empathise or identify, but to 'feel' in a subjectless way, uncompromisingly, unredemptively. Affective interiority beyond (outside) subjectivity. Like a body-without-organs vibrating with intensities. The utterance of poet's creation moving along in 'majestic' cadence is the utterance of empty streets, the rain, the silences of half-shadowed textures. Dithyrambic rapture and rhapsody with the mystic dance weaving its captivating dreamy mazes.³⁴¹

Thus, what might be perceived as prolonging the never-ending hopelessness, and deterioration, is in fact a strategy that endows the image with a creative, productive

³³⁹ Daniel Frampton, 'The Way that Movements Speak: London Film Report, 31 March 2001', *Film-Philosophy*, vol. 5 no. 10, March 2001, in <http://www.film-philosophy.com/vol5-2001/n10frampton>.

³⁴⁰ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 207.

³⁴¹ Lauchlan Maclean Watt, 'The Chorus', www.theatrehistory.com/ancient/chorus001.html.

potential, which 'transcends' the language as a system of signs, beyond syntax or signification. Hence, taking it beyond narration and symbolism. These are the signs that we cannot simply recognise but encounter, as such, at the very limit of the sensible. The sudden encounter of a man in a bath at the end of the muted and ritualised violence of the hospital massacre in *Werckmeister Harmonies* for instance, or the silent look of a girl in the pub's window in *Sátántangó* – the 'irrational cuts', beyond language of representation or communicative speech, are not merely a sign of alienation or impossibility of communication. Here, the film-thinking enacts a kind of non-rational, figural non-communication, communication without communication as Lyotard would put it, communication of vision and experience, embodiment of tensions, complexities and ambiguities.³⁴² The sensations 'stored' in the image, which do not refer to anything outside themselves, pure 'mechanical' intensities before or outside of any meaning have a capacity to derange the everyday, to short-circuit the mechanism of common sense and to bring a different kind of thinking at the threshold of "the thinkable." Here at the threshold/ interval, both the reality of the film and the reality of the 'outside' coincide and interact. It is as if the past surfaces in itself but in the shape of spaces and personalities, which are off-balance, in some sense embryonic and inexplicable in the present where they surface.³⁴³

This is something one can only sense, ambiguous, singular beyond individual experience; physical, concrete, and virtually present, real in a non-realistic sense; a space of 'unfixed' identity. Here the outside, the virtual nothing, opens into other outsides to infinity; embracing all: the 'negative', the pessimistic, the sad, the melancholy, the real, and death, in the eternal return of no longer recollected amnesiac repetition of the same but that of amnesiac difference; a creative process of eventing/ 'imaging', where one and the same event is played out in these different worlds, in incompatible versions.³⁴⁴ Ultimately, such a universe goes beyond any lived experience; it exists only in thought and has no other result than the work of art. But it is also, writes Deleuze, "that by which thought and art are real, and disturb the reality,

³⁴² Frampton, *Filmosophy*, p. 75.

³⁴³ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 109.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

morality, and economy of the world."³⁴⁵ With the cinema, "it is the world which becomes its own image, and not an image that becomes the world."³⁴⁶

Thus the thinking image seems to be a question of style.

Tarr's style – a collaboration of sound and image in the variable compositions of a fugue – functions on two interacting realms. That of music: as an imitative, polyphonic composition in which a theme or themes are stated successively in all the voices of the contrapuntal structure, and that of 'psychology': an amnesiac condition during which one is apparently conscious of one's actions but has no recollection of them after returning to a normal state.³⁴⁷

Style creates the space of different 'becomings' in an assemblage of signs and images. It frames the living image in tiny fragments – microcosmic details – carved out of chaos or imposed on it, or both as a process of negotiations, details vibrating in a web of relations where "everything is connecting to everything else."³⁴⁸ Out of this labyrinth of encounters the new 'happens' in the nothingness of happening, in a creative process of imaging. Here the 'perception in becoming' enables the 'appearance' of the unforeseen and the unexpected that is an expression in itself; becoming visible without being seen. In this becoming one does not become another as such (identification), rather each encounters the other and becoming is something (this something) between the two or outside the two, irreducible to the affections or perceptions of a subject. Time itself, and the constant change it implies, carries the relentless motion that transforms all Beings into Becoming, instead of letting it *be* ...³⁴⁹ Cinema short-circuits the sensory-motor schema that governs our perception. Encountering the productive power of affect therefore permits us to confront what Deleuze refers to as "the 'microperceptions' that make up who we are – not just the perceptions of the eye that sees and judges, but also the disorganised perceptions of

³⁴⁵ Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. xxviii.

³⁴⁶ Deleuze, *Cinema I*, p. 59.

³⁴⁷ Definition of fugue, Oxford Concise English Dictionary.

³⁴⁸ Werckmeister Harmonies.

³⁴⁹ Hannah Arendt, *The Life of the Mind*, One-Volume edition, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Publishers, New York, 1977, p. 206.

the life that pulses through our bodies."³⁵⁰ Style allows for the creative forces of life, subject-less expression outside of interpretation or judgment. It is a real protagonist.

Choreography, immanent to the physicality in front of the camera, and following its own rhythm in a striking symbiosis, rather than imposing itself finds the order "inside" the chaotic physical world. The order lies inside entropy, inside the liquid and dispersive deployment of time, instead of simply being opposed to it: that is Tarr's style. It could be argued that like the whale, Tarr's style is the static image of time, i.e. the destructive force par excellence, shown and cinematically 'frozen' at the microscopic level of its everyday action, circulating from point of view to point of view. It seems that this is the style of living and creating as one, an aesthetic of immanence that dislodge the 'politics' from the dialectics of negation (Utopia). It is a manner of thinking 'towards the world' or with it, a belief in this world, not another, transformed one.³⁵¹ Style is creating an order which is then dis-ordered through the movement of camera and narration in a rhythmic repetition. The style in the most threatening one could say, radical. There is no value superior to life, Deleuze writes: Life is not to be judged or justified, it is innocent, it has 'the innocence of becoming', beyond good and evil ...³⁵² and the cinema:

carries the experiment further and offers us not only certain rhythms of habitual life as the eye or ear recognises them, but those darker, slow-motion encounters with all that is concealed beneath things, the images – crushed, trampled, slackened or dense – all that swarms in the lower depths of the mind.³⁵³

The characters, like the camera's different points of view, enable the multiplicity or 'muteness' of perception. They point to nothing but themselves and the situation they are in, and at the same time bring forward the expression of becoming. As such he or she refuses identification and by depriving the viewer of a position from which to act/judge, renders the viewer 'knowledge-less' and 'direction-less', that is, in the standards of commonsensical rationale, powerless. There are no carefully placed signs

³⁵⁰ Claire Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze*, p. 39.

³⁵¹ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 172.

³⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 133.

³⁵³ Anton Artaud quoted by Daniel Frampton in *Filmosophy*, p. 66.

or symbols to decode, no frames designed to send a message, only an Image in itself and our inability to do anything but 'watch'. Repetition, description, and point of view are intertwined, entangled in a framed space with no position from which to 'enter' the image. "To open up to the inhuman and overhuman ... to go beyond the human condition is the meaning of philosophy ..."³⁵⁴

To sum up, amnesiac reality functions as 'unreal', hallucinatory or a sleepwalking state of eternal return, a process of destruction, entropy. "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."³⁵⁵ It is also the state of 'forgetting' that might by-pass the accepted, established perceptions and thus create a potentiality for the new: now an eternal return of difference. Amnesia does not allow for a transcendental image. Being outside subjective remembering, it enters remembering in general as in the case of Werner Herzog's *Kaspar Hauser* who, not having any experiences to remember, while acquiring new 'memories' is able to 'see'/ dream the images he never encountered in reality.³⁵⁶ The regions of the past will keep their secret, and the call to recollection remains empty. He can no longer recall anything about it, but the whole of it is hallucinatory. The present is no more than an empty door from where the past can no longer be recalled, since it has already left while it was being waited for.³⁵⁷

It is as if the past surfaces in itself but in the shape of personalities which are independent, alienated, off-balance, in some sense embryonic, strangely active fossils, radioactive, inexplicable in the present where they surface, and all the more harmful and autonomous. Not recollections but hallucinations. Madness, the split personality, now show the past.³⁵⁸

The eternal return, memory repeating itself but differently each time, is a circle in the spiral of infinite possibilities. The repetition acquires a different dimension. In this sense, Tarr makes the same film again and again where what repeats is difference, in the return of new. Evolution/ history is construed as a process of repetition that is inherently creative: it is productive of difference. All life is a "rhizomatic mode of

³⁵⁴ Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*. Trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam. New York: Zone, 1991, pp. 27-8.

³⁵⁵ George Santayana, *The Life of Reason, Reason in Common Sense*, Scribner's, 1905, p. 284.

³⁵⁶ Werner Herzog, *The Enigma of Kaspar Hauser* (1974).

³⁵⁷ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 110.

³⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

change", without firm and fixed boundaries, which proceeds "from the middle, through the middle, coming and going rather than starting and finishing."³⁵⁹

Memory is 'stored' in the senses, and sense is this repetition that never returns to the same. In this way, amnesiac reality – because it is amnesiac it is new – creates the space for non-preconceived affects and percepts making seeing anew possible. Not from the perspective of the voyeuristic gaze but through sightless 'e/motion'.

Amnesiac memory can also be a question of choice, as opposed to being traumatically imprisoned. Valuska tending to his daily routines, moving from one to another, 'sees' nothing. *Sátántangó's* different points of view culminate in doctor 'barricading' his window ... What are we seeing exactly? And how is the I-eye (of the viewer) to enter the becoming of world-image of these films?

Emotion is a subjectless affect. As such, perhaps, amnesia is no longer an opposition of remembering but is a different kind of remembering – the memory of the senses, or 'mute' remembrance. Amnesia in Tarr's films is a potentiality, as it is an entropy. Forgetting and remembering embraced by the rhythm of polyphonic fugue, the to-ing and fro-ing of untimely meditation. A kind of amnesiac memory that plays on the idea of repetition. Two kind of repetition: repetition of the same (when history repeats itself) and repetition of the new (a-historical creation), based on experimentation and experience. The whole work revolves around questions of life and creativity, challenging pre-conceptions and perspectives. "The proliferation of intensities in art also destroys the image of a unified viewing subject who recognises a meaningful world that is there for us all."³⁶⁰

This kind of cinema implies a kinaesthetic way of experiencing space, and images stored in our memory, which are embodied and haptic as much as retinal pictures.³⁶¹ In a work of art we encounter ourselves and our own being-in-the-world in an intensified, non-personal manner.

³⁵⁹ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 58.

³⁶⁰ Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze*, p. 39.

³⁶¹ Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Architecture of Image: Existential Space in Cinema*, translated by Michael Wynn, Helsinki, 2001, p. 11.

There is always a temptation to put one's faith in God, a better world, Humanity. In Tarr's world there is no God, no morals, and no Humanity. In this sense his films are truly nihilistic. The nothing however happens here out of the affect/ desire and thinking matter. Belief in this world without a priori 'knowledge', without God, State, and heaven turns the world from something given into something to be explored and created, not according to measure of 'what is' but according to 'what this world is capable of'; an active and affirmative attitude towards the world.³⁶² In existential terms this means attention to life 'as it is' (which is not the same as resignation but as what Tarr calls a 'pathological clinging to life', a kind of Beckettian 'plodding along'), whereas in philosophical terms it is a choice to think with the movement of life. In view of this the 'pathological clinging to life' becomes an active affirmation, a wa(o)nder.

This is cinema that is not philosophical but which does philosophy. It does philosophy through life in a Deleuzian-Nietzscheian-Spinozan fashion through the excess of material detail and time of wa(o)ndering narrative. Cinema of wa(o)nder might thus 'function' here as a method and philosophical concept (of 'seeing' the world without judgment), an ultimate affirmation of life. Furthermore, the crystalline narration, by creating a vision that is no longer a presupposition to action, but takes its place, will stop the 'movement' altogether. The character, or the shot remaining immobile, will discover the "power of the fixed shot"³⁶³ taking thinking further, into the photographic 'in-between'.

³⁶² See Kathrin Thiele, 'To Believe in This World, As It Is', in Marcelo Svirsky (ed.), *Deleuze and Political Activism. Deleuze Studies* Volume 4, 2010 (supplement).

³⁶³ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 124.

exposure 3:

Rendering Real. Still(ed) Image and The Outside. Space.

*Photography is not a return to the things,
but a return to the body as undivided vision-force.*

François Laruelle³⁶⁴

*In obsessive framing, empty or disconnected spaces,
the filmmaker, in a certain sense, stops movement
and rediscovers the power of the fixed shot.*

Gilles Deleuze³⁶⁵

*What is a photograph?
'Nothing but relation, nothing but affect', we may reply'.*

Yve Lomax³⁶⁶

As it has already become apparent in the previous chapter, we no longer have an indirect image of time which derives from movement, but a direct time-image from which movement derives. This would be the fixed shot of the photographic, which by indexing its specific reality through the world immanently, erases the opposition between actual and virtual, form and content, past and present, and creates a special affective space of singular 'identity' – the real. Moreover, as reality is not constituted

³⁶⁴ Laruelle, *The Concept of Non-Photography*, p. 14.

³⁶⁵ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 21.

³⁶⁶ Yve Lomax, *Writing the Image*, p. 158.

by borderlines and functions, and identity is not a matter of limits but capacities, the relationship between time and space, between stillness and movement also changes.

With the time-image of cinema risen out of the ruins of post-war Europe where time as well as space was fractured and fragmented, the photographic 'fixed shot' stood out as an 'any-space-whatever', without identity and without name. Out of the 'grand-narratives' ruins, like a pagan Phoenix, orphaned and forgotten, the new and 'homeless' potentiality of image 'arisen'. Schizophrenic, multiple-personal, 'undeveloped', and affirming. It became, as John Rajchman observed, a "laboratory to make sensible the existence of time (as distinct from movement)" and to intensify the experience beyond the empty "banality" of the familiar ...³⁶⁷ This kind of image, brought to life by Italian Neorealism has been strengthened by East European cinema's aesthetics of resistance through the construction of camouflaged, ambiguous, and unspoken imagery requiring an aptitude of (de)ciphering rather than critique. This new, clandestine, and unfamiliar imaging enabled by the 'style' of encounter rather than judgment became for Deleuze, and others the way out of a suffocating regime of information or cliché.³⁶⁸ Such molecular politics of resisting enabled photography – despite the claims of realism – and despite the later digital artificiality, to free itself from the constraints of mimetic representation, keeping at the same time the sense of the real merging aesthetics and politics together: 'expression and reality'.³⁶⁹ Not in the image, but neither absent, perhaps 'this' (photographic time-image) occurs as something – 'abstract-real' – that vibrates in the space of intense folding (of time and space, subject and object, past and present), or "shines through" its aesthetic, rendering visible the event that is no longer and not yet, becoming 'future' for ever. A

³⁶⁷ John Rajchman, 'Unhappy Returns'

³⁶⁸ "No information, whatever it might be, is sufficient to defeat Hitler. What makes information all-powerful is its very nullity, its radical ineffectiveness. It is necessary to go beyond information in order to defeat Hitler or turn the image over." Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 269.

The Italian Neorealist choice of aesthetic was dictated by damaged by the war reality which required new ways of creating/ filming with what was available. Eastern European cinema was forced to invent a kind of clandestine, complex aesthetics in order to work and create within the regime of control and censorship. For Tarr (and Deleuze), creating new, difficult imagery, resisting assimilation into the utilitarian, undemanding, already given forms, became a question of choice, and of a different necessity/ importance.

³⁶⁹ "The flexibility of cinematic expression which in a flash passes from the objective to the subjective, and simultaneously evokes the abstract and the concrete does not justify [the assumption] that film confines itself to[following] an aesthetics as narrow as that of realism." René Clair cited in Siegfried Kracauer, *Theory of Film*, p. 83.

forgotten instant released from the world, fleeting from definitions, ungraspable by knowledge, unpredictable. 'Waiting' to be(come).

Thus, it can be suggested that what the concept of the time-image involuntarily discovered, was the potential of photography or the photographic, both making and viewing, paradoxically perhaps, that keeps fleeing from the information/communication regime of meaning-making and yet remains real.³⁷⁰ The impossible image of affect-thought.

Still in the still/moving convolution of relations, a number of questions arise. How can we critically and conceptually 'approach' such an image? To suggest photographic indexing, and particularly in relation to the virtual, is almost unthinkable within the established dialectics of a discourse.³⁷¹ Thus, in what way is it possible to 'argue' the impossible? What does it mean to encounter an image that is 'fixed', and yet from which movement derives? Why might it be important to look at the still photograph from the point of the cinematic, or perceive the moving image of the cinema through the photographic still? Most importantly, what can such image/s or 'relation' do, or what is it capable of?

When thinking about the film image, the tendency is, understandably, to acknowledge the multiplicity of different 'expressions'/ arts, not only that of the visual, involved in the creation of what is known as film image.³⁷² With photography there tends to be a more monolithic view of the image confined to vision (bound to the mimetic – a copy or death mask), and predominantly belonging to representation. Yet, if we move away

³⁷⁰ Despite Deleuze's criticism of photography as no more than a medium of information and communication, the fixed shot of the time-image brings forth the possibility of thinking about the photographic (and thus a photographic image) differently, outside representation and yet within the real. The photographic real can be thought of not as being referential of reality but as a link to this world in a sense of a radical immanence: actual-virtual, stillness-movement, absence-presence.

³⁷¹ Photography today is accepted either as the traditional way of meaning-making or its (post)modern deconstruction. On the one, hand there is still the need to defend its representational characteristic in the form of realistic or idealistic dogmas. On the other, the de-construction strategies of simulacrum (particularly with the rise of digital technology) leave the photographic image hanging in referential oblivion of a 'copy of a copy'. One way or another it is always a device that oscillates between the transcendental and the representational. Thus, between indexicality and simulacrum, document and construction, photography seems to still suffer the destiny of oppositional thinking embedded in the dialectical methodologies of negation.

³⁷² As John Mullarkey discusses in the Preface to *Refractions of Reality: Philosophy and the Moving Image* (Palgrave Macmillan 2008), pp. ix-xvi.

from perception/ representation to affect/vision, other possibilities might arise on the horizon of 'love' rather than death. The blind vision? Seeing with the eyes closed?

The time-image – a sound and optic situation is framed and deframed by the aesthetics of *durée*, in the narrative of w(a)onderous imaging 'strung together' or sculpted by the logic of poetic thought. Without a before or after, in the meanwhile of time, this image exists as its own reality and its own thinking; neither realistic representation, nor symbolic structure of communication it stands alone and present: objective and subjective, actual and virtual, ephemeral and embodied. It is a thing in itself, a different world and a different reality that is immersed in the 'stuff' of life, and which restores the link with the world by rising above the everyday, both transcription and construction (art).³⁷³ As 'a life', it transgresses the meaning of life (cliché). As art, it 'forces' to think by the power of affect, a non-personal, difficult, and 'unknown' space of transformation (an affect-thought), and thus might, as Deleuze hoped, liberate a seeing whose power is still unknown to us.

The silent, flat space of its 'secret' – the real that is located nowhere but 'pierces through' (Barthes) – that seems to hover, ungraspable on the surface "at once lived and imperceptible"³⁷⁴ is what makes the photograph(ic) 'most compelling'. It may, arguably be one of the most interesting in affirming life, thought, and creation as a (non)philosophy of "this world." This expression of the 'still image' as neither realistic nor idealistic, yet both actual and virtual is perhaps possible only through cinema or the moving image. Photography as an event of cinema?³⁷⁵

Could a photograph be thought of as 'real', outside realism and representation? As both an impression and an expression³⁷⁶, a gesture pointing to 'nothing', a shape

³⁷³ "A representation emphasises the identity of its object, hence it might be called a likeness; a photograph emphasises the existence of its subject, recording it; hence it is that it may be called a description." Stanley Cavell, 'What Photography Calls Thinking', in Stanley Cavell and William Rothman, *Cavell on Film* (State University of New York Press, Albany), 2005, p. 118.

³⁷⁴ Laruelle, *The Concept of Photography*, p. vii.

³⁷⁵ Damian Sutton, *Photography Cinema Memory: The Crystal Image of Time*, (University of Minnesota Press Minneapolis, London, 2009), p. 6.

³⁷⁶ Impression here refers to both impression of light upon a surface, and as sensation and reflection that precedes ideas (Hume): "all ideas derive from a corresponding impression and, consequently, every given impression is reproduced in an idea which perfectly represents it." Deleuze, *Empiricism and Subjectivity: An Essay on Hume's Theory of Human Nature*, trans. Constantine V. Boundas (Columbia University Press), 1991, p. 29.

carved out of chaos, or pause, a non-place of an encounter-event that destabilizes perception and implies multiplicity of relations recovering at the same time the link with the world? The link with this world does not close the relation with the world to referential or judgmental models, neither to realism or idealism as it is known, but opens up the experimental and experiential virtual space (not to be confused with virtual reality) for the possibility of becoming (vision).

In what sense – visually and conceptually might we perceive photography through the lens of cinema, and in what way might such perception be necessary? Cinema as a certain number of photographic stills put together in motion? Or is it more to do with the way the camera 'sees'? More to do with framing? On the one hand, it could be the many points of view/ framings of the camera, on the other, its ability to frame intensities, sensations, or affects. Perhaps it is the question of a particular framing of space-time, the relationship between stillness and movement in a complex entanglement, interchangeable and interconnected in the material and abstract sense; the sense of photographic. A vision-force.³⁷⁷

Thinking with and against Deleuze's ideas concerning time and space, stillness and movement, materiality and abstraction, the aim of this chapter is to (re)negotiate the photographic (image) as real, taking its 'inherited' dispositions outside of realism and representation.³⁷⁸ Situating it within the concepts of multiplicity, creation and immanence, I propose an 'image' – a plane of composition, a map – where the 'trace' and the 'false' do not exclude each other, and where time and space are not opposed.³⁷⁹

Expression, as discussed in the introductory chapter, is understood here through Deleuze and Spinoza, i.e. as image in time, no longer an image of something (a representing image).

³⁷⁷ Or vision-in-one, "radically immanent and universal; it is the given-without givenness of the givenness of the Thought-World." Laruelle, *The Concept of Non-Photography*, p. 17.

³⁷⁸ Continuing thinking the real as both indexed and intuited, not seen or perceived in the image (or as image) but 'through' it (its own image), from the outside; not so much a hybrid but as 'one' in a sense of both subject and object, form and content, presence and absence, and thus as radical immanence; as intertwining with/ aiming at reality affectively, where not only reality but also mind is 'lunacular'; 'this' "which prevents perception from being extended into action by putting it instead in contact with thought." Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 1.

³⁷⁹ I'm referring here to the distinction made by Deleuze between the trace and a map in terms of representation. For him, the trace closes the possibility of movement in the image (or drawing), diminishing it to the status of a copy: "What distinguishes the map from the tracing is that it is entirely oriented toward an experimentation in contact with the real. The map does not reproduce an unconscious closed in upon itself; it constructs the unconscious" write Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 12. The trace is of course the very attribute of the photographic, and in the light of opposing the trace to a map, the photographic trace would also be opposed to the false.

This would allow me to think of the concept of space-time, or haptic spatiality (defined by the flow of forces), which has to do with affect as different from affection (and yet not completely detached from 'bodily' desires). Not the same as phenomenological 'being-in-the-world', this is rather a question of 'becoming with the world' or alongside it.³⁸⁰ Rather than thinking of the photographic as a paradigm of either physical or virtual reality, the discussion will adopt the idea of the image as a plane of forces where the real is incarnated (repeated as difference) in the becoming-photographic; a vision which is also a matter of (photographic) thinking rather than 'philosophy'³⁸¹. This will be the realm of both actual and virtual, still and moving, objective and subjective, and the relations within and between, in the open experimental space of singular encounters; the question of affect and intuition. This chapter's aim is to move away from oppositional thinking and to propose a different way of looking at both the 'still' and the 'moving' photographic image, where the coming together of opposites is not a question of relation or hybridity as such but of a radical immanence. This will be possible by moving away from theoretical, critical discourses and meaning-making strategies around photography, and instead by exploring the potential of the photographic through the (non)philosophical and creative investigation into the cinematic 'time-image' where movement is 'stopped' becoming vision.³⁸² The emphasis will be on the idea of vision (rather than act of looking) as realised in the long, hallucinatory shots of Béla Tarr's imagery.³⁸³ This will give an opportunity to rethink space and image and their relation to one another, a way of returning to the photographic still, via film, as an image (and art), and as its

³⁸⁰ Being in the world in Deleuzian sense is different from its phenomenological understanding. This would be "an existential communication that would constitute the "pathic" (non-representative) moment of *the* sensation." "The world that seizes me by closing in around me, the self that opens to the world and opens the world itself." Deleuze, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, trans. Daniel W. Smith (Continuum, London and New York, 2002), pp. 30-31.

³⁸¹ Fragmentary, fractured/ fractal and flat according to Laruelle; 'punctured', mad and uncertain when attempted through *Camera Lucida* (Barthes); as creating concepts through opening up new 'problems' (Deleuze).

³⁸² Stopped or paused or stilled movement is thought of as an optical and sound image of its own vision, where time is 'given' to attention (not perception but intuition) and to contemplation (thinking from a non-habitual position, outside of sensory-motor re/actions); also not only in relation to stopped movement but in relation to the world/ outside.

³⁸³ The photographed has for some time now been perceived as a particularly dangerous form of short-circuited thinking and representation, since its chemically based realism confers it with an air of authenticity, of innocent directness, that supports all its stereotyping. This point, central to Roland Barthes' and other structuralist thought, has created a particular critical discourse positioning still photography within a fixity of meaning, and the defining power of the gaze. This monolithic view of the image, confined to the act of looking, bound to representation, has been criticised for some time now. See Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes*, pp. 435-493.

own reality (experiential and experimental space). It will be thought of as real which connects with the world but is 'rescued' from the burden of truth (of) either documenting or representation. Following the conceptual 'ethos' of the theses as 'photographic thinking' the writing will flow in the fragmentary, discontinued fashion opening up problems rather than looking for the solutions. Using expressions (photo, photographic, image), and concepts (still, moving, fixed) interchangeably it will aim at a materiality of 'what is' sensing the image-photo-world and thus 'teasing out' the real.

Disconnected by the irrational cut, fixed by aberrant movement of non-narrative, and 'banished' from the rationale of symbolic order to the 'madness' of any-space-whatever, the time-image brings the photographic image to the surface, and as a surface, allows it to live in a space of movement and change. In this sense the photographic 'still' could be perceived as a space-time (in its embryonic state of potentiality), which, growing in dimensions, "never stops reconstructing the identity of image and object."³⁸⁴ The 'time-image' on the other hand can become a 'moving photograph' that fills the image with a temporal flow of 'pure contemplation': "the mental and physical, the real and imaginary, the subject and object, the world and I"³⁸⁵. The photograph thus is also a plane of different relations where 'everything is connected to everything else' (*Sátántangó*) in a cosmic web of 'world-memory' which is also a multiplicity of 'unlimited finity', and a plane of composition that is also an abstract "plane of consistency" (or immanence).³⁸⁶ As such, a photographic image moves away from fixing the meaning and opens up the space of infinite becomings.

A photograph – the sense of space and vision, and a plane of (non)relations.

³⁸⁴ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 27.

³⁸⁵ Ibid., p.15.

³⁸⁶ 'Unlimited finity' refers here to different finitudes and distinct combinations "not unified by a single vital current." Colebrook, 'Deleuze and the Meaning of Life', in Constantin V. Boundas (ed.), *Deleuze And Philosophy*, Edinburgh University Press, 2006, p. 122.

The plane of consistency is also the plane of immanence, the virtual dimension of reality. Sometimes also referred to as A Body Without Organs of "the earth." "The Earth, is a body without organs. This body without organs is permeated by unformed, unstable matters, by flows in all directions, by free intensities or nomadic singularities, by mad or transitory particles." Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 40.

Also in terms of time, this is the time of Aion; an 'idea of time' rather than Chronos, which would be a concept of the plane of organisation: "The plane of consistency consists of the 'chains' of co-emplaced modes or 'stages' of abstract machines and of assemblages, and overall of the field of co-emplaced becomings or intensive fields of all kinds." Ibid., p.251.

The photograph is always a way of seeing different from perception, a 'viewpoint' among and within many, "not truth according to the subject, but the condition in which truth of a variation appears to the subject."³⁸⁷ A fleeting moment amongst many other moments vibrating in-between.

If a photograph is a hybrid, it is in a sense of a labyrinth 'ordered' into a web (variety) of all the (non)connections (the photograph, the image, the photographer, the viewer, the world and the outside – the indefinable process of becoming), different points of view that in their most radical form free our perception from any viewpoint. The "impossible" frames/ worlds folded in the potential of the false, this is where time puts truth into crisis.³⁸⁸

A photograph is also a paradox – both any-instant-whatever and *durée* at the same time, a trace and a map.³⁸⁹ Both absent and present, it is never 'what is'. Time here exists not as the chronological ordering of a 'narrative's' progression, but as going in two directions at once, where the perception is already a memory, "the pure present being the invisible progress of the past gnawing into the future."³⁹⁰ Already and not yet. Here, the past coexists with the present, objective with subjective, inside with outside, actual with virtual within the plane of immanence. This is the nonorganic life that is retained in the photograph in a strange contradiction: life within death as a potential of multiplicity, of what might come (next), or of what might have been. The living present of Chronos expressed in the wonderment of the photographic instant (Sutton), and the empty time of Aion as the meanwhile's interval (Yve Lomax).

³⁸⁷ Deleuze, *The Fold*, p. 22. Each point in the world is a monad, a perception that unfolds the world from itself without the requirement of a shared and anticipated space that is synthesised into the future. To say that 'monads have no windows' is to say that a world is perceived and unfolded without the assumption or presupposition of perception in general. As discussed by Claire Colebrook in 'The Space of Man: On The Specificity of Affect in Deleuze and Guattari', in Ian Buchanan and Gregg Lambert (ed.), *Deleuze and Space* (Edinburgh University Press, 2005), pp. 189-207.

³⁸⁸ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*. Impossible refers to Deleuze's concept of an open and divergent - but not antagonistic or contradictory - series belonging to one and the same; the only world, our world.

³⁸⁹ The paradox is understood here not in the contradictory sense of opposition. Rather, as Deleuze suggests, paradoxes allow us to be present at the genesis of the contradiction: "The principle of contradiction is applicable to the real and the possible, but not to the impossible from which it derives, that is, to paradoxes or rather to what paradoxes represent." Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, trans. by Constantin V. Boundas (Athlone Press, London 1990), pp. 74-5.

³⁹⁰ Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, p. 150.

Reality (the link to the world)³⁹¹ and fiction (the power of the false) are bound by the chance of a meanwhile. Both a revelation and concealment; an infinite web of (in)finite connections in the cosmic world of memory, and an embryonic state of potentiality. An empty meanwhile that is also a pure reserve. A photo – radical immanence.

How thus can the fixed shot Deleuze speaks of, exist as a thinking image that is never stable, defined, or captured, but in constant motion of inventing and reinventing itself?

Beautifully filmed, with extreme long takes and very little editing, Tarr's images are like a collection of old black and white photographs of a forgotten time. People walk, dance, get bored, drink, and muse on the universal order or disorder of the world. It is as if the world has been confined to the 'number' of still, and what feels like timeless, moments of 'nothing happens': mating animals, moving round empty coal carts, foul-smelling kitchens and smoke-filled pubs. Independent, singular sequences are folded into a textural dance of fugal repetitions as if time has been paused or suspended momentarily dwelling in the timeless now. Derelict buildings, dark, empty squares covered by rain, swamped by harsh light attics and muddy streets, rise up to the surface like old photographs, where the utterances of half-remembered worlds still resonate. Movement, space and time lose their respective positions, becoming imperceptible. The past is carried by the surfaces of buildings reduced to their own descriptions, the space reinvented outside of either control or recognition. The film's and the viewer's memories meet and interact in the 'any-pace-whatever' – an empty space of Aion. The sense of endless decay and suffocating intensity of style 'deceptively' point to unstoppable, degrading hopelessness.³⁹² Here the image in time becomes 'pure expression', no longer image of something but an image-affect-thought. Tarr's hallucinatory image, enfolded in the long, wandering shot, not only destabilises the still/ moving opposition but throws in motion of experiments and experiences the established notions of image, photography, perception, and time. The relation between

³⁹¹ Again, this not phenomenological being in the world (perception) but intuitive misrecognition; percepts and affects, rather like *Camera Lucida's* *punctum* cut off from its psychological and phenomenological attachments.

³⁹² Tarr's films have often been interpreted in terms of being bleak, dark, and even nihilistic. See András Bálint Kovács, 'The World According to Tarr', in *Kinokultura*, <http://www.kinokultura.com/specials/7/kovacs.shtml>.

the film, the viewer, the world, and the outside are interconnected in the process of creative transformation brought forth by the director.³⁹³ The rainy image of Hungary is a powerful and unique "vision" stored in long takes, deep focus photography, "any-spaces-whatever," characters' faces, "architextures" of settings, vision and sound. The image that becomes rendered (sensed/ felt) in moments of percepts and affects, through the photographic, neither 'art' nor information. Difficult, intense, disquieting in its seeming bleakness and its absurd tragicomedy, it is an image in the process of what Claire Colebrook calls, rendering visible imaging itself "not yet incorporated to a viewpoint, ordered into line of time."³⁹⁴

Instead of concentrating exclusively on Deleuze's linking of the fixed shot to 'crystalline regime' (Damian Sutton's reinterpreting of still photography³⁹⁵), the concept of the photographic will attempt to unpack or decipher the still photographic image by looking at the concepts of stillness and movement in relation to space as a plane, both virtual and actual, of composition (art), of immanence (philosophy), and of the outside (ethics). The deciphering, as mentioned already earlier, will take a form of 'sensing' (rather than defining or synthesising) with Tarr's imagery and the photographic concepts involved.

"Photography affects us like a phenomenon in nature," wrote Bazin, "like a flower or a snowflake whose vegetable or earthly origins are an inseparable part of their beauty."³⁹⁶ Photography's affect 'identical' to that of a 'phenomenon in nature', is more than simple objectivity or the 'naïve realism' Bazin is often 'accused' of. As both, the 'camera consciousness', which combines human and non-human 'seeing' into not so much a way of seeing but a new vision, a seeing (an eye-camera-world process of rendering visible each time of encounter, never a priori or given), and the material existence of all life, photography becomes a plane of consistency/ composition where every element (sign) is the enlargement or extension of material intensity.³⁹⁷

³⁹³ This could be thought of with Laruelle's concept of a photographer who "ceases interminably to verify the supposed identity of things, escapes the obsessive-compulsive interpretation of philosophies and their sub-systems. Instead, he 'gives' to things – manifesting as it is, without producing or transforming it – their real identity." Laruelle, *The Concept of Photography*, p. 56.

³⁹⁴ Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze*, p. 53.

³⁹⁵ Sutton, *Photography Cinema Memory*.

³⁹⁶ Bazin, 'The Ontology of the Photographic Image', p. 13.

³⁹⁷ As Pasolini suggested, the objects of reality have become units of image, at the same time the movement-image has become a reality which 'speaks' through objects. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 27.

Moreover, the 'beauty' read here with Peirce's (and, by extension Deleuze's) 'semantics' can not be perceived as a form imposed upon matter, or a thought-mass of linguistics, but as direct experience which is also a thought (a matter/ brain coupling).³⁹⁸ We could extend this to include the photographic index as material-abstract sign of a particular mode of expression as this-world-image coupling, outside signification and outside reference.³⁹⁹ This would be an experience that can never be known but only 'captured' as potential, where the relation of the real world and affect-thought is immanently 'unrecognisable', neither through aesthetic judgment nor through dialectics of political re-action. The material world extended to the materiality of the photograph via photographer-camera-eye is experienced through the immaterial sign enabled by the style/ framing. It might also be the camera/ optical unconscious – a time as 'infinite opening',⁴⁰⁰ and space for something unknown or unexpected about to happen. This has a potential for restoring the direct link to the world not through its reproduction but through the belief in this world as "unlimited finity." This is not so much a question of perception held within the frame of another perception (Sutton),⁴⁰¹ but the complex relationship of indexicality and the unconscious in a multiple framing of immanent becomings (between the world and

³⁹⁸ Matter is not just the material element of the subject's thought but is the material element of all life, of which the subject is only one mode of expression. This material existence is necessary for thought, and is actualised in thought and the sign. The sign does not result from the imposition of form, but instead, the sign teases out of matter what is already real, yet abstract. See Roger Dawkins, 'The Problem of a Material Element in the Cinematic Sign. Deleuze, Metz and Peirce', in Angelaki, vol.8, no.3, 2003, pp. 155-66. This is not the question of a referent or analogy, but what Pasolini called 'Ur-code' which, "independently of any language system, makes the phoneme of the image from real objects and the moneme of reality from the image." Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 276.

³⁹⁹ Index is thought of here in the context of Peirce's theory of signs, as outside referentiality and symbolism. As also outside transcendence, it becomes, on the other hand, the link to this world, As a sign of in-between (Deleuze excludes index from his discussion of non-referential, non-signifying signs) it is the domain of both actual and virtual. This is not a question of contrasting analogue to digital but more importantly of remaining within the immanence of actual and virtual (not reality and virtual reality which points to transcendence), and within the Deleuzian emphasis of 'this world' (not any other or better world). The index is folded within the world and the outside immanently.

⁴⁰⁰ "...there must be "a birth of the world that is not completely restricted to the experience of our motivity" and "the most distant recollection of image must be separated from all movement of bodies" writes Deleuze with Jean-Louis Schefer, *Cinema 2*, p. 36.

The unconscious is understood here after Deleuze, as a constructive opening to the outside rather than the psychoanalytical negative space of repression as in Krauss's 'optical unconscious', or Foster's *The Return of the Real*. Rosalind E. Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious* (MIT Press, 1994); Hall Foster, *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1996).

⁴⁰¹ As cinema's rediscovery of the photograph's *free-indirect proposition*, Sutton, *Photography, Cinema, Memory*, p.104.

According to Laruelle, for instance, photography is not a model of perception, it supposes (not pre-supposes) perception, requires it, refers to it. Laruelle, *The Concept of Non-Photography*, p. 7. Vertov's *Man with a Movie Camera* (1929) might be considered as a practical exploration of this proposition.

(non)human/ camera framings). It is an affect of the instant in a moment of a spontaneous 'optical situation' that is real, not a copy of the real; the momentary (be)coming together of the inside and the outside, the form and the content in the image-world by the way of re-thinking/ redefining perception altogether. It is the way a photograph grasps this world, the image and the outside, in the "image that is a reality of nature, namely an hallucination that is also a fact."⁴⁰² A mad image chafed by reality.⁴⁰³ Cinema (photography) represents reality through reality.⁴⁰⁴ This is not the question of analogue versus digital, aesthetics versus politics, but of the image that is 'impossible': capable of bringing forth the forces of life as becoming, and as such, becoming itself with the world and the viewer. Perhaps, the question would be as Deleuze 'stated'," ... not to achieve a real as it would exist independently of the image, but to achieve a before and an after as they coexist with the image, as they are inseparable from the image."⁴⁰⁵ Such an image shatters our expectations – the shared 'knowledge' (of image and of reality) giving us instead the direct experience of 'reality' – an intensity of affect, as a singular becoming, and the 'beauty' not of the beautiful but of the 'sublime'.⁴⁰⁶ This paradoxical 'indexicality' of the photographic within 'this world', between the thing and representation, is what Tarr's 'unrecognisable' imagery sense imperceptibly and intensely. Against 'natural perception' and 'unnatural cliché', it resists appropriation.⁴⁰⁷ A strange kind of 'realism' where the world/ life thinks itself through the image immanently.

When Tarr speaks about "developing emotions" which is something "physical, concrete and clear", about "just some lenses that are objective", and "the real thing",

⁴⁰² Bazin, 'The Ontology of the Photographic Image', p.16.

This is not the result of the exposure to the unmediated real world (Lacan) that in the dissolution of the ego would lead to the implosion of all meaning. For Deleuze and Guattari, the dissolution of the "I" is a moment of encounter and becoming which is thought in positive terms (outside subjectivity). Deleuze, Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, p.143

⁴⁰³ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p. 119

⁴⁰⁴ This is not the question of a referent or analogy, but what Pasolini called 'Ur-code' which, "independently of any language system, makes the phoneme of the image from real objects and the moneme of reality from the image." Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p.276.

⁴⁰⁵ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p.36.

⁴⁰⁶ The sublime is referred here to the Deleuzian reformulation of Kant's idea of the sublime. For Deleuze, upon encountering something too terrible or too beautiful, the synthesising power of the faculties are shattered, and are replaced by difference in itself; the pre-subjective, impersonal "sensation-event." See Stephen Zepke, 'Contemporary Art – Beautiful or Sublime? Kant in Rancière, Lyotard and Deleuze', in *Avello Publishing Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 1. 2011, p. 4.

⁴⁰⁷ 'Unnatural cliché' refers to the shock factor employed by many mainstream cinemas of 'action'.

he gestures towards his complex and uncompromisingly 'difficult' imagery, "closer to life than the cinema", and so intense it "becomes more real than reality."⁴⁰⁸

It is a plastic mass, an a-signifying and a-syntactic material even though it is not amorphous and is formed semiotically, aesthetically and pragmatically.⁴⁰⁹

Film and photography, writes Lisabeth During, are not "modelled" "but moulded in the crucible of real things."⁴¹⁰ Similarly for Deleuze, the image is not analogical in a sense of resemblance, neither a codification; "the image is the object." It is "the modulation of the object itself" which re-positions the 'analogical' from resemblance to a process of a transformation (of the mould), and a sign from linguistic to 'material'.⁴¹¹ This is the photography's resistance to language. Neither language nor a language system, but "[d]escriptive science of reality", the photographic sits in-between what could be called an 'estranged' resemblance, and "signaletic material"; "the thing itself caught in movement" – a modulation. As such, it is the operation of the real, "in so far as it constitutes and never stops reconstituting the identity of image and object."⁴¹² Such index as a conduit to affect, an in-between sign, a gap of non-resemblance unhinged from designation, lacking a referent is "unmooring the conditions of truth."⁴¹³ By the way of [this] 'factuation', it would be the utterable of poetic experimentation with the world, grounded in the image but never given; an index as 'nothing to say'. The process of indexing the real world 'happens' in Tarr's

⁴⁰⁸"I'm able to develop emotions from you, but it's always physical, concrete, and clear. I cannot use any metaphors. I cannot use any symbols. What I have are just some lenses, which are objective. I tell you and show you real things" Béla Tarr, Interview with Fiona Meade, <http://bombsite.com/issues/100/articles/2909>.

The "reality more real than reality" was Alfred Steiglitz's 'aim' in photography.

⁴⁰⁹ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 28

⁴¹⁰ Lisabeth During, 'Innocence and Ontology', in Temenuga Trifonova (ed), *European Film Theory* (Routledge, New York and London), p. 262.

⁴¹¹ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 26-27

⁴¹² Ibid, p. 27. The 'thing caught in movement' here, or a pause (used throughout the project) is not the same as a photogram - a single unit of film strip, and a film still – the term used in film-theory in discussions between cinema and photography. See Garrett Stewart, *Between Film and Screen-Modernism and Photo Synthesis* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999). Neither is it the movement registered in the series of still photograph like those of Edward Muybridge. It is rather a singular sense of a moment lacking nothing, a 'thisness' as a individuality different from that of a thing or a subject.

Signaletic material, which includes all kinds of modulation features, sensory (visual and sound), kinetic, intensive, affective, rhythmic, tonal, and even verbal, which Deleuze speaks of in relation to movement, could be also extended to the still photographic in terms of index as non-linguistic, material sign, similar to those (opsigns, sonsigns) he employs for the cinema. Ibid., 28

⁴¹³ Massumi, 'Introduction', *Shock to Thought*, p. xv.

imaging a posteriori in a sense that it envisions the world but never follows any scripted pattern of narration, or linear logic of progression.⁴¹⁴ The filming occurs through the detailed attention to the world, and the letting go of any clear or hidden agenda, or judgment, which gives an impression that things are indeed being caught in the in-between, in becoming without before or after.

Thus, we could think about the world photographically as a starting point, or a middle without a centre; not as being in the world (phenomenologically) but becoming with the world affectively.⁴¹⁵ The 'had been' of Barthes's *punctum* as one of many potential 'beings' in the immanence of the photo-world, might be thought of as be-ing of, or with, 'this world', intuitively (Bergson). Indexicality thus, as 'ur-code' and haecceity, moves from referentiality/ commentary and signification to the 'believe in this world as it is'.⁴¹⁶ Similarly perhaps to Neorealist imagery, which, by "severing the link between the man and the world", has already moved from realism/ representation to 'belief'. With later modernist cinema, the belief was 'replaced' with a totally different and radical sense of belief as difference. Would it be possible to say that the link with the world (as it is), outside World, and outside Man, can be restored via the index as "an *index sui* prior to any indication,"⁴¹⁷ as a material empty sign, not linguistic but 'worldly', of the reserve. Index as haecceity, thisness, *sunya*, the void, or sovereign contingency.⁴¹⁸ Presence (only) of affect through co-existence with the world, a pure potentiality in a real sense of immanent becoming.

Laruelle's photographic apparatus "negotiates the re-entry of the World in the abstract photographic stance ... And this synthesis – where the claim of the World over

⁴¹⁴ Tarr often talks about having everything in his mind before starting the filming. At the same time he refuses to work according to script. Moreover, he sees the process of filming as a collaboration with those involved, including the places (and people) where the filming occurs.

⁴¹⁵ Becoming affectively refers here to the Spinozan and Deleuzian becoming through the encounter with the world (through empowering or disempowering, affecting and being affected).

⁴¹⁶ Believing in this world, as will be discussed later, acquires a different understanding when thought of outside transcendence and teleological 'narratives'. In this way it does not mean accepting the status quo but 'repositioning' the belief within the 'materiality' of thinking/ creating rather than the transcendental of ideas.

Deleuze, *Cinema 2*.

⁴¹⁷ Francois Laruelle, 'The Truth According to Hermes: Theorems of The Secret and Communication', in *Parrhesia*, Number 9, 2010, p. 18.

⁴¹⁸ Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p. 5.

abstract vision-force is at once satisfied and postponed, where its resistance is admitted and displaced" – "is perhaps nothing other than art."⁴¹⁹

How can we think, or act/ experience, this relation to the world which is real?

Could indexicality (as non-referential) be thought of as the world that is 'incarnated' in the image, that is a result of the in-between actual and virtual "of an impassive mechanical process" (Bazin), and of 'passive vitalism' (Colebrook); the relation between this world and photography, and the question of presence? As de-centred 'perception' setting time/ vision-force free from any linkage (Deleuze)? An index-gesture pointing to itself? Or a metamorphic eye, neither objective nor subjective, a new vision each time?

The photographic thinking of the real does not know the world, it cannot delineate or judge it. Neither truth nor lie, how little we know what the photographic reveals?⁴²⁰

Could it be the point of 'emanation' as a trace of space-time (as affect), not a copy but a quasi-automatic transfer, the question of a different 'direct' link to the experience of the world (neither subjective nor objective but pre-personal in a sense)? Without the presence of Man and World (representation), photography opens the space for an 'instance of wonder' and thus potentiality (not will), for not-yet-human chance encounter with the world, which would then change the subject/ object position form fixed to one of many, an encounter that is empty of perception. As such, the 'photo', Francois Laruelle writes, "[may] not show the invisible that haunts the world, its folds, hinges and furrows, its hidden face, its internal horizon, its unconscious... It does not make the repressed return. It manifests the real, "the Identity which is its invisible object." This is paradoxically perhaps the link to this world and its 'index', as it – the invisible – is in this world. At the end (or the beginning) it is the world that is 'in photo', an event of 'real(ist) aesthetics'.

⁴¹⁹ Catherine Kron, 'The Concept of Non-Photography: Review', <http://dismagazine.com/blog/20047/the-concept-of-non-photography/>.

⁴²⁰ Cavell, 'What Photography Calls Thinking', p. 117.

The impassive lens, stripping its object of all those ways of seeing it, those piled-up preconceptions, that spiritual dust and grime with which my eyes have covered it, is able to present it in all its [...] purity to my attention and consequently to my love.⁴²¹

What is the love Bazin speaks of? Could that something be in-between (through the camera-photographer) the world and the photo, in a gap, or 'contingent' interval, a 'truth' in itself but outside knowledge, and outside transcendence? The index as the secret prior to any indication, and outside (human) reason? Here the index and the *punctum* might come together in "this silence or this darkness – when they are absolutely deprived of transcendence, but not of positivity."⁴²² Perhaps in a complex entanglement of experience and experiment, in a radical rejection of the Self and the Other, without the Name or Origin, an 'orphan' innocence of singular encounter can resonate as 'love'.⁴²³

Thinking through Blanchot, this might be the a singularity of an encounter as a vision without 'seeing' that allows the 'unknowable secret' to be discovered, to resonate/affect without ever being exposed, and thus can only work as real through non-communication, and not-knowing, radically and rigorously. Here the secret (not mystery) of the flat silence, or what McMahon calls the 'flattening out of moments',⁴²⁴ the affirmed darkness flickers on the surface of the photograph, never what it is. These are the "clandestine encounters" with the world, radically unknown, and outside nostalgia, or 'mysticism'.⁴²⁵ Time is no longer a progression to and from privileged points, "that gives a priori order and depth of personal or historical meaning to the

⁴²¹ Bazin, 'The Ontology of the Photographic Image', p. 15.

⁴²² "The secret", Laruelle writes, "contains in it no fragment of the World, of History, of Meaning, etc.: it is radically finite and for this reason inalienable." Bazin, 'The Ontology of the Photographic Image', p. 15.

⁴²³ Perhaps this is what Katherine Malabou calls the plasticity of the subject, which never springs back into its 'original' form—it is malleable, but it can also explode and create itself anew. See Noëlle Vahanian, 'A Conversation with Catherine Malabou', *Journal for Cultural and Religious Theory*, vol. 9 no. 1 (Winter 2008): pp. 1-13. Also reprinted online: <http://www.jcrt.org/archives/09.1/Malabou.pdf>.

⁴²⁴ Drawing on Deleuze's *Cinema* books, Melissa McMahon talks about the flattening out of moments in relation to the beautiful, where the time is no longer a progression to and from privileged moments, and where one moment is much like any other. Melissa McMahn, 'Beauty: Machinic Repetition in the Age of Art', in Brian Massumi (ed.), *A Shock to Thought. Expression After Deleuze and Guattari* (Routledge, London and New York, 2002), pp. 3-9.

⁴²⁵ I have borrowed the expression from the title of the book: Kevin Hart (ed.), *Clandestine Encounters: Philosophy In the Narratives of Maurice Blanchot* (University of Notre Dame Press, Indiana 2010).

course of things." One moment is like any other. "All are moments without qualities, indifferently divisible and possibly connectable", It is open-ended process of contingent time.⁴²⁶

The photographic image does not look *like the real*, it is real. The camera's physical intimacy, engaging with 'nature' at a different angle from that of copyist, breaks down the distance between perception and the perceived, attention and memory, objective and subjective in/ as an instant. This is a matter of 'truth', divorced from 'metaphysical' absolute truth, that of art/ photo as appearance, as surface, as life; as the 'power of the false', an *Idea-in-image*.⁴²⁷ The thing itself caught in movement. What we see is not ghostly residue of a departed reality, but the "material passing into sensation" (Deleuze). Henceforth there will be, as Bazin suggested, a living-on, a continued presence, or virtual plane of consistency, of the real in the photographic image.⁴²⁸ A photograph is a fiction: "wholly real but in its own mode" – the fictional realm⁴²⁹

What the camera sees is the "being in time" experience itself, the sensation of being 'in the moment', which is "done by fidelity to what is passing", by making concrete the sense of evanescence in ordinary things.⁴³⁰ It is itself the Uninterpretable from which an interpretation emerges.⁴³¹

Time and space become tangible in what is felt, experienced, and even thought through the camera not as a mediator, but as a machine in Deleuzian sense of (re)assemblages, entering into relations with other 'machines', bodies, movements.

⁴²⁶ Massumi, 'Surfacing Too Late', *Deleuze, Guattari and the Philosophy of Expression*, http://www.anu.edu.au/hrc/first_and_last/works/crclintro.htm.

⁴²⁷ Laruelle proposes the concept of a photo as Idea; an Idea-in-image more than a philosophical 'concept' which rests on a material support, on a symbolic order, which in relation to photography would be a technologico-perceptual complex. For him, photography broadens "the idea of the symbolic and of symbolic practices beyond their scriptural, language-bound or linguistic form." Laruelle, *The Concept of Non-Photography*, p.37

⁴²⁸ Bazin, *What is Cinema? Vol. 1*, p. 9-15.

"One does not photograph the World, the City, History, but the identity (of) the real-in-the-last-instance; [...] the rest is mere 'objective givens', means or materials necessary to an immanent process." Laruelle, *The Concept of Non-Photography*, p. 47-48

⁴²⁹ The photograph creates an image anterior to both copy and abstraction. Laruelle, *The Concept of Non-Photography*, p. 111. It could be thought here together with Proustian definition of virtual (memory) as "real but not actual, ideal but not abstract." Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, p. 96.

⁴³⁰ Peter Metelerkamp, 'Questioning Realism: Bazin and Photography', <http://www.metelerkamp.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/Questioning-Realism-web-version.pdf>

⁴³¹ Laruelle, *The Truth According to Hermes*.

Tarr's films seem to be thinking these conditions, the spatial and temporal conditions of experience, seeing the 'world' through the world. "The camera is an observer that captures the atmosphere of a moment, and reacts to life", he states in the interview. The man waiting at the corner can be a story, a story is not only human actions, everything can be a story.⁴³² The uncertain moments in fragmented composition, where every-thing is an "utterance" (a singular 'story' taken out of 'context'), 'evolve' in 'unlimited finity' of folded expression. In this sense, the nonhuman eye of the camera might be a more "natural" or "material" form of perception than human perception.⁴³³ What the camera does is free the image from its human perception.

The faces in the photograph could look at us, writes Mary Price, which is not merely the effect of true-to-nature-ness of the photography but perhaps the first self-consciousness of the camera.⁴³⁴ Not only as an independent view from a human way of seeing, but in a reverse sense of making the viewer self-conscious.⁴³⁵ The camera-eye is also part of the framing (as art), which enables 'vision', a sensation that illuminates for an instant, an impression and machinic assemblage. Perhaps it has something to do with a new kind of 'lyrosophicall' thinking that Epstein saw in cinema, one that could sense 'the unconscious mysteries of nature, including human, through its epistemological exploration of time as well as space'.⁴³⁶ Here the film, freed from human perception becomes an omniscient eye seeing both objectively and subjectively, 'framing' as a vision-force and sensation.⁴³⁷

Thinking photographically would then be freeing thinking from its natural/ human perception, and allowing for the 'seeing' to happen to us. And as perception is in matter (Bergson) and in movement, becoming photographic would be a-centred,

⁴³² Béla Tarr on *The Turin Horse*, an interview conducted by Konstanty Kuzma, in *East European Film Bulletin*, <http://eefb.org/archive/february/bela-tarr-on-the-turin-horse-2/>.

⁴³³ "It is the eye of matter, the eye in matter ..." Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 83.

⁴³⁴ Mary Price, *The Photograph: A Strange, Confined Space* (Stanford University Press, 1999), p. 142.

⁴³⁵ A "paralysing self-consciousness" which 'arrests' the viewer as Sutton suggests in relation to Barthes' *punctum*, Damian Sutton, 'Immanent Images', in *Afterimages*, p. 320.

⁴³⁶ Jean Epstein quoted in Daniel Frampton, *Filmosophy*, 52 Also Dziga Vertov's *Man with A Movie Camera* (1929).

⁴³⁷ As Elizabeth Grosz pointed out, after Deleuze and Derrida, that the first gesture of art, its metaphysical condition and universal expression, is the construction or fabrication of the frame. Elizabeth Grosz, *Chaos, Territory, Art, Deleuze and The Framing of The Earth* (Columbia University Press, New York), 2008, p. 10.

nonhuman experimentation with the world – fragmented, spatially intense, and instantaneously paused.

Thus, what might be referred to as the aesthetics of becoming-photographic, similarly to modernist art and neorealist cinema, perhaps, defy every Kantian separation of art and nature, ideality and materiality. Autonomous images in which the conditions of nature *appear*, intimating the existence of a world of their own, a deeper and phenomenally invisible nature.⁴³⁸ The becoming photographic of the image and the viewer, in-between imagination and perception.

It could be suggested with Elizabeth Grosz, that the long shot of the time-image and the still photograph can think about 'perception', of "seeing reflecting to us the process (the vision) of contemplating what is in/ becoming."⁴³⁹

Photography is essentially a way of making the world look back at the viewer.⁴⁴⁰

Rain washes over the world

Steadily Rhythmically

Embracing all

It rains onto the slopes, the sounds, and the gestures

Opening silence to thought

Speechless

The relationship between the world and image is immanent, outside or between realism and representation. The locations of Hungarian towns provide not so much a realistic credibility but a sense of material earthy physicality of any-space-whatever, and the richly orchestrated mise-en-scene seem to function independently as tableau or even 'still-lives'. The Doctor's exercise books and overflowing ashtray; the wilted plants in dark rooms; rain-soaked external walls; peeling plaster; the spray of rainwater; damp, sagging net curtains; the condensation gathered on windows; the

⁴³⁸ Lisabeth During, 'Innocence and Ontology: The Truthfulness of André Bazin', in Trifonova (ed.), *European Film Theory*, p. 260.

⁴³⁹ Bazin, *The Ontology of the Photographic Image*, p. 13.

⁴⁴⁰ Mary Price, *The Photograph. A Strange Confined Space*, p. 177.

sodden leaves in woods; the clods of earth on well-worn boots; the paper engulfing two figures in a windswept street, locking the gaze for a time longer than necessary, all seem to rupture the perceptual surface of narration.⁴⁴¹ The long, tracking shot of the night owl, the close-up of beer mugs in the pub, or the wall of a decaying house, as if digressing from the main 'story' are not just stylistic excess, as David Bordwell might have had it. They are, Tarr tells us, "the everyday tidbits that are very important."⁴⁴² Partly the result of camera framing and partly the result of a necessity on the part of the director to resist the familiarity of mainstream cinema's quick gratification, the detailed physicality of the 'tidbits', also provides the link to this world, the landscape, animals, buildings, objects, and weather. Their material earthy physicality and detailed texture intensified by the light, reposition the photographic 'indexity' from its 'status' as a copy to the creative (inter-subjective, and experimental) coexistence of the image and the world, not as a double of imaginary, but as a multilayered facets of impossible coexistences. At the same time, indexicality, by refusing the mode of representation, becomes pre-reflective, a kind of 'automatic' being in the world, a gesture pointing to itself.⁴⁴³ Idle periods, 'Stilled lives' of ordinary objects, and abortive empty spaces, 'trapped' in what feels like endless, staring shots, impose their 'presence' as a felt time of living photographic thinking.⁴⁴⁴ People attending to their most 'ordinary' daily activities in scenes often lasting for a great deal of time is what 'happens' in Béla Tarr's films. At the beginning of *Sátántangó*, the endurance of the hallucinatory, long, 'painful', slow movements of the doctor while he staggers to bed, his immobility and frustration, become almost fascinating. The step-by-step, detailed and immaculate procedure of opening the can of soup by Valuska before pouring the contents into a pan mesmerises by its sheer ordinariness. As we watch characters repeatedly move from one place to another, our attention is drawn to the 'excessive' elements: the mud underfoot, the gravel on the

⁴⁴¹ Matthew Flanagan, "Style's Function": Narration in Béla Tarr's *Sátántangó*, in *Unspoken*, 2009.

⁴⁴² Steve Erickson, 'A Brief Interview with Béla Tarr', <http://home.earthlink.net/~steevee/bela.html>.

⁴⁴³ Automatic refers here to the idea of a spiritual automaton. The cinema as a machinic apparatus of automatic images gives rise to automatic responses in the viewer, which touches both a subconscious and a supra-conscious level, involving both an affective and intellectual 'shock', which feed into each other and force the viewer into thinking. IJs Huygens, 'Deleuze and Cinema: Moving Images and Movements of Thought', *Image & Narrative: Online Magazine of the Visual Narrative* (September 2007), http://www.imageandnarrative.be/inarchive/thinking_pictures/huygens.htm

⁴⁴⁴ For Deleuze, 'still-lives' of the time-image cinema (Ozu or Tarkovsky for example) are not the representation of real objects but a presentation of time in itself; time which never changes but in which everything changes constantly. This is "a direct time-image which gives what changes the unchanging form in which the change is produced." Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 16.

road, the visible force of the rain, the contrast of greyscale photography. All seems to be equally important: a piece of furniture, the naked man discovered behind the shower curtain during hospital massacre, the faces illuminated by the fire. The abundance of material detail goes beyond what might be described as normal observational necessity, adds nothing except as perceptual material. Suspended in-between still and moving, actual and imagined, these 'remarkable events' throw into question our accustomed ways of seeing. It is never clear why things in the films are shown, what we are seeing and why. As such, these images bring emancipated senses into direct contact with both life and thought. The uncanny 'scenario', where the human *sensus communis* is banished and the new sense of the world starts to feel itself from with(in)out of 'what is', unknowingly, imperceptibly.

The photo renders indiscernible ground and form, the universal and the singular, the past, and the future etc. And photography, far from being an aid or a supplement to perception, is the most radical critique of it.⁴⁴⁵

This 'quality' of a still(ed) photograph frames the perception out of perception. Non-expressive, everyday, neither strictly objective nor subjective 'bits', none of them more privileged than another, including people and animals, creates a sense of material in their actual intensity and their virtual expression. Here it is the 'logic' of the events that determine what we see. It is not so much the distancing strategy of cinematic 'dead time' but the experience/ sensation. According to Deleuze, the most banal or everyday situation releases accumulated 'dead force' equal to the life force of a limit-situation. They are the effect of a remarkable event which is reported only through itself without being explained'.⁴⁴⁶ Sometimes, Deleuze writes, it is necessary to restore the mundane parts, to rediscover everything that cannot be seen in the image, everything that has been removed to make it 'interesting'.⁴⁴⁷ In everyday banality, the action and even the movement tend to disappear in favour of pure optical situation, which "bring the emancipated senses into direct relation with thought."⁴⁴⁸ Framed in black-and-white photography, the mundane, everyday, boring chores are slowed down and intensified in an almost ritualistic presence of existence. Like remnants of a

⁴⁴⁵ Laruelle, *The Concept of Non-Photography*, op.cit., p. 51.

⁴⁴⁶ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, op.cit., p.7

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 235.

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid, p.28

cosmic memory of everyday gestures, insistent, intense, and physically present, pointing to something outside. Purely playful, pictorial or experiential, those elements that resist or exhaust connotative “meaning,” that remain ever elusive, ever opaque. As Maurice Blanchot wrote:

[t]he everyday is platitude [...] but this banality is also what is most important, if it brings us back to existence in its very spontaneity and as it is lived-in the moment when, lived, it escapes every speculative formulation, perhaps all coherence, all regularity.⁴⁴⁹

Again, Tarr is not reluctant to point to the great influence of Bruegel on his image making, not only pictorially but also philosophically. In terms of the films' 'composition', it is the cosmic dimension he is interested in, where the opposition of the particular and universal collapses into immanence. When the doctor 'observes' the farm through his binoculars, the 'gaze' is slowly passing by the buildings, by Futaki urinating outside, remaining – for a while – on the dog wandering nearby or on the dripping tap, 'taking in' the rain and muddy texture of the place. In another scene, the camera remains on the faces of people gathered next to each other in the cart on their way to the new place, while the faces drenched by the rain blend into the black and white surroundings. One of many possible arrangements in the multiplicity of available framings, in a process that is never finished.⁴⁵⁰ The human condition, and indifference of nature, like the 'flatness' of the image, resist commentary and judgment. Here our gaze wanders, almost vaguely, as if gliding over the figures, and objects, only to lose itself in the emptiness irresistibly drawn towards 'nothingness'. Yet the perspective is not one beyond the horizon, but within it. The detailed, textured, and slow moving view of the windows tracks the worn net curtains with their holes and creases and the wilted plants, remaining on the surface, while Futaki 'recalls' his future plans. It is as if the 'story' is being weaved into the textures and 'colours' of the surface, disappearing in-between the light and shadow of another morning awakened by the bells. Enfolded into the composition, the 'direct

⁴⁴⁹ Maurice Blanchot, 'Everyday Speech', Yale French Studies, no.73,1987, p.13.

⁴⁵⁰ A plane of composition: a "composition of speeds and affects" (p. 315), formed through "a natural play of haecceities, intensities, events, accidents" (p. 310), "an immense abstract Machine, abstract yet real and individual, whose pieces are diverse assemblages and individuals." (p. 311) Its time is Aion, "a time of pure event or of becoming" (p. 322). Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*.

presentation of time', with its own rhythms, 'forces' us to feel and to think from the outside, yet still within the frame, inducing non-sensicality into common sense, 'alien' into recognisability, abstraction into figuration. Windows are not views in to the world, just surfaces where thought lingers. 'Boredom', nothing happens, passive endurance, useless time 'compose' unnatural relations. Not an excess (Bordwell) but exhaustion. The 'commentary' is 'rejected' in favour of 'description', where waiting and the exhaustion of space obliterate their 'objects', discovering instead a force (of life, and thought) which paradoxically, by "irregularizing the given immediately", prevents the crystalline narrative from exhausting itself.⁴⁵¹ The plane of composition 'resolves' into the plane of immanence. This kind of metamorphic (nonhuman) creativity would be the case of passive vitalism as nonhuman becoming, and of intuition/ imagination as subjectless subjectivity (Bergson).

The 'hopelessness' of a commonsensical 'progress' appears to be rather a 'tragic of a surface', a force that manifests through still 'passivity' and the 'uninteresting', long (en)during moments between perception and action. This is different from what is known as the psychological depth of repression or trauma, rather like a mad zone of indetermination and experimentation from which new connections may emerge.⁴⁵² Pathological clinging to life dissolves into affirmation, a 'leap of faith', a kind of perverse vitalism that is 'required' in order to resist the 'cliché' of the image as well as of thinking.

The photographic process of composition is also an event and an encounter-event in the way that it does not make sense of the world but opens the senses to its 'earthly' intensities and ambiguities. It is saying yes to all experience. Tarr often speaks of his practice of living in the place of filming for a while, getting to 'know' it, 'getting close to life'. What 'comes after' in a sense is not the description of reality but the 'identity' of the real manifested through the director's vision, immanently. One "does not photograph the object or the 'subject' that one sees – but rather, on condition of suspending [...] the intentionality of photography, one photographs Identity – which

⁴⁵¹ The force of irregularity, which is one with the breaking of all symmetry rather than lurking behind it, and which might echo Deleuze-Nietzsche's difference, is for Laruelle the force which prevents creating from exhausting itself into the circuit of teleological entity. *The Concept of Non-Photography*, p. 136.

⁴⁵² Rajchman, *Connections*, p. 9.

one does not see – through the medium of the 'subject'", writes Laruelle.⁴⁵³ The mundane, everyday, boring chores evoke an almost ritualistic presence of existence. In his world, objects and things, to paraphrase Pasolini, appear charged with a multitude of meanings and thus "speak" brutally with their very presence. At the same time their existence is 'determined' by what the photographer/ director 'sees', by "the affect of the reality that he alone feels."⁴⁵⁴ This immanent process, the affect-thought of multiple meanings, render the image pensive, ambiguous, difficult; somewhere on the border in-between still and moving, revealing and concealing, absence and presence, memory and forgetting. A kind of *art brute*, not in the sense of the 'poor image' in art, but perhaps as "outsiders art", with its "own raw materials that permit it to enter into external relations ..."⁴⁵⁵ This, working against the already thought and perceived, does not lend itself to a particular interpretation or analysis and, as such, embodies what real is.

This world-image, a physical space of attention, allows one to become fragmented, multiplied, disconnected and 'immature', with and out of 'I-myself-self-me. It 'pricks', it touches (my) self, outside and despite myself. It is an encounter, not with the traumatic Real of the Symbolic order, but with life itself. The self here is this singularity which resonates most with the Deleuze and Guattarian concept of 'becoming-child',⁴⁵⁶ a 'plastic subject'; an artist-child-philosopher. In this sense the *punctum* which Barthes speaks of cannot be an 'emanation' of the mother or the confirmation of the son. The umbilical cord of familiarity has been cut rather than restored. It is the breath of Life, the tragic affirmation of love, where death of the photographic is not opposite or other to life but, to draw on Claire Colebrook's observation, "that which, from within "life itself", allows for the thought *of life*."⁴⁵⁷

⁴⁵³ Laruelle, *The Concept of Non-Photography*, p. 47.

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 50.

⁴⁵⁵ The phrasing is borrowed from Rajchman's description of Deleuze's philosophy as "art brut" which can enter into relations with other disciplines. See Rajchman, *Connections*, p. 21.

⁴⁵⁶ A becoming-child is, according to Deleuze and Guattari, not returning to childhood or resembling a child; it is a question of molecular, non-human becoming: "a" molecular child, "a" child that coexists with us in a block of becoming, not the child we once were but a block of becoming. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p.294. The plastic subject refers again to Malabou's idea of plasticity, where the subjects resist determinism by retaining their own sense of singularity. In this way such a subject is capable of adapting but is also capable of resistance and rebellion. Vahanian, 'A Conversation with Catherine Malabou'.

⁴⁵⁷ Colebrook, 'Happiness, Death and the Meaning of Life', in *Static*, Issue 03: 'Choice and Suffering', The London Consortium, 2006, p.2.

The movement in the still takes a virtual form of existing as intensity and thought, in-between the stillness of the fixed shot (space) and the movement of time.

The time-image is not only an event of photography (Sutton) but a still photograph is an event of the time-image because of its potential as a 'fixed shot' beyond movement itself (Deleuze). As a space-time event, a plane of relations and possibilities, where the space is not subordinated to time and time is not subordinated to space, it is a still movement of difference. Here time and space coexist in a multiplicity of becomings.

The photograph has been arranged and anticipated, performed and posed. It has been judged, put on trials, celebrated and discarded. It has been negotiated to become expression, intensity, an (in)decisive moment. What moves in the photograph and moves the photograph is sensation. The photograph moves (double meaning) in reciprocal encounters of immanence. We wait with Estike who, being ordered by her mother to sit outside, remains on the chair, staring ahead, motionless. The wind on her face, what seems like a resigned tension in her expressionless look ...; two long minutes of motionless (e)motion where nothing, and so much, happens.

Perhaps the time-image is 'still', in a sort of waiting attention and indecisiveness where the sensory motor response is suspended. The movement that consists of 'pure', empty time, where movement and stillness interact and exchange places in a relation of becoming, and without end. It might be the opening to time, in its direct presentation, from in-betweenness: between what had been and what is not yet, where the past folds onto the future and the present acquires the status of a meanwhile; an indecisive moment. Tarr's image-world-photo is suspended in-between categories, and folded into unhinged time that we will be never able to grasp definitely. Here the insane trust, and knowing 'idiocy' of belief in creating where nothing makes sense, opens the space of affirmation, and yields a strange sense of freedom.

Thus, if we were looking for the essence of the photographic, we might find it in its paradoxical character of this world. In the multiplicity and the relational intertwining of all the factors involved in taking and looking at the photograph, it is a moment of the real beyond or outside all that is known. Thus the objective and subjective, the illusion and the document, the actual and the virtual disappear in the 'nothingness' of in-betweens; or become a pause (hesitating) in the meanwhile,

exchanging their momentary positions and moving on, traversing the space, 'affecting' the image, the viewer, the world, and the outside.

If duration is defined less by succession than by coexistence (Bergson), can a photographic image (as affective) be perceived as freed from succession of the cause-effect linearity, becoming a plane of a particular intensity, amongst other planes where each corresponds to a different intensity of memory, a different hold on the past? The past that undergoes transformation and fragmentation, between different planes? If so, would it be a 'new thing', detached from World, Image, and Idea, the object itself; the object, as Bazin suggested, "freed from the conditions of time"?⁴⁵⁸ Or perhaps as a body, the photographic is of all times (Lomax).⁴⁵⁹ Each a memory, expressing a different 'tone' or style or rhythm of becoming, a distant voice, it speaks, talks to itself, or whispers, and recounts what happened.⁴⁶⁰

Thus, perhaps instead of asking what a photograph is, we can ask with Spinoza: What is it capable of? What can it do?

Depth of field would be the photographic play, and plane, of 'reality-memory'. This will not be the lost memory of a nostalgic past 'attached' to photography, and neither an archive of stored memorandums. Not so much a function of reality or memory but an image that absorbs the real, which exists as much in virtual as in actual. The alternation of different lenses on the same image and the excessive use of the zoom, "doubles the perception",⁴⁶¹ enabling the depth to remain on the surface. It becomes the non-perception of the photographic vision-force.

In the Deleuzian sense, this would be an 'invocation' of memory (virtual). As immanent past-future, where the present is only an encounter; "not exactly a recollection but invitation to recollect."⁴⁶² Tarr's deep-focus imagery is of a kind that invites 'recollection' without conscious remembering. It is a play, and a kind of

⁴⁵⁸ Bazin, *What is Cinema? Vol. 1*, p. 13.

⁴⁵⁹ Lomax, *Writing the Image*, p.122.

⁴⁶⁰ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 49.

⁴⁶¹ Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 77.

⁴⁶² Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 105. "For memory is clearly no longer the faculty of having recollections: it is the membrane which, in the most varied ways (continuity, but also discontinuity, envelopment, etc.), makes sheets of past and layers of reality correspond, the first emanating from an inside which is always already there, the second arriving from an outside always to come, the two gnawing at the present which is now only their encounter." Ibid., p.200

memory that is also forgetting, thinking through attention, through the world to the unconscious/ outside and back. In the image it would be a question of trajectories and paths, forkings and rhizomes. The straight line as a force of time, as the labyrinth of time is also the line which forks and keeps on forking, passing through *impossible presents*, returning to *not-necessarily-true pasts*.⁴⁶³

As already mentioned, in Bergson and then Deleuze's view of time, the past coexists with the present: the sheets of past and peaks of presents.⁴⁶⁴ Here memory also functions as forgetting, as going into other planes of past, or in the sense of forgetting one's own preconception based identity in order to 'enter' another. This is the paradox of 'it has been' and 'not yet'; photography's madness that Barthes speaks of in *Camera Lucida*⁴⁶⁵, which overcomes the dialectics of memory and forgetting, absence and presence.

"We photograph things in order to drive them out of our minds," wrote Kafka in his diaries.⁴⁶⁶

Might it be the forgetting that enables repetition of the new? A 'living' memory rather than a dead memorandum, the memory of variable (in)tensions rather than as nostalgia of the same?

There is forgetting which is different from the remembered or the forgotten of historical past. On the one hand we can think of events that did not leave a trace, that have passed unnoticed; those unrepresentable, non-subjective sensations of the imperceptible virtual. On the other hand there are those 'extra' moments not yet actualised or those "exceeding actualization"⁴⁶⁷; the "pure past" of virtual non-memory of the immanent real. An "infinite awaiting that is already infinitely past,

⁴⁶³ Ibid., p.127.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 95.

⁴⁶⁵ "The Photograph is an extended, loaded evidence, Barthes writes. "The Photograph [...] becomes a bizarre 'medium', a new form of hallucination: false on the level of perception, true on the level of time: a temporal hallucination, so to speak, a modest, *shared* hallucination (on the one hand 'it is not there', on the other 'but it has indeed been'): a mad image, chafed by reality." Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p. 115.

⁴⁶⁶ Franz Kafka, cited in Brigitte Peucker, *The Material Image: The Real In Film*, (Stanford University Press), 2007, p. 104.

⁴⁶⁷ Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts*, p. 177.

awaiting and reserve."⁴⁶⁸ Those neither forgotten nor remembered 'left-overs', rather than mourning, require the opposite – "unmourning" as Deleuze proposes. *Unmourning*, according to Deleuze requires "more work but promises more joy", and is the process not of re-memorisation or identification, but an "active forgetting and affirmative experimentation with what is yet to come."⁴⁶⁹ In this way, the photographic 'had been' can become the open space of potentiality. Outside knowledge, structure, and signification, at its loss of memory, the photographic 'waiting' moment creates the space for 'orphaned', nomadic encounters that are indescribable and often imperceptible; no longer lost memories but 'returns' created anew. Eventually, those 'new returns', as manifested in Belá Tarr's aesthetics, would become the unforeseeable future.

Tarr's enduring 'contemplative' images of 'nothing happens' – deep focus and stretched time of the shots – function, in a sense, as acts of "active forgetting"; memory open to other (than mine) "affective tonalities, intensities or rhythms of duration that continue to be implied within it."⁴⁷⁰ It is what Deleuze calls the description and exhaustion of space, which is photographic and still. The photographic future-past shifts from historical or identifiable towards the memory of the present as a world memory that is always a potential in becoming, and invention. It can then think in terms of "potentials" and "inventions", not absence and loss, in terms of life and not the retrieval of lost memories.⁴⁷¹ That is perhaps why the depth has to stop at the surface, where the 'instants' of the other pasts can be felt through the cracks, and where the wounds of extinction cannot be written except in poetic language of the disaster,⁴⁷² where:

⁴⁶⁸ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 149.

⁴⁶⁹ See Rajchman, *Connections*, p. 133.

⁴⁷⁰ Alia Al-Saji, 'The Memory of Another Past: Bergson, Deleuze and a New Theory of Time', *Continental Philosophy Review*, Volume 37, Number 2 (2004), 203-239, p. 223.

Contemplative is used here in a sense of Bergsonian, and Deleuzian attention; as a gap between perception and action where the habitual response is suspended. Active forgetting is also a Nietzschean expression of a non-historical sense of 'remembering'/ writing. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Horace Barnett Samuel (Dover Thrift Editions, 2003), p. 34.

⁴⁷¹ John Rajchman, 'Unhappy Returns'.

⁴⁷² "[T]he disaster ruins everything, all the while leaving everything intact." I'm referring here to Blanchot's *Writing of the Disaster*, where the disaster, although haunting and unspeakable, is not thought of as negative or traumatic in the way war or genocide is interpreted. Blanchot Maurice, *The Writing of the Disaster*, trans. Ann Smock, (University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln and London, 1980).

... forgetfulness would be not emptiness, but neither negative nor positive: the passive demand that neither welcomes nor withdraws the past, but, designating there what has never taken place (just as it indicates in the yet to come, that which will never be able to find its place in any present), refers us to non-historical forms of time, to the other of all tenses, to their eternal or eternally provisional indecision, bereft of destiny, without presence.⁴⁷³

Thus in the stories/ histories/ memories (Hungarian any-towns, any time) the films take a form of sentient gestures pointing to nothing but themselves; bits of unimportant, concerning no-one moments, suspended from action and forgotten by History. Actualised namelessly, again and again in the 'performance' of becoming. Those who forget repeat the past. According to Deleuze, we repeat not because we forget (repress), but we forget (repress) in order to repeat.

Béla Tarr's black and white imagery is a stylistic choice, moving away from naturalistic representation towards creation, and a vision.⁴⁷⁴ Describing and 'erasing', it forgets the World, History, Image. Creating the false – true real – process of becoming; imperceptible, nebulous and 'uncertain' but felt, lived and experienced on a pre-personal or even pre-humanistic level. Its aesthetic figures are not metaphors but sensations: percepts and affects, landscapes and faces, visions and becomings.⁴⁷⁵

It ushers in a thought, a future, a community without any guarantees. Not future as all future. Not past as much as all past. A return to tradition, break with tradition, and a leap into the unknown.⁴⁷⁶

The poetic vocabulary endows the image with the intensity of the real and the space of encounter. The feeling of two-dimensionality, the equal treatment of visual elements brought to the surface of a screen and 'subjected' to long, tracking, scanning camera

⁴⁷³ Ibid., p. 85

⁴⁷⁴ 'For me the colour movie is kind of naturalistic. With black and white you can keep it more stylistic, you can keep more of a distance between the film and reality which is important' – Béla Tarr, in Fergus Daly, 'Interview'.

⁴⁷⁵ Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 177.

⁴⁷⁶ Petar Ramadanovic, 'From Haunting to Trauma: Nietzsche's Active Forgetting and Blanchot's Writing of the Disaster', <http://pmc.iath.virginia.edu/text-only/issue.101/11.2ramadanovic.txt>.

movements, lead not to illusionistic depth, but to the "untimely meditation"⁴⁷⁷ of shape, light and texture; like the body in the world, neither fully conscious nor unconscious, erasing the opposition between subject and object, real and imagined, memory and forgetting. Here, the description erases or destroys its reality which passes into the imaginary, and at the same time brings out all the reality which the imaginary or the mental create through vision. In this process – the drawn out stillness of the moment, and the silence of attention – perception, instead of prolonging into action, is absorbed into objects and situations, in a continuum of intensity whose effect is to erase all identity. No longer objects but percepts and affects 'materialise' at the points of indiscernibility of imaginary and real, physical and mental, remembered and forgotten becoming photographic (of) real.

In *Werckmeister Harmonies*, the townsmen (seemingly 'all' the men of the town) stand around in loose groups, possibly waiting for work, or simply to keep warm by the fires, as Daniel Frampton has suggested. At this point, the film begins to move around the faces of the men, tenaciously, almost impertinently⁴⁷⁸, as if puzzled, uncertain. The everyday description accentuated in black and white contrast dissolves at times in the mid-tones of "empty frosted grays."⁴⁷⁹ People, faces, fires are blurred into the surrounding space. The actual mutates to the virtual; the light, tone, and sound intertwine and mingle with the objects and each other. Anonymous faces, 'obliterated' identities, 'abstract' figures gathered in the crowd of any town, any square. The stationary, staring shot depicting a de-dramatised action, generates a dreamlike mood, as if the action was floating in the situation rather than bringing it to conclusion or strengthening it.⁴⁸⁰ The boundary between the dream states and conscious states are erased, the two modes are 'combined' in an open circuit where the actual and virtual exchange their roles. 'Natural' locations metamorphose into any-spaces-whatever, faces into landscapes, visions into becomings. Figures become abstractions and abstracts re-emerge into shadows. A hallucinatory, hypnotic image/ thought arises from the blurry figures diminished by the burning fires – as the force of visual

⁴⁷⁷ See Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*.

⁴⁷⁸ Daniel Frampton, 'The Way that Movements Speak', *Film-Philosophy Journal*, Vol. 5 No. 10, March 2001.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁰ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p.4

description tends towards a point of indiscernibility of the real and the imaginary.⁴⁸¹ The image-space opens inviting all sorts of 'adventures of memory': tactile, kinetic, aural, aleatory, and becoming-reserve suggests pure potential. The "art of description" passes into the plane of immanence, becoming thinking. Man and space become one. Blank, shrouded in fog looks, and non-expressive, alienated faces coexist and intermingle with the light, the textures of crumbling buildings, the 'schizophrenic' landscape, and stray animals: not a different perception but no perception at all. The earthy materiality of minute detail is caught in the duration, becoming duration itself; a wa(o)ndering thought, an empty time. Particular and universal merge as photograph(ic) thought is enfolded in the molecular becomings. And if there are symbols in description, these are of different, non-linguistic but material kinds.⁴⁸²

This is not only the result of undermined perception, but also a question of the meta-communication which Tarr speaks of.⁴⁸³ This is also the absurdity of otherworldly hope. It resonates with the 'methodology' of the absurd employed by Kafka or Beckett; one of the ways to resist the oppressive language of narratives' discourse. The world cannot be explained, only evented (Colebrook), and 'described' in a language that has no language; that is, intuited rather than recognised (Bergson). The 'play' with the metaphysical and the symbolic is not a cynical rejection of all spirituality but the critique of a same-image symbolic and the pointing toward potentiality of another 'worldly' vision, both material and abstract, vision and thought.

Light is 'everything' in Tarr's films, and like other elements, it is also a character. Black and white, grainy and high-contrast, greys and dark-light modulation, depending on the situation, reverberate with "intensely celluloid textures"⁴⁸⁴ functioning/ performing as a matter of expression or abstraction. The light here is not, as in the manner of the Expressionists, the result of a struggle between light and darkness, nor of an embrace of light and dark, nor dialectical opposition. Rather, as an

⁴⁸¹ Ibid., p. 12

⁴⁸² There is a teasing quality to Tarr's stylistic gestures, that oscillates between metaphysic and symbolic, as well as the concrete and the physical; between going beyond the surface and resisting it.

⁴⁸³ Phil Ballard 'In Search of Truth. Béla Tarr interviewed',

<http://www.kinoeye.org/04/02/ballard02.php>.

⁴⁸⁴ Robert Koehler, 'The Thinking Image: Fred Kelemen on Béla Tarr and The Turin Horse'. Interview. <http://cinema-scope.com/wordpress/web-archive-2/issue-46/interview-the-thinking-image-fred-kelemen-on-bela-tarr-and-the-turin-horse/>

alternating movement of grey, "not so much black and white but lightgray and darkgray."⁴⁸⁵ It is an alteration in extension, and not conflict and, as such, not a subject of judgment. Here light – "sunlight and moonlight, sunlit landscape and moonlit landscape – communicate in grey and pass through all its nuances."⁴⁸⁶ It becomes an extension of (to?) thought, not in terms of judgment but as style of immanence, a way of not so much illuminating or revealing but, we could suggest after Heraclitus, of 'intimating'.⁴⁸⁷ Not "yet bodies or rigid lines but only figures of light, blocks of space-time", they are images in themselves – of potentiality.⁴⁸⁸ Here white does not stand for purity, and black can be a 'colour' of passion.⁴⁸⁹ As Yve Lomax writes,

"pure potentiality is non-exclusively both black and white: it goes in both directions at once and, with this movement making a sparkling alternation, produces a shimmering zone of indetermination between the blackness and the whiteness ..."⁴⁹⁰

Light is, of course, the figure of the photographic, turning it into image, so to speak, and the film can only 'live', as Stanley Cavell reminds us, as light projected on screen. Furthermore, as Deleuze suggests, the plane of immanence is entirely made up of light; light which diffuses, which is propagated "without resistance and without loss." In this sense, just as matter is light, the image is a movement of empty potentiality.⁴⁹¹ Therefore, as the distinction between light and darkness not longer holds, things are luminous by themselves, and need anything to illuminate them. They shimmer imperceptibly on the surface of the image, shattering the perception and cognition into impossible bits of imaging. All consciousness is something (rather than of

⁴⁸⁵ Frampton, 'The Way that Movements Speak'.

⁴⁸⁶ Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 46.

Light and darkness alternate between expressing "an alternative between a given state of things and a possibility or virtuality that overtakes them... In effect, what is essentially spiritual to lyrical abstraction is to be in search of an alternative, rather than being caught up in a struggle." Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, pp. 114-115.

⁴⁸⁷ "It does not say, it does not hide, it intimates" is Heraclitus' 'description' of the Delphic oracle. See Hannah Arendt, *The Life of Mind*, p. 210.

⁴⁸⁸ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 62.

⁴⁸⁹ Lomax, *Passionate Being*, p. 61.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁹¹ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 62.

something), not our consciousness but consciousness by right, which, Deleuze writes, is diffused everywhere and yet does not reveal its source... :

... it is indeed a photo which has already been taken and shot in all things and for all points, but which is 'translucent'.⁴⁹²

Light, consciousness, matter ... plane of immanence. Light is valid for itself, in a sense of 'privileged' singular intensities that populate the plane of consistency. Valuska walking away into the darkness of immense possibility is no longer bound to the human laws. The momentarily illuminated, empty rooms at the house where the group is about to stop for the night, Estike's face outside the pub's window, or the neon "Titanic" sign over the bar door in *Damnation* – these are 'inhuman' sublime moments of the unknown becoming, connect thought to the outside. Not symbols or signifiers but forces and expressions. The way light, dark and shadow play on the surface, teasing the expectations, whatever it seems to otherwise suggest. By the means of light and shadow, infinite non-organic forces are at play, turning space into an indeterminate and 'spiritual' intensive surface of pure powers, qualities, and affects.⁴⁹³ The light's modulation creates both the sense of materiality and the sense of outside, visible and invisible, folded (photographically) into each other within(out) the fabric of the world. We are no longer caught by the absolute values of darkness and light, but are invited into the space of an authentic choice, able to "start again at each instant", and to affirm.⁴⁹⁴

We have reached a philosophical space... [T]he white that imprisons light alternates with the black that stops it, and then white is liberated in an alternative, which restores to us the white and the black. We have travelled without moving, from one space to another, from a physical to a philosophical space of experimentation (or metaphysics).⁴⁹⁵

⁴⁹² Ibid., p. 63.

⁴⁹³ Nilsson, 'A Crystal Matter'.

"Intensive surfaces" is an expression which Deleuze adopted from Lewis Carroll. Deleuze, *Pure immanence*, p. 11.

⁴⁹⁴ Deleuze, *Cinema I*, p. 115 -162.

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid, p. 117, p. 165, Deleuze cited by Rodowick, 'The World, Time', in *Afterimages of Gilles Deleuze's Film Philosophy*, p. 106.

Be it decay, entropy or repetition of the new, the circular rhythm of 'endless' variations – actual and virtual, real and imaginary, particular and universal – prevents the photographic image from fixing either past or memory. In this way the past can be both, present and absent. Its 'existence' depends not on historical data but on a chance to become-new-photographic. If we think of a photographic still as one of many moving images in time, not ordered into chronological narrative linearity, not frozen into past archives, but as image in becoming, we encounter memory/ image that is non-representational (not an afterimage of a present perception), but the real of 'any-image-whatever'.

What I'm seeing anyway is the formula of the unendurable. It expresses a new relation between thought and seeing, or between thought and the light source, which constantly sets the thought outside itself, outside knowledge, outside action.⁴⁹⁶

The amnesiac remembering of this world 'enables' by the potential of inventing the 'false', forging new 'worlds' and new connections forever incomplete. Like the circular and repetitive dance sequences present in all of Tarr's films embracing time and space in a rhythmic, open polyphony of the senses, it unsettles the accepted modes, taking expectation outside the given. Again, like the time of photography, all the time and none at all, not dead or frozen but 'suspended' temporarily in a fleeting (fugitive) moment of intensity where the 'trueness' of the past is brought to life not by conscious perception or conscious recollection but by creative 'forgetfulness'. The truth of the past 'moves' towards the false, and its artistic, creative power. In forgetting and forging, fragmentary finitudes and distinct combinations, it 'implies' a multiplicity of worlds and perspectives, keeping creating and thinking alive. Thus, how does the forging and forgetting keep the thinking alive? Perhaps the perception must become seeing, and the consciousness must "slip through the interval",⁴⁹⁷ and fall into the outside.

Imagine, what you hear is what you see, and what you see is what you remember, and what you remember is what you dream, and what you dream is what you are.

⁴⁹⁶ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 169.

⁴⁹⁷ Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, (Cosimo Classics, New York, 2005), p. 336.

Or:

Now imagine, what you are is what you dream, and what you dream is what you remember, and what you remember is what you see, and what you see is what you hear.

Or ...

The extremely long, disconnected, and enduring moments, no longer images but thoughts, put in contact with the real – the unclear and dispersive nature of the outside. It is this "hypnosis that reveals thought to itself."⁴⁹⁸

By means of the long/ 'still' images we can remember something that we have never seen before, sense the 'unknown' in the anticipation withdrawn from habitual perception, recollection, thinking, and suspended on the edge of the familiar, and of destination. Looking at the rain embracing meaningless 'wanderings' of men brings up the sensation of 'aimless' thinking, the quiet anxiety of lost time, echoed in the opening shot which presents itself as an image that embodies the 'situation'. It is the situation that lasts, presenting itself to the viewer: framed 24 times a second. Time flows 'through' the photograph, and around it, intensifying the details and interconnecting with the senses. It flows in-between stillness and movement, imaginary and material, expanding and contracting in the hallucinatory space of becomings; in a mad dance of rhythmical movements, wanderings and waitings. Not arrested but paused, waiting... Tangible in their elusive gesturing. This is the middle, the affective space between the world and the outside, where relations start to form.⁴⁹⁹ Here description stops presupposing a reality, as every perception is hallucinatory. It could be that, by giving us enough time, films intensify our interaction with the world by allowing us to relate to it intuitively and affectively, through both the movements of film and our memory in a space of creative imaging/thinking. By staring at the long, immaculate, step-by-step process of tin opening by Valuska preparing his dinner, or the endless waits and wanderings, we are 'invited' to unpack the secrets encoded in images and objects and find the memory of the senses. We are hypnotised by the sheer ordinariness of life. In the slow-moving, somnambulistic shots, time

⁴⁹⁸ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, op.cit., p. 120.

⁴⁹⁹ For Deleuze the middle is a very important concept: the middle or in-between is not a place; it is a continuous becoming, it has no beginning and no end. It has nothing to do with the Aristotelian middle, known as the Doctrine of the Mean. Deleuze uses it in relation to the rhizome.

renders the image inexplicable. These are no longer 'long takes', but thinking of the human 'gaplessness' of experience.⁵⁰⁰ What happens is imaging itself. We experience this when we follow János, as he surveys the whale, or when we keep endless pace with Mr Eszter and János as they walk side by side, when we 'endure' the long walk of people on their way to the 'promised' town, tired and drenched by the rain in *Sátántangó*, or wait for the protagonist of *Damnation*, Karrer, to finish shaving. It is not so much a matter of technique – real time, but like deep focus, a function of 'remembrance' uncertain, hesitating, and as affect, when 'nothing happens' between perception and action. According to Bergson, when affect arises in a body, the future action is interrupted or delayed. The body waits before acting; it has time to *remember*. The delay enables access to memory and the openness of its future. Thus, to feel is to no longer play out the past automatically, but to imagine and remember it intuitively.⁵⁰¹ Affectivity opens for my body a particular intensity of remembering, replacing perception with intuition. When nothing happens, the virtual is trying to keep itself from realisation, sometimes returning as actualisation, half-way in-between.

The long shots of stilled images are important on different levels: as questioning/thinking but also as a chance of unexpected and unintentional. Remembering, forgetting, 'seeing' and hallucinating, weave the pattern of imaging – "an unlimited opening into the world occasioned by lights and shadows in time."⁵⁰²

Thus, photography can (in an affective, or disorienting way) provide a vision that can 'hear' the multiplicity of figure/s and ground/s at once, from elsewhere, a no-place. In an affective way, it can be a 'truly democratic' vision where everything is equally important or unimportant, and the 'response' of the viewer depends on the "degrees of tensions and relaxations."⁵⁰³ What we 'see' in the imaging force of Tarr's films' photography effected through the combination of careful arrangements, and of chance, is the array of connected to but not dependent on, or resulting from, each other's intensities. The face of Estike in the window, as she looks in at the pub's dancing from the night outside, or the 360 degree shot of people sleeping in the barn

⁵⁰⁰ Frampton, 'The Way that Movements Speak'.

⁵⁰¹ Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, p. 225.

⁵⁰² Kron, 'The Concept of Non-Photography: Review'.

⁵⁰³ According to Bergson, there is no one rhythm of duration, but multiplicities that repeat each other at different levels of tensions or relaxation, and remember each other differently. *Matter and Memory*, p. 207.

with the night owl perched on the window sill (*Sátántangó*), the slow, painstaking, almost unbearable 'loveless' love scene, or the faces in the bar 'traversing' silently amongst the interiors' furnishings 'according to' the monotonous harmonica's sound (*Damnation*), are different moments of 'the same' image: a world in becoming. The "different levels of tensions and relaxations" are derived from the highly exceptional/remarkable sense of the difficult and 'original' vision. In this sense, the aesthetic complexity and sophisticated employment of the camera movement is a visually (and conceptually) demanding image, and in this sense by no means democratic. Rather than the 'equal distribution of the sensible' (Ranciere), it seems to be the matter of a rapture in common sense and shared experience, where the viewer is 'forced' to feel and think difference, from a non-position of an individual 'crack', outside the aesthetics of the 'beautiful' and the politics of the possible.⁵⁰⁴

Here the 'blackness' of visceral force resonates with the earth and rain refracting into greys of vastness interlocked with landscapes and faces, becoming a space of timeless rhythms of difference. The sombre ambience dwells in raininess and shadowiness, in repetitions of fugal sounds and whispers in an endless litany of hopeless hope.

The wild dogs, the rain, and the any-space-whatever are the zones of forces outside the worlds of loops, of marching, of things oscillating on hinges.

It is always autumn. "And have been cold a long time
... and not to think
Of any misery in the sound of the wind,
In the sound of a few leaves,

Which is the sound of the land
Full of the same wind
That is blowing in the same bare place
For the listener, who listens in the [rain],
And, nothing himself, beholds

⁵⁰⁴ As already mentioned earlier, according to Deleuze and Guattari, Humanity and the Beautiful, which in the end only recreate doxa, are incapable of forming concepts that can handle non-human percepts and affects beyond cliché. Deleuze, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 149-50.

Nothing that is not there and the nothing that is."⁵⁰⁵

This is a complexity of (non)perception enfolded in the rhythms of an open whole (a vision), yet equally important is the time given to behold. Just enough time to grasp the vibrating moment of becoming. A moment that resists or exhausts connotative meaning, that remains ever elusive, ever opaque; pointing to the outside.

As the inside resists meaning, the outside is not a metaphysical beyond, or the "fixed limit." It is "a moving matter animated by peristaltic movements, folds and foldings that together make up an inside: they are not something other than the outside, but precisely the inside of the outside."⁵⁰⁶ Tarr refuses to "cross to the other side" (Tarkovsky) remaining instead on the surface. Despite many gestures that might suggest otherwise, the outside is inside and in-between. Immanence is immanent only to itself. The 'nothing' happens in the crack of the surface. The unforeseeable nothing, which takes time, which is everything in a work of art (Bergson) and which the director makes into the form of the event,⁵⁰⁷ which has just happened and is about to happen again. The endings of Tarr's films verge on 'going over the edge' only to return to this world again, making the same film.

The surface of the photographic is a depth, an immanent, pre-personal, non-subjective virtual space of relations, which establishes temporality, rather than a set of outcomes. Beyond Chronos is the multiplicity, the inter-fused world of virtual and actual emergences of all kinds. Tarr's far-reaching, suggestive but only teasingly so, "dizzying" power brings about a very different kind of depth. It is existential in that it creates a magical concreteness, such a tangible precision in which "no traces of mysticism can be found."⁵⁰⁸ At the same time, questioning neither the absolute nor the finite value of human knowledge, it restores the link with this world through the belief sensed imperceptibly. Here the expression of immanence as at once infinite and finite

⁵⁰⁵ Paraphrasing Wallace Stevens' *The Snow Man*, p. 54.

⁵⁰⁶ Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, (University of Minnesota Press, 1988), p. 96-97.

⁵⁰⁷ Marchant, *Nothing Counts*, p. 33. For Deleuze, the event is something that can never be actualised. It is always something that has happened and is about to happen. It is affirmed not as resignation or acceptance of 'what is', but in recognition of its potentiality.

⁵⁰⁸ Biró, 'Confined Space'.

material plane on which everything happens, if mysticism, it is a "mystical atheism."⁵⁰⁹

A photo is infinite, Laruelle argues, having just one surface which extends forever, in the sense that it is impossible to catch or qualify all the information in the sheen of emulsion on its surface. But like a fractal, any part of this one photograph contains the possibilities of All Photography in-its-entirety.⁵¹⁰

In *Damnation* the scene of the pub dance is interrupted by a strange surrealistic shot of a man dancing manically outside in the rain, splashing in puddles, stepping rhythmically, the sound of his shoes slapping on the watery ground. The framing of the shot gives emphasis to textures, and as the image 'unfolds', everything persists in movement to the point of stillness, the body and the space merge into one another. The dance becomes strange, 'unreal' in a kind of 'mystical' ritual of embodiment, and delirious assertion of peculiar joy-trance. This 'static' image, completely unrelated to the narrative, and filmed from a disinterested distance, opens the space for a surprised 'attention', where the viewer has been caught unawares. One does not quite know what to think and how to 'take' this almost absurd image. Dancing in the rain? The indescribable mixture of joy and piercing 'unexpression' of the face obsessively engaged in the movement, a kind of autistic repetitive pleasure of the 'now'; life "tears itself free from the organic by a permutating, stationary whirlwind."⁵¹¹ Outside and inside of the 'narrative', it is a brilliant example of a situation where the power of visual impression forces us to forget our own logic and retinal habitus, and to think (affectively).⁵¹² Who is the man? What dance? The image 'pops out', shattering the logic of good and common-sense. 'I' cannot think. The machinic force of animalistic body unleashes the power of repetition, loses its substance, becoming a "spiritual automaton" in the affirmation of the inorganic (or supraorganic) singular power of life. The unknown outside, "farther from us than any external space and, as such, closer than any inner world", suddenly becomes the space of a creative force dissolving the repressed impossible desire or trauma. What happened before has no

⁵⁰⁹ Zepke, *Art As Abstract Machine*, p. 6-7.

⁵¹⁰ Kron, 'The Concept of Non-Photography: Review'.

⁵¹¹ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 499.

⁵¹² Thinking doesn't happen inside us, it is not a given. According to Deleuze, something in the world forces us to think. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 18.

bearing on what will or might happen next. No longer an interiority of thought, not even an open one, but "a force from the outside which hollows itself out, grabs us and attracts the inside", we can say with Deleuze,

We no longer believe in association of images – even crossing voids; we believe in breaks which take on an absolute value and subordinate all associations.⁵¹³

And ...

This is a radical feeling, insofar as it makes us suspect that the cinematographic unconscious could be photography itself: as though to look at it were to see all and nothing, at once.⁵¹⁴

"A photo", writes Laruelle, "does not let us see the invisible that haunts the world, its folds, hinges and furrows, its hidden face, its internal horizon, its unconscious... Nor does it make the repressed return." It manifests the Identity which is its invisible object.⁵¹⁵ Thus the photographic 'space' between perception and action, where "the material passes into sensation" (Deleuze), remains a singular, flat surface at once lived and imperceptible. A moment suspended in time and posed in space, it manifests the difference (not of something or from something but as itself). The inside of an outside, it produces a field of infinite, singular materialities immanently.

The outside is also an interval.

It is the meanwhile, Yve Lomax writes, that holds in reserve an incalculable and irreducible 'not yet'. It doesn't hold in reserve a historical future, a prefiguration of what is to come; rather, it "holds in reserve what can only be called an oceanic future",⁵¹⁶ the horizon that can never be reached. This paradoxically restores the intensity of a temporal moment, of past as not yet, a passing present that is already a memory, creating a moment in becoming. The in-between space when something is

⁵¹³ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 212.

⁵¹⁴ Raúl Ruiz, *Poetics of Cinema, Vol. 1*, trans. Brian Holmes (Editions Dis Voir, 2005) p. 69.

⁵¹⁵ Laruelle, *The Concept of Non-Photography*, p. 44.

⁵¹⁶ Lomax, 'Thinking Stillness', p. 61.

ending and something else is about to begin. A state of suspension or emptiness where things are churning before they begin to 'appear', the world/ life in becoming.

When the intelligence encounters a problem, a gap opens up, a void appears in the middle of the unthinkable. The gap between cinematic images brings us to an encounter with the limits of the thinkable where the thought appears to itself. Somnambulistic consciousness therefore is not just produced by traumatic events, but also asserts itself by exploiting the 'problematic holes' in intelligence responding creatively through the productive imagination. In order to 'provide' the condition for such a gap a particular style is required; the style of construction and creation, of open framing, and of hallucinatory space of amnesiac, de-focused imaging.

Neither the depth of individualistic dreams (Surrealist and Modernist conceptions of liberation) nor the limited sense of collective consciousness (ideology), this is a plane to which other planes relate, a surface of relations, and the Other which is the expression of possible worlds. As virtual, it is also pre-personal and pre-individual space, the memory of other pasts, which have never been present for me, of other lives that I have not lived – 'a virtual nebulosity accompanying my own life or past'.⁵¹⁷ It is the reservoir from which thought draws in order to bring about the actual. It opens onto impossible memories, different 'histories', and other perspectives and planes, which then become 're-created' into something else. It is recounted in multiple 'voices'. Those voices do not necessarily form a harmony, nor are they organised according to any overriding logic or order. Indeed, more often than not, the polyphony of memory records dissonant and dissenting voices and inscribed discordant histories.⁵¹⁸ This is the space of becoming where actualisation takes place through creation, a constant process of self-alteration through fragmentation, discontinuity, and death. Thus, it is not just a realisation of what is possible, but an actualisation of something entirely new, unexpected, unrecognised.

To think of image as actual and virtual in the state of becoming is to move away from both material reality as traditionally defined – static, visible, and definite – and from transcendence by bringing it back to materiality. To think of image as world and

⁵¹⁷ According to Bergson, the perceptions of actual existence are duplicated in a virtual existence as images with the potential for becoming conscious, actual ones. Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, p. 95.

⁵¹⁸ Alia Al-Saji, 'The Memory of Another Past', *Continental Philosophy Review*, p. 226.

world as image – difficult and uncertain, yet real in its effectual and thinking qualities, makes it possible to move away from the corrupted ideologies/ theologies of other worlds and turn the focus on this world as it is, its human and in-human nature. Deleuze insists that the 'structure' of the unconscious is not conflictual or oppositional (another I or another world) but rather questioning and problematising, it is productive. Unconscious questions inside and outside, the centre and the periphery, the near and the far. The Gaze turns towards a Vision; not a fantasy, but veritable Ideas that the artist sees or hears in the intervals.⁵¹⁹ They 'cannot be reduced to the psychological fantasies of the author, nor to 'ideologemes' of a collective unconscious, since they take place, as Kafka said, "in the full light of day" and not "down in the cellar of structure."⁵²⁰ Yet, the multiple processes of self-alteration are often hidden and imperceptible, and are without the unity of an ancestry, without filiation or hereditary production.⁵²¹ Epidemic and contagion, rather than reproduction, seem for Deleuze to 'drive' multiple becomings of creation, and the plane of unconscious desires, rather than repressed traumatic dramas, shifts radically the relation between memory and forgetting, nostalgia and orphaned future as affirmation; this "another time that neither "comes back" nor "goes forward", but is constantly deviating from its course."⁵²²

Muted and ritualised, the climax of *Werckmeister Harmonies* is one of the most nightmarish eruptions of violence in recent cinema, suggests Jonathan Romney. A mob marches in hypnotic rhythm, the camera hovering in front of them, rising, falling, drifting from left to right "before this inexorable river of hostility"⁵²³. A single, eight minute shot then accompanies the crowd through a run-down hospital, where they smash up the fittings and attack its inmates; throughout, we hear not a single threat or scream of pain. It feels like a long, still, mute and impossible enduring. The discrepancy between sound and image is not merely a sign of alienation or impossibility of communication, but a power of the irrational interval, a gap in-

⁵¹⁹ Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 5.

⁵²⁰ See Gregg Lambert, *The Non-Philosophy of Gilles Deleuze* (Continuum, New York and London, 2002), p. 145-6.

⁵²¹ Like a schizophrenic world, this consists not only of those constructed by family relations but other histories and relations which might point towards what Jung called the 'collective unconscious'. See Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*.

⁵²² Rajchman, *Connections*, p. 109.

⁵²³ Jonathan Romney, 'End of the Road: The Films of Belá Tarr', *Film Comment*, Sept-Oct. 2001.

between. Here the discordant voices and different memories interact with each other. We are, in a sense, 'forced' to feel much more than we see or hear, and the feeling is outside the familiarity of knowing or certainty of recognition. We do not know why this event takes place, who the people are, and will not find out what happens to the crowd at the end. Again, a singular, out-of-context image, carved out of chaos, picked up and abandoned by wa(o)ndering camera-thought, wants something from us, demands our attention. The image 'enfolds' a kind of ungraspable meaning, enigmatic and unnameable, lurking in the details, the textures and the sound, beyond conscious control, a kind of intuitive anticipation of something to come; an affect, the real, in between construction and description. Nothing but an intensive labyrinth of suspended truth brought out by a total lack of knowledge or information.

What happens seizes us, writes Blanchot, as the image would seize us; that is, it deprives us of it and of ourselves, keeps us outside, makes this outside a presence where "I" does not recognize "itself."⁵²⁴

Thus, the Outside might be thought of as a non-place from which all forces emerge, not a specific context, "out of field", or the third meaning (Barthes). It is a demeanour of cosmic indeterminants beyond the personal – individual or collective, particular and universal. In Tarr's films it is the feeling of immanence, where the duration of the image and the time duration of its beholding create an important space for 'something to happen', something unexpected, uncanny or unusual but also something new, like a thought provoked by memory of events one has not experienced. Accordingly, what might be called communicating with the outside is the moment's 'seeing' of unanticipated experience provoked by the an amnesiac kind of memory; the power of visual impression causing us to doubt the reality and existence of our normative self. Stylistically, this is a question of a particular framing, a question of movable (dynamic and ambiguous) frames of in-between, not quite inside or outside, or where inside and outside merge. Here the frame articulates distinction without ever fixing its relationship with the work, as with Derrida's Parergon.⁵²⁵ On the other hand, the obsessive framings of description – slow, insistent, repetitive – allow the image to

⁵²⁴ Maurice Blanchot, 'Two Versions of the Imaginary', in *The Gaze of Orpheus and Other Literary Essays*, trans. Lydia Davis (Station Hill Press, 1981), p. 88.

⁵²⁵ Jacques Derrida, 'The Parergon', trans. Craig Owens, in *October*, Vol. 9 (Summer, 1979), pp. 3-41.

free itself from the logic of narration and to exist as a singular moment/ frame, relating 'openly' to other moments/ frames, becoming photographic.

The time-image, that is duration-image, change-image, relation-image, volume-image, which is beyond movement itself ... Any-instant whatever, remarkable and singular. A stilled photograph in its embryonic state of potentiality, a direct image of time: non-dialectical, paradoxical time – all presents are simultaneous and all pasts co-existent.

At the still point of the turning world, neither flesh nor fleshless;
Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is,
But neither arrest nor movement. And do not call it fixity,
Where past and future are gathered. Neither movement from nor towards ...⁵²⁶

The image of the dead girl lying on the table surrounded by village people in Sátántangó, is a minute and a half long. The camera-eye is fixed on the scene. The only way we can detect that the image is moving is by noticing the blinking of somebody's eye from time to time, or from the slight turning of a head. The moving image becomes 'still' through the withdrawal of 'action', not necessarily of movement. As such, it is a moment of a still, not an illusion of stillness. Time is not immobilised but momentarily spatialised; not frozen but temporarily locked in space, moving inwards and filling it with 'depth'. Depth, on the other hand, becomes a surface of non-geometrical time and space of "thinking otherwise."⁵²⁷ It is like the experience of looking at a still photograph: silent, mute, without before or after; quiet intensity. The time-image is moving but 'still' in terms not of action but of space-time; a moving 'photograph' that fills the image with a temporal flow, allowing it to exist in the act of becoming. Space here is the one that allows for the uniqueness of this becoming, and for the link to the outside. The speech, the motionless bodies, the table around which 'image' unfolds, as if all and nothing were related; 'things' thrown together in an empty space of potentiality which can be sensed between, alongside, outside and around of the impossible – a "plane of composition" opening sense and thought. "The plane of composition in art", Claire Colebrook writes, "is more than a spatial metaphor, for any

⁵²⁶ T.S. Eliot, 'Four Quarters', in *The Complete Poems and Plays* (Faber and Faber, 1969), p. 173.

⁵²⁷ Lomax, *Writing The Image*, p. 134.

work of art is a struggle with those perceptions, affects and sensed encounters that are 'lived':

Art does not express the 'lived' but releases from the lived the impersonal power form which any oriented and located life emerges. The plane of composition comprises the potentials of sensibility that an artist must somehow locate in a material (in this time and space), while producing a moment, such that this sensation as it would be felt comes to stand alone, for all time.⁵²⁸

The movement that surfaces indefinitely depthwise, enables a particular connection with the outside and in-between. The spaces are not only actualised planes of relations, but are also openings to new/ other relations. The long takes of empty spaces, crowded interiors or stilled paused 'actions' think the outside. The 'artist' teases the affect/thought from in-between the surface and depth, form and content. This is the thinking otherwise, 'a shock to thought', "a camera consciousness no longer defined by the movement it is able to follow or create, but by the mental connections it is able to enter into."⁵²⁹ Here the time-image becomes a moving 'photograph', a map that carries us towards experimentation in contact with the real.

Looking at this 'still' image, we are 'jumping' to other images, trying to put together the moments that brought it to 'this' moment, searching for 'signs' of the whole. At the same time, we are exposed to the singular expression within a tableau in front of us, connected to the stretched body. The nature of this experience is neither past nor present. This is perhaps the death that is only the stage or a state to some new sense of life. Life goes on 'indifferently' but in death it affects for a moment, changes its intensity. "We are with, in death already, to live is to die, for death does not *take place*."⁵³⁰ This is also the power of amnesiac memory, which dissolves into the boundless oceanic space, conjuring up the nothing that matters. Such an image, never stable, never frozen in time, connects with the real. While the camera pauses, observing the situation with a meticulously steady eye, provoking the search for

⁵²⁸ Claire Colebrook, 'On the Specificity of Affect', p. 197

⁵²⁹ Gilles Deleuze quoted by Daniel Frampton, in *Filmosophy*, p. 68.

⁵³⁰ Julia Hözl, 'In/Possible Relation: Being, Time, Death, Bodily Proximity', *Poligrafi*, No. 55-56, Vol.17, 2012, p.125, <http://www.poligrafi.si/Content/pub/BodilyProximity.pdf>

reasons "to fill the gaps in the void of explanation",⁵³¹ the scene 'feels' again like a still, silent photograph affirming the thought of no answers.

The spider in Tarr's films does not carry a symbolic meaning but is a figure of thought, a style of connections in a space of becoming. It parallels the process of making and unmaking, framing and deframing, in an infinite creation of imperceptible and impersonal life as a work of art. It is the web of vital cells vibrating in between the object and 'I' in the flesh of the world enfolded in time. The style that enables the image to 'think the unthinkable'. What is it to think the unthinkable? Is it a creative construction, less involved in making sense of the world and more in opening the senses, where neither the mind nor senses alone, but the whole of existence, is addressed? The perception of an "independent aesthetic consciousness"?⁵³²

Subjective and objective coexist folded in a nomadic viewpoint of bifurcation, "waiting for an eternal thread to move to start it all again."⁵³³ It resonates with a particular kind of thinking as traversing which starts from the centre, and has no beginning and no end. Every image, Deleuze writes, is "merely a road by which pass, in every direction, the modifications propagated throughout the immensity of the universe."⁵³⁴ The endurance of the hallucinatory, long, 'painful', slow movements; buildings, landscapes, objects, and beings are not longer "recognised" but perceived, as it were, for the first time. The 'spider function' envelops life and opens it poetically to the non-human outside. This requires a style of 'wonder' in order to bring such unfamiliarity to the surface. The suspension of normal motor activity, and slowing down of the senses.

It could be argued that in Tarr's films, the camera movements mirrors the description of the image and an act of looking, in the complex web of relations, framing and deframing, remembering and forgetting, waiting and transforming, in becoming 'wondrous thinking'. Indecisive and questioning, they move in elaborated stylistic choices dictated by time and 'vision', not presenting but anticipating the word. The camera sometimes slides along the images of interiors, moving from one to the other not by a cut but by a 'blank screen', as when it pans across a blank exterior wall that is,

⁵³¹ Janet Harbord, *The Evolution of Film: Rethinking Film Studies* (Polity Press, 2007), p. 167.

⁵³² Ibid, p. 77.

⁵³³ *Sátántangó* (1994)

⁵³⁴ Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 60.

every so often, interrupted by a door. Inside, crowds of people, their hard faces as expressionless as the wall, stare disinterestedly out at the pouring rain. They do not stare back at the viewer but passed past him/ her. Their sombre gazes disappear in the rain, and we are at a loss, comprehending at close range, haptically, the breathtaking crumbling beauty of the repetitive motion of space-time, disappearing and reappearing each time slightly differently. The difference itself is carried on by the monotonous sound of the accordion. There is nothing socially determined in this strange metamorphic fluctuation of 'the same' image. These relations are not a matter of a context or environment which surrounds them and remains exterior to an interior (Lomax); "infinite or discontinuous", they are "always in displacement." (Blanchot)⁵³⁵. The context disappears in the walls' rainy texture, the exterior of the interior. This is a staggering towards the unknown, and waiting indecisively⁵³⁶. A long, staring shot of the photographic surface that is also a communication of vision and experience, embodiment of tensions, complexities and ambiguities.

Communication of the world and the I in a fragmented world and in a fragmented I which are constantly being exchanged.⁵³⁷

To think is to question everything, including thought, question, and the process itself. To question requires that something happens that reason has not yet known.⁵³⁸

Béla Tarr is making images and thinking in images. Breathing, lurking through, permeating the material, earthy physicality entwined with the precise construction of 'elements' that are the result of the director's vision, they persevere. After the young girl Estike (*Sátántangó*) has tortured her pet cat she forces its face into a bowl of poisoned milk. She then leaves it alone and backs up a few yards behind the it until her back rests against a wall. The camera remains static, with little action, looking at the little girl flat up against the wall. The girl does not move, the cat is barely able to move its maimed body. Unable to move, it attempts to lift its head to and from the

⁵³⁵Yve Lomax, *Writing the Image*, p. 80.

Maurice Blanchot, *The Step Not Beyond*, trans. Lycette Nelson, (State University of New York Press, 1992, p. 5.

⁵³⁶Harbord, *Evolution of Film*, p. 162.

⁵³⁷Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 213.

⁵³⁸Lyotard, in Lomax, 'Thinking Stillness', p. 57

bowl. The image 'expands' in this transitory state of a 'present moment' seized in its association with past affects and 'meanings'. On the one hand, there is the remembered 'speech' of a the girl echoing the parental indifference and verbal abuse she suffered; on the other, the dying cat, the only thing she had ever felt close to. At the same time, the disinterested camera, a presence, of which, oddly, only the cat seems to be aware, refuses any rationally expected point of entry into this naked and nameless any-image-whatever. Frozen, immobile, imprinted by time already forgotten and remembered at the same time. Spaces of memories not exactly of what is remembered but what is seen. I'm grabbed by the throat. Forcing the way between impossibilities. Choking on the excess of flooding affect. Gasping for air between breaths. On the other 'side of the screen', the viewer is not given any direction; is left to his/ her own devices. He/ she finds himself/ herself in the labyrinth without the thread of escape, confronted with the 'unknown', witnessing this strange ritual or sacrifice, impossible to perceive from any commonsensical point, or judged by moral standards. The unknown is not the Other of a different culture or different space; it is of a more basic, affective level of responding to that for which there is no language. Restored to us with its direct matter, there is only the framed "Image," and the torturous emotion arrested in time.⁵³⁹ We could think of the Real that Lacan speaks of, the trauma, that cannot be named or represented, or of Barthes's photographic *punctum* of 'ordinary' images met by chance,⁵⁴⁰ the leftover, the throwaway of symbolic order; an image without metaphor. Instead, the imaging, to paraphrase Deleuze, creates the 'whole' which "brings out the thing in itself, literally, in its excess of horror or beauty, in its radical or unjustifiable character, because it no longer has to be "justified", for better or worse ..."⁵⁴¹ No longer a family drama played out by repressed desires, but a desire/ drive of poetic (non)language/ affect-thought outside judgment and morality.⁵⁴² Scrambled emotions (with)draw the viewer into different/ other spaces (of

⁵³⁹ The image is no longer restricted to what we "see." There are moments when discursive "hiatuses, holes or tears [...] widen in such a way as to receive something from the outside or from elsewhere." This "something seen or heard" that seeps through this hole, Deleuze says, is called Image. See Gregory Flaxman, 'Introduction', in *The Brain Is the Screen*, p. 12.

⁵⁴⁰ See Malcolm Bowie, *Lacan* (Fontana Press 1991), and Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, trans. Richard Howard (Vintage, 2000).

⁵⁴¹ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 20.

⁵⁴² Underneath the social and personal interests there is, Deleuze writes, "an enormous flow of all kinds of libidinal-unconscious flows that constitute the delirium of this society." Furthermore, the unconscious (the real) is a positive "sub-representative field" of immanence: "pure positive multiplicities where everything is possible (transverse connections, polyvocal conjunctions, included disjunction); signs of desire that compose a signifying chain, but which are themselves non-signifying,

attention), not 'interpreting' but experiencing, 'living' in and with/ through the image. A long intensity of almost unbearable physicality of space, bodily entrapment (entanglement) in the textures of place and time, of enclosed fragmentations... a labyrinth with no Ariadne. The slow, mundane, cruel, and painful situation unhinges the logical time not only by violence to the senses, as in the case of the sublime, but also by a strange, powerless resignation; "formless, 'mute, unsignifying region where language finds its freedom' even from whatever it has to say ..."⁵⁴³ This is the most remarkable example of the confrontation with ourselves that is truly 'other' than our (hu)man other. Similarly to the moment in *Damnation* where Karrer barks with the dogs, rolling in the mud outside the town, or the de-humanised love making scene earlier in the film, this is a moment of rupture, perceptually and cognitively. Perhaps, what we encounter are not repressed traumas, but "the demons, the sign-bearers: powers of the leap, the interval, the intensive and the instant."⁵⁴⁴ The time-image acts as "the utterable itself" – pure automatic or psycho mechanical utterance, emitting from itself, a no-place.⁵⁴⁵ Time exhausts the image, which becomes its own 'matter', description without before or after like a 'whisper' of eternity, of the meanwhile. The only truth that exists is the search itself, an awareness of the *being of becoming*.⁵⁴⁶ Where thinking the unthinkable begins.

It is like being at the edge of a terrifyingly ancient void. It is like hearing the silent calls of a people who do not yet exist. Intolerable? Almost.
Unthinkable? Almost.⁵⁴⁷

If we fold still into the adjective still, Lomax writes, we enter into another relation (dimension) with movement and time. That which has been in not yet (still to come) and present (still here). The trajectory of an arrow, which bends, reverses and comes back, only to miss the point, and a throw of the dice, which will never abolish chance.⁵⁴⁸ This can also mean 'even', 'then', or 'nevertheless', which always remains

and so on." See Daniel W. Smith, 'Deleuze and the Question of Desire: Towards an Immanent Theory of Ethics, *Parrhesia*, No. 2, 2007, pp. 74-75.

⁵⁴³ Deleuze, *Foucault*, p. 132.

⁵⁴⁴ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 182.

⁵⁴⁵ Frampton, *Filmosophy*, p. 65.

⁵⁴⁶ Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 188.

⁵⁴⁷ Lomax, 'Thinking Stillness', p. 60.

⁵⁴⁸ Lomax, 'Writing the Image'. p. 132.

open and uncertain. It could fold into an adverb – continuing now or in the future as in the past, or up to this or that time; yet, in movement of unlimited relations. A space-time that carries in itself the affirmation of immanence.

Is the image paused also, in a sense, posed?

David Campany suggests that the pose of a still photograph is a theatrical convention.⁵⁴⁹ He argues with Baudrillard that photography cannot but transform the world into a world performed or posed.⁵⁵⁰ However, to think of the momentary 'arrestness' of the image as pausing the 'world' rather than imposing a pose on it, seems more adequate. The pose of the paused moment is like stillness, polyphonic and unstable in its meaning: as a pose, a gesture but also a pausing, slowing down, bringing to attention. Moreover, to think of pose as gesture does not necessarily imply theatricality or performing out the world. The gesture of uncertainty, not a monument, but a momentarily fleeting expression, like the image which is not or about, but a new thing, itself performing only itself. It is rather a result of encounter, of 'dealings with the world', whose outcome is not known a priori. Any-instant-whatever instead of an 'ideal pose'. What would be next becomes a pause, a gap, an "amazing wait of an event." A slowed-down image-world. Stopping the movement in order to discover the power of image. In Béla Tarr's images everything is 'paused', slowed down, but not arrested and not imposed. The 'blankness' of the faces, intertwined with the material physicality of space and textures of light, 'combine' the life and gesture in the process carrying becoming. Texture, light, and physicality of the photograph, its affective intensity (real), brings out all sorts of actual and virtual movements and relations 'probed' by chance (not known to cliché). It brings importance to space as a plane of composition/ becoming and of style as a mode of living.

Stéphane Apollinaire, 'A Throw of Dice Will Never Abolish Chance, in *Collected Poems*, trans. Henry Weinfield (University of California Press, London 1994), p. 124-125.

⁵⁴⁹ There has been a tradition of thinking about still photographs in terms of their theatricality as resumed by Michael Fried in his last book *Why Photography Matters as Art as Never Before* (Yale University Press, London and New Haven, 2008).

⁵⁵⁰ See: David Campany, 'Posing, Acting, Photography', in *Stillness and Time: Photography and the Moving Image*, pp. 97-113.

Since thought is inseparable from motion, Yve Lomax suggests, one is obliged to 'keep the thought moving'.⁵⁵¹ Perhaps the 'waiting' stillness of a non-representable silent 'voice' also provides the space for thought. "It is in stillness that one may be said to find true speed", asserts Trinh T. Minh-Ha.⁵⁵² The meanwhile, in-between time (no longer and not yet at the same time) but also between before and after, might be the constant process of questioning without end. A perpetual moment of thought. An interval that goes on for aeons and is profoundly immeasurable.⁵⁵³ Here anything can happen. The 'taken out' of time still image, an 'amazing wait of an event' where the present remains in question, might be more radical in its non-fixidity than moving narrative.⁵⁵⁴

Tarr's films are incredibly intense, 'earthy', real and felt, as if the process of imaging was the result of a kind of 'artistic' wrestling with the power of vital, formless, and chaotic force. One could argue that his images have almost the sense (the rawness and the magic) of 'mythical' cosmic stories from before they were written down. Here time flows 'through' the photograph, around it, intensifying the details and interconnecting with the senses. It flows in-between stillness and movement, the imaginary and material, expanding and connecting, bifurcating in different directions. In a hallucinatory space of becoming. In a mad dance of rhythmical movements, wanderings and waiting. In the space not arrested but paused. Tangible in the elusive gestures of unprivileged instant.

Static views, ordinary scenery, blank faces. Tarr uses the 'documentary' style, yet there is no desire there to document. Imagery 'ingrained' in reality – found locations, non-actors, no editing – and yet so 'unreal' in terms of realism or representation. Nomadic, individual singularities brought out by the materiality of existence.

Robert Bresson, as Paul Schrader points out, defines reality by what Aristotle called "privation" by the qualities that the object lacks, yet has potential for.⁵⁵⁵ Tarr, like Bresson, documents the surfaces of reality. Nothing is resolved psychologically,

⁵⁵¹ Lomax, 'Thinking Stillness', p. 27.

⁵⁵² Trinh T. Minh-ha, *The Digital Film Event* (Routledge, 2005), p. 11.

⁵⁵³ Lomax, 'Thinking Stillness', p. 58.

⁵⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

⁵⁵⁵ Paul Schrader, *Transcendental Style in Film: Ozu, Bresson, Dreyer* (Da Capo Press, New York, 1988), p. 63.

rationally, even conceptually. Nothing is deconstructed in terms of narrative. Things are here as they are, in this world's one of many existences. Yet, the link to the world (and the belief in it) is different from cause-effect commonsensical thinking and perception. There is a sense as if things were unfolding on their own, in fragments, unrelated viewpoints, fleeting momentarily and taking time according to their own rhythms rather than dependent on some already determined outcome. It is as much an act of living in the world as in the image and if a performance, it is performing with and not (of) the world.⁵⁵⁶ In this sense the truth and the image are being unsettled/destabilising both the mimetic 'evidence' and auratic transcendence. The virtual, as the multiple potentiality of emergence from a situation, comes into view imperceptibly. We could think of these images as photographic impressions, an "existence placed half-way between the thing and the representation" (Bergson). In this way, the posed moment of a photograph may be 'embraced' as a positive 'state' of potentiality, not necessarily 'dead' past (Benjamin, Barthes). "Lives freed from their destiny" (Benjamin) can be seen as perhaps an escape from too much control, or as an embryonic power of returning of the new, where what is dead (if it is dead) passes through into another state of living, not nostalgically suggesting 'non-human' becoming. And more, closing of the horizontality of the outcome (in whatever form it might be) of the World, Idea, Self, is pointing to the unknown future. Like a photograph no longer 'remembering' the identity of a 'subject', becoming any-instant-whatever or any-body-whatever, an 'identity' of the real, freed not only from destiny but from definition.

Is a photograph an acting-out of the world? Or is it the unstable, or fragile 'impossible' connection (link) with the world; the desire to dwell and to escape (wander), to grasp and to retreat? In the meanwhile, between 'whisper and eternity', the empty time of 'nothing happens' prevents becoming (and pure potentiality) from ever ending.⁵⁵⁷

Stillness becoming alive, yet still ...⁵⁵⁸

⁵⁵⁶ The sense of performative here is more of an encounter-event of chance rather than the performative Judith Butler linked to the presence of the mimetic. As discussed by Harbord in 'Aesthetic Encounters', in *Film Cultures: Production, Distribution and Consumption* (Sage Publications Ltd., 2002), pp.126-128.

⁵⁵⁷ Lomax, 'Thinking Stillness', p. 61.

⁵⁵⁸ Theodore Roethke, 'The Lost Son' (1948), in *Collected Poems* (Doubleday, New York, 1966).

In the *Evolution of Film*, Janet Harbord discusses the predominant tendency in film thinking towards regarding time as somewhat superior to space. In the conceptualisation of cinema and time, she writes, time becomes the indefatigable discovery that revitalises thought. Space, in turn, is the conservative force, singularly appearing as the measurement of time; "its empirical plodding order."⁵⁵⁹ The space, and spacialisation of time in particular, has also been attributed to still photography. How can we think of image and space outside of Cartesian measured space, Euclidian geometry, the rules of perspective, where the space is not reconstituting time and time is not homogenised by space? Is it possible to think of space-time as time-space, as relational strata of possibilities of becomings?

Could the space of still photography, based on the 'fixed shot', be rethought of as a space of unrecognisable, and non-definable 'interval': any-space-whatever, as aesthetics of the 'meanwhile'? For Deleuze, space could only be explained in non-spatial terms. Perhaps to reclaim space is to reclaim the image and the photograph. The power of the fixed shot of the time-image is both space and time that co-exist in formation of the image.⁵⁶⁰ Thought of, as Rajchman proposes, as an intensive complexity, it is a "groundless depth from which erupts something that creates its own space and time."⁵⁶¹ Such space exists in becoming, blurring inside and outside, figure and ground, space and thresholds. Perhaps we could start with the photograph as both time and space. Not something organised into a chronology of privileged instants but as any-instants-whatever existing in time, unborn, unnamed, and undecided. At the same time, as 'actualised' virtuality in the form of percepts, affects, intensities, the photographic space, heterogeneous and as a 'play of forces', would distance itself from *sensus communis* of the beautiful becoming the rapture of the 'sublime' singularity of difference.⁵⁶² If we think of a photograph as a paradox, an event somewhere, sometime, that has been and will be but with the indefinite 'outcome' of 'could have been', or of 'not yet', perhaps there is a way of thinking of (photographic) space as

⁵⁵⁹ Harbord, *Evolution of Film*, p. 21.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 30.

⁵⁶¹ John Rajchman, *Constructions* (MIT press, 1998), p. 16.

⁵⁶² The aesthetics of sensation as beautiful allow for the shared experience of the sensible (Rancière), whereas the aesthetics of rupture through the sublime is based on the singularity of difference (Lyotard, Deleuze). Stephen Zepke discusses in depth the realm of sensation (Kant) between the beautiful (as adopted by Rancière), and the sublime (as developed by Lyotard and Deleuze) and their implications for the 'political' in the arts today. Stephen Zepke, 'Contemporary Art – Beautiful or Sublime? Kant in Rancière, Lyotard and Deleuze'.

constituted through the sense we make of it, as a space-time image where movement is not 'arrested' but exists as imperceptible but felt. This, to draw on Colebrook's discussion, may not be a constituted sense, or term within a structure but "sense as such, a surface that is liberated from any denoted being."⁵⁶³ It is not space to which time is added but space-time of 'attention' and thinking. Affective, singular, and haptic, as well as sensed; a field of singularities embodied as well as conceptual.⁵⁶⁴ Through the time of waiting, an image reinforces the sense of space as haptic. As it is defined by the flow of virtual forces, it is perceived haptically as much as optically. It is the 'intensive', where striated space is 'extensive'. It is "occupied by events or haecceities more than by formed and perceived things", and it is more a space of affects or sensations than properties.⁵⁶⁵ At the same time this plane or field of singularities cannot be separated from the material power of immanent differentiation. Again, in Tarr's aesthetic this is the question of intensity where the sense of confinement defines both the ephemeral and physical, the inside and the outside, the oppression and 'freedom'. In his vision, smooth and striated spaces meet, interact and exchange places. They multiply, destroying the sense of both uniformity and contrast (as opposition). The material modes of expression become abstract lines, and abstract lines overtake the material in the infinite pulsation of life, carrying it towards the unexpected. It is the space of enduring, an affect-thought where the world thinks us, and where the fleeting instant, as if hidden in its dark intensity, was affirming something new and unforeseen. The haptic space where every encounter creates another space, another sensation, another instant that is also duration.

Space is also produced through rhythm and repetition, through an exercise of energy that is manifested as intensity ... In an excavation of filmic space, its properties emerge as a corollary to time, as folded, pocketed, stretched, and compressed.⁵⁶⁶

⁵⁶³ Colebrook, 'The Sense of Space: On the Specificity of Affect in Deleuze and Guattari'. <http://pmc.iath.virginia.edu/text-only/issue.904/15.1colebrook.txt>, §1.

⁵⁶⁴ It should be possible to think immanent tendencies, the way in which different expressions of life unfold different spaces, relations, fields, or trajectories, "the immanent power of corporeality in all matter." Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, cited by Colebrook in 'On the Specificity of Affect', p. 195.

⁵⁶⁵ "Smooth space and striated space – nomad space and sedentary space ..." On difference between smooth and striated space in Deleuze and Guattari see *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. Tom Conley, 'Space', in Parr (ed.), *Deleuze Dictionary*, p. 257-58.

⁵⁶⁶ Harbord, *Evolution of Film*, p. 38.

Space is what a photograph is in time. The space-time of a photograph is a pause, an instant and still, where time has been momentarily suspended at the edges of this moment. The posed movement gestures to the outside that remains out of sight; unknowable, unreadable. Rather, like Jean Epstein's notion of *photogénie*,⁵⁶⁷ it is a fleeting moment of experience or emotional intensity – a sensation – that the viewer cannot describe verbally or rationalise cognitively. Paradoxically, this fleeting intensity can only be experienced in a space of 'stillness' within its singularity of no before or after, in the space of an irrational cut. If we look at a still photograph in light of the time-image, it will suspend the narrative of before and after, thus becoming a memory of the present, leaving the image outside of time and yet forever in it. In this sense, it can be viewed as an image outside representation, history, chronology, and definition; as life's gesture of becoming, paused in-between, in the meanwhile of waiting potentiality.⁵⁶⁸ The seeming apathy and the dragging movement of 'fate', where gestures are charged with an extremely solid 'reality', not only destroy the form/content solidity of aesthetical judgment but shift the active/ passive dynamic. It becomes a matter of an event that folds and unfolds within and between.

As a photograph unfolds a content, we also find it folding into a future that is without content. Unfolding and enfolding – both continuous and discontinuous. As Yve Lomax reminds us, being "between these two folds is what makes a photograph astonishing."⁵⁶⁹

Photography could be thought of as framing space but also as space re-framing the world. Deleuze speaks of obsessive framings... Framing is also 'carving space' out of chaos or 'curving around', which produce a style of movable borders that 'shade' into each other thinking not just "the space of man" but the sense of space as such.⁵⁷⁰ Art struggles with chaos but it also illuminates it for an instant as a sens(ation). A photograph becomes a creative and creating space, no longer belonging to anyone or anywhere. Now, it becomes the 'place of composition', the space of fleeting

⁵⁶⁷ Jean Epstein, 'For A New Avant-Garde', in *The Avant-Garde Film: A Reader of Theory and Criticism*, ed. P. Adams Sitney (New York University Press, New York, 1978).

⁵⁶⁸ "What needs to be thought is not this or that plane, nor this or that realized system of relations, but the potential to produce planes, the "planomenon" and our capacity to think or encounter that potential," writes Colebrook in 'The Sense of Space', p.10.

⁵⁶⁹ Lomax, *Writing the Image*, p. 159.

⁵⁷⁰ Colebrook, 'On the Specificity of Affect', p.190.

encounters of nomadic movements of solitude and anonymity, of (dis)connections with the potential of opening up new planes. "The elaborately choreographed mise en scène is consistently inventive and unpredictable, making use of highly unorthodox angles,"⁵⁷¹ and unorthodox 'suggestions'. Here, in addition to the space produced out of encounters of individual forces, there is also "the *metaphysical surface*, which is the image of those powers *not* as they are actualised but as they might be."⁵⁷²

The space of no-place (of Tarr's films) is neither that of belonging, nor identifiable. Always heavy, peopled with only very few but repetitively appearing 'miserable' objects, it seems overwhelmingly confined and borderless at the same time. The harsh chiaroscuro light and the camera movements create a forever shifting space: closed to the outside world, the small town where the action takes place contains endlessly explorable interiors, such as the expanses of Karrer's house in *Damnation*, unfolded by a wandering camera. The apartment is austere and sparsely furnished, like the lethargic electric powered conveyances endlessly traversing along the overcast, desolate landscape, obscured by the density of the fog. As Yvette Biró points out, they all radiate the same feeling: being on a desolate wasteland, imprisoned by Time. Paradoxically, however, one cannot see where the walls or bars are found, the space seems borderless, infinite. Dense, thick "comprising of so many layers in the slow motion", time brings out the sensation of the any-space.⁵⁷³ The confined space of the photographic frame incites forces and puts us in contact with the outside. Here the sense of 'homelessness' conditions thinking.

For Harbord, this space (film space) is a complex production defining an originary cultural space ('here' and 'elsewhere') mediated through a range of cultural references; being composed of images and media forms as much as built environment. Tarr's spaces are more 'unbounded'. They are outside recognition, orphaned, both timeless and outside time. In these spatial 'explorations', there are no cultural references. The 'places' in Tarr's films, although filmed in real locations, do not allude specifically to a particular time or space. The sets and related landscapes were often constructed from different parts of different locations. As the set designer, Gyula Pauer explained,

⁵⁷¹ Rosenbaum, *Almanac of Fall*, <http://www.jonathanrosenbaum.com/?p=6266>.

⁵⁷² Colebrook, 'On the Specificity of Affect', p.192.

⁵⁷³ Biró, 'Confined Space'.

sometimes only a street scene was recorded, sometimes a house wall outside Budapest, an inside in Ajka, and a next-door shop in Pécs; "so the film's world consists of real elements, which, however do not create a real place."⁵⁷⁴ Tarr's streets and landscapes are not identifiable as particular places, towns, or villages. They could be any-street or any-town somewhere in the past or future, any-spaces-whatever that existed or are imagined. Anytime, anywhere. This forking of "delirious pasts" and "delirious futures" creates a sense of hallucinatory uneasiness, as if the vision was somehow strangely clairvoyant⁵⁷⁵; the sense that there is more to what we see, and not beyond but in the world. This is not the relation to the world phenomenologically but opening relations as such. The tactile material quality of light, shapes, and the physical intensity of wasteland-scapes, deframe the image from its 'culturally' bound convention of rectangular geometry. Tarr's towns are where any street, any house, any field is every house, every street and every field. The 'beyond' surface in his films is not the metaphysical in usual sense but timeless and cosmic (if not universal). There are no stabilizing shots of towns, or overviews to reassure that vision is knowledge, neither the flaneuristic sense of exploring –as what cinematic theory would call the 'active viewing'. Rather, we move blindly, from frame to frame, from sequence to sequence, in a searching attempt to locate the sense of 'place', public and private space.⁵⁷⁶ This visual (and sound) *ballade* takes us nowhere in terms of either common sense or *communis sensus*. This is also a liberating force. A force of imagining/thinking different places – different world. If time is really an unchanging motion, space can be thought of as the 'composition' of change, as creation, again, a becoming or as vessel of abandoned memories in a labyrinth of passing through. Time as an open-ended, non-linear 'flow'; and space open onto the outside. The space-time of transition.⁵⁷⁷

⁵⁷⁴ Interview with Gyula Pauer, reproduced by András Bálint Kovács, in 'The World According to Tarr'.

⁵⁷⁵ Bergson attributed this kind of 'seeing' to hyperaesthesia of the eye. For Deleuze it is *aistheteon*, "not a sensible being but the being of the sensible. Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental encounter ... It is not the given but that by which the given is given. It is therefore in a certain sense the imperceptible. It is imperceptible precisely from the point of view of recognition ..." Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 176.

⁵⁷⁶ Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion*, p. 64.

⁵⁷⁷ In 'On the Specificity of Affect', Claire Colebrook writes: "In contrast with the idea that space or the world is constructed from sense – socially or culturally constituted – spaciality opens sense, for any location bears the potential to open up new planes, new orientations. Rather than seeing space as effected from sense, as realised from a system of orientation or intending, Deleuze sees spaciality as an opening of sense, as the potential to create new problems." Colebrook, 'On the Specificity of Affect', p. 196.

The land one possesses is always a sign of barbarism and blood, while the land one traverses without taking it reminds us of a book.⁵⁷⁸

A-cultural and a-historical, they are often claustrophobic close-spaced intensities of entrapment or vast, open landscapes of Hungarian "puszta." Disconnected, autonomous, mute any-spaces-whatever dimmed by the high contrast and black and white photography, the interiors emptied of their occupants, deserted exteriors, or landscapes in nature. And the endless stretches of rural wasteland. Not quite in the same way as the alienating anonymous spaces of airports and waiting rooms Marc Augé writes about.⁵⁷⁹ The spaces are any spaces that could be anywhere in any time, they are familiar and foreign, close and far, *heimlich and unheimlich*, reinvention of space as any-space-whatever, outside control, knowledge, and recognition. It is a no-place of the overlapping of perspectives, description, repetition, a crisis of action, in a direct presentation of time. For Janet Harbord, referring to Deleuze's reading of spaciality, this is space as an affectual register in its own right, not simply as nature mirroring the emotional or psychological state of characters but a landscape which decentres the human.⁵⁸⁰ In the last shot of *Damnation*, Karrer literally descends to the level of dogs, getting down on fours, barking and snapping at them. The dark, muddy landscape recedes behind while the camera 'walks' through it. This is one of those puzzling, unsettling images reminiscent of some seen in Tarkovsky's *Stalker* (1979). Edward Howard perceives Karrer's choice to abandon the town as an act 'less than human, an animal fighting only for itself'.⁵⁸¹ Yet, the isolation of man outside the social 'condition', pointing towards 'indifferent' nature, rather than seen as degradation, might create a possible connection between the human and non-human world, where spaces, animals, corners and walls also have their stories. Here, film space produces an affectual register that is not simply human projection: filmic space may be claustrophobic, agoraphobic, neurotic, eroticised. It is not simply location, a container or backdrop for action, but a creation of the mobile forces at work between the human and the non-human; a space of potential 'beyond' the human condition. Empty spaces,

⁵⁷⁸ Chantal Akerman, 'Of the Middle East', 1998, cited in Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion*, p. 75.

⁵⁷⁹ Mark Augé, *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, trans. John Howe (Verso, 1995).

⁵⁸⁰ Harbord, *The Evolution of Film*, p. 38.

⁵⁸¹ Edward Howard, *Damnation* in *Unspoken*, 2009, <http://unspokenjournal.com/i-tarr/damnation/>.

bleak industrial landscapes, and the oppressive and alienating environment might reflect the desolation and spiritual lethargy of morally bankrupt protagonists. In Tarr's world, everything seems to take place in a crumbling world of mud, alcohol and betrayal. There is no psychology, and no morality here. In the spirit of Italian neorealism perhaps, "the world *is*, quite simply, before it is something to be condemned."⁵⁸² Things and people are encountered in a web of relations outside the personal and the social in the process of becoming, where the question of how to co-exist is one without signposts or 'commandments'. This is not the question of existential decadence or nihilism. It is "the powerful, non-organic Life that grips the world."⁵⁸³ Deleuze calls this 'pre-hodological' space, the space of indecision (not an indecision of the spirit but an undecidability of the body) where "disparate sets overlap and rival each other, without being able to organize themselves according to sensory-motor schemata." The space of 'passive vitalism' "which reveals a non-choice of the body as the un-thought."⁵⁸⁴

This might be the result of the clandestine aesthetic mentioned earlier, aesthetic that probes the thought itself. Yet, unlike Tarkovsky, for instance, Tarr doesn't search for a truth in the realm beyond the senses, but in material physicality (actual and virtual) of this world. Could it also be that description exhausts the meaning through the apprehension of space? The slow, difficult, and unrecognisable image replaces perception with intuition. When the action is suspended between fiction and truth the only choice left is to think the new.⁵⁸⁵

The seemingly naturalistic sets feel more like variations on the same atmosphere, 'unrealistically hopeless, and claustrophobically depressing' (according to Kovács). The sense of space as place is not the one of belonging or actual dwelling. It's 'orphaned' particularity 'arises' from the specificity of a (waste)land free from the certainty of 'identity'. And yet somehow it perversely 'emanates' life – an impersonal vitality – not through the realistic 'preference' of misery or poverty but through art(ifice) that is also real. As such, the space, rather than formed into nostalgic

⁵⁸² Bazin, *What is Cinema? Volume II*, p. 21.

⁵⁸³ Flaxman, *The Brain Is the Screen*, p. 42.

⁵⁸⁴ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 196.

⁵⁸⁵ It could be argued that, after Deleuze, Tarr - like Antonioni - had taken up a Nietzschean project of a real critique of morality: "When everything has been said, when the main scene seems over, there what comes afterwards." Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 7.

resignation or 'contented' by judgment, is open to experimentation. The aesthetics of movable frames where new encounters can open new relations.

In the images of this cinema, we are unsure of the status of what we are seeing and hearing: despite the apparently 'real' locations, there is no containing schema or guarantor that these situations have an existence outside of the image.⁵⁸⁶ The disclosed space is minutely defined in the placement of objects, in the lighting, and the length of the shot enveloping them. Excess of intensity – space as zone of intensity, an embryonic sense of potentiality.

But there is also the notion of space-time, which is 'operating' in the realm of the real: abstract and concrete, virtual and actual. Here the space loses its two-dimensional recognition of stability and is re-imagined as a multidimensional 'set' of transitions. Attics, cellars, unused sheds – places abandoned by domestication and 'stable', safe, recognizable attributes of belonging are often 'charged' with those 'forbidden' forces of desire for adventure, for the new, for the unknown. When the doctor in *Sátántangó* stops to rest with the prostitutes in the attic of what might be an unused barn, the sense of hopelessness or repression is offset somehow by the material intensity and wonder of hardly recognizable space. Another attic where Estike has created her own 'world', or even the elaborately 'described' pub interiors, in all their stagnating eradication, seem to evoke some sense of transition. This is also a childhood's space of 'freedom' from family and domesticated constraints, and a space of 'magic'. These kind of spaces (any-spaces-whatever) provoke, by their 'unfamiliarity', a sensation which enables intuitive 'connection' with the time as 'pure' cosmic memory of 'life'. Not only in a sense of involuntary memory of individual sensation, but of a more 'basic' opening to the outside – a sensation that becomes a seed, a creative longing of potentiality rather than traumatic or nostalgic sense of loss.⁵⁸⁷ A new sense of being-in-the-world, re-making and re-creating the world, even if it seems devoid of meaning, even if it is destined to extinction. This is what space-time in photography

⁵⁸⁶ Harbord, *Evolution of Film*, p. 27.

⁵⁸⁷ This resonates with the Deleuze and Guattari's desire is connected to the idea of the people to come, and to the concept of fabulation as discussed by Ronald Bogue in 'Fabulation, Narration and the People to Come', Constantin V. Boundas (ed.), *Deleuze And Philosophy*, pp. 202-227.

is. It does not represent time but 'gives' time literally to contemplation.⁵⁸⁸ The thought as movement is operating in two directions: a non-linear associative process (create associations and connections), and a movement of integration and differentiation (distinguishes and arranges thought into sets of ensembles). The whole of relations – the consciousness of a qualitative change. The concrete set changes qualitatively in an abstract/ virtual dimension of thought. Any-time-space-whatever of waiting, hesitation and anticipation becomes the zone of intensity, a time which endures the 'still', and space (both physical and sensed) which acts as a catalyst of affect/thought.

Without boundaries or measure, the space frequently affiliated with the unconscious – has no depth – it is a surface, the mirror unreflexive, opaque. There is nothing beyond what we see. It is a surface of visual and aural interconnecting/ intertwining becomings, forming and deforming, framings and de-framings. What connects with the virtual outside is a crack, a crack as some intensive pull (as if losing it, or losing the ground) between virtual and actual.⁵⁸⁹ It might happen on the same plane or between different planes but it exists now and always in the immanent infinity of chaosmos, always pregnant with potentials of different instances, singularities, bodies. These are the 'instances' formed out of matter with the force of spirit; "minute perceptions," according to Leibniz.⁵⁹⁰ The virtual that awaits its actualisations is a non-spatial 'outside'. There is nothing more than can be seen in the image, one does not quite know what to look at, and yet, as Laleen Jayamanne⁵⁹¹ has suggested, there is so much to see and to hear... Yet, what is seen is so ambiguous that perception is impossible. Senses are scrambled in the mute whisper of meaning-less (not meaningless) signs: the world and world as an image. The 'fixed' shot is a surface, a plane upon which images of thought arise and where percepts and affects are born. The surface here is not the opposite of depth or a base upon which everything is arranged. It is not an interpretation nor it is a disclosure but a space-time (zone) of

⁵⁸⁸ As earlier, contemplation is used here in the Bergsonian sense of time and of non-utilitarian 'perception', and as questioning attention.

⁵⁸⁹ Throughout his writing, Deleuze used the term 'crack' or 'wound' to distance the idea of the unconscious desire from Freud's death drive. For Deleuze, the crack is in the surface and does not bring out the depth; "it is like a volcano ready to erupt." Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*.

⁵⁹⁰ As Daniel W. Smith proposes through Deleuze, as well as Leibniz, the unconscious is 'populated' by "auditive, gustative, olfactory, and visual perception, an entire perceptio-inclinator ensemble," which is not exclusively our own. "Not only are all of us constituted by a multitude of unconscious drives," he writes, "each drive is itself multiple, an infinite complex of minute perceptions and inclinations." Daniel W. Smith, 'Deleuze and the Question of Desire', p. 72.

⁵⁹¹ Laleen Jayamanne, *Towards Cinema and Its Double*, p. 142.

affects and intensities. It acts as a mirror, deprived of its reflective and reflexive certainties. It becomes a plane where different worlds, times and identities meet together with the plane of transition, where personal and real time, knowing subjectivism and objective description as well as image and spectator, blend together again and again without resolution, in a domain on this-other side, within the mirror. Perceptions are no longer linked or linkable and the "spaces are neither coordinated nor filled."⁵⁹² It is a plane, a virtual plane, a transcendental, preindividual, and even prephilosophical field of infinite variation which, as Gregory Flaxman writes, "superseding the limits of normal perception, deterritorialises the classical coordinates of thought" and opens the space for creative experimentation.⁵⁹³ Not returning to any prior or 'primitive' modes, it is a plane of composition (art) and production of sensation that takes us beyond the lived experience of phenomenological flesh, and cognitive thinking into the space of creating new, and unknown modes of existence.⁵⁹⁴

In this sense, a surface can be perceived as a space of 'absolute potentiality', where faces and objects, people and landscape, touch and coalesce in poetical transformations, in a trans-subjective dimension that becomes a web of multiple possibilities, encounters-events open to chance and the unknown. In Tarr's films, this is the non-metaphysical/physical beyond, as "that flat and death thinking, strictly horizontal and without depth", a photo.⁵⁹⁵

Suddenly I am astonished. I see a photograph stretching (and folding) to infinity. Suddenly I see the infamous window on the world not shattering but gently, gently folding. Suddenly I see the frost on the window pane of the frozen moment becoming an intricate pattern of unfolding and enfolding.⁵⁹⁶

The photograph might be an instant, and the slice, but by bringing this instance to the surface, it demands attention. The fleeting moment does not flee but is imprinted in time. What time-image in cinema created, photography was doing all the time. Instead

⁵⁹² Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 40-41.

⁵⁹³ Flaxman, *The Brain Is the Screen*, p. 7.

⁵⁹⁴ (Human) "life in a form of thinking brain is the site where the potential for space – the intuition of inhuman foldings of space – can be actualised and counter-actualised." Colebrook, 'On the Specificity of Affect', p. 193.

⁵⁹⁵ Laruelle, *The Concept of Non-Photography*, p. 36.

⁵⁹⁶ Lomax, *Writing the Image*, p. 158.

of spacialising time, it enfolded it in space of embryonic potential. It could not be fixed as then and there, because it exists as a separate reality, a space-time always growing in dimension. Whenever we think, we produce memory, we are engaged in becoming, a kind of amnesiac memory of potentiality. We write not with childhood memories but through blocks of childhood that are the becoming-child of the present."⁵⁹⁷ Space does not need to be confined to fixed determinations. It does not have to hold time in its chronological calendar. It can be folded in time (Chronos) outside of time (Aion), and outside of place as any-space-whatever. A plateau. Self-vibrating region of intensities.

Time-space – 'the empty space' that resembles the Tao – empty and formless yet with the potential to contain an infinity of things. A winter landscape with its isolated vastness. Endless stretches of rural wasteland. Deserted interiors. Creaking coal dumpsters. Wandering stray dogs. Muddy streets. Half-empty packet of cigarettes and half-forgotten dreams. The void is not merely opposite to fullness or objecthood but is the very site that makes forms and contents possible – that is also inseparable.

Changing emphasis from time to space-time and from movement to 'stillness' might provide the opportunity to 'slow down' the senses, to 'observe' the relationship (affectual encounters) between the spaces and objects and bodies within space. This might, instead of freezing time into the chronological definition of a 'place', free space, allowing it to grow in dimensions, to 'capture' attention, to invite sensual and affective thinking and rethinking of our relationship to time (speed or slowness), to purpose and to 'productivity' in a context of nomadic 'displacement', where space does not belong, or is own or recognisable but open to a intuitive and imaginary wonder of a vital life that is more than possession, including that of knowledge.

Although, as Victor Burgin pointed out, a photographic exposure may be made "in the blink of an eye", the experience of looking at the resulting image belongs to the register of *durée* rather than to the mechanical abstraction of the "instant."⁵⁹⁸ The 'fixed shot' of modern cinema, which has a particular resonance as 'instant', becomes a 'durée'. Time is 'confined' in the image by the length of 'recording', and the stillness of

⁵⁹⁷ Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 168.

⁵⁹⁸ Victor Burgin, *The Remembered Film* (Reaktion Press, 2005), p. 25.

a camera. In a sense, the image is cut out from the world by 'attentive misrecognition', becoming a thinking image. Every single shot is self-contained, "each image being on its own, just a fragment of reality existing before any meaning";⁵⁹⁹ a singular image in a collection of 'stills' weaved together by the logic of 'irrational cut'. Time, however, lingers somehow in the direction of depth or 'breadth' rather than linearity, growing in dimensions, but like a ripple. Depth, on the other hand retains its importance not as an illusionistic window to the other world, but the dimension of time outside chronological time. The image "does not extend to new spaces but 'intends', involuting into the mind, opening up a whole new sense of mental duration."⁶⁰⁰ Exhausting the space, the thought turns inwards towards memories, memories as becomings. Space-time becomes a qualitative combination of sensation and '(e)motion' where perception becomes hallucination, and memory becomes déjà-vu. The movement 'stops' in the image 'growing in dimensions'. Long shots, mimicking the still image, multiply the dimension of space-time 'outside the time' of a photograph and enable the viewer to make 'connections', becoming-other. Film is thinking within the shot as description, and between as (non)relation. The slow and prolonged camera movements never rush into the depicted space, inviting the eye to linger on the surface, and the viewer to remain on the edge. It evokes the thinking process, yet a process that is hesitant, experimenting, questioning, rather than interpreting or defining. The camera, sometimes still, sometimes scanning or recording, echoes the experience of looking at the still photograph. The movement of the eye constructs a recognizable space, and "it is only through the suspension of movement ... that the essential heterogeneity of the visual field can be approached. ... To learn to see is to unlearn to recognize."⁶⁰¹

Something happens in the process between the photographer/ filmmaker, the camera and the world that is outside intentionality. Photographic image (the photographic) is not only the question of "camera consciousness" but the "camera unconscious", something which is outside the natural or 'implied' perception, outside intentionality. It is in Bazin's statement about the snowflake and in Deleuze's 'fixed shot'. 'I' who perceives, cannot experience nonchronological time, but the eye which gets rid of the

⁵⁹⁹ Bazin, *What is Cinema? Vol. 2*, p. 37.

⁶⁰⁰ Flaxman, *The Brain is the Screen*, p. 6.

⁶⁰¹ Jean-François Lyotard, *Discourse, Figure*, trans. Mary Lydon and Antony Hudek (Cultural Critique Books, University of Minnesota Press, 2011), p. 157.

'I' could become the catalyst of the image-world happening through it. The time-image severs the link between mind and matter temporarily, throwing the knowing "I" into the gap of the nothing matter. We forget who we are for an instant, and by the failure of attentive recognition, discover seeing (perceive for its own sake). We gain new subjectivity in a sense: "subjectivity is never ours, it is time, that is, the soul or the spirit, the virtual."⁶⁰² No longer the objective camera or subjective eye but vision which is immanent to itself (self-referential). Falsifying, virtual 'pure expression' that is real. When the subject's ability to act has been suppressed, Temenuga Trifonova writes, the subject's attention to images is intensified, and now all it can do is perceive images for the sake of perceiving them. It is as if the subject becomes hypnotized by the images.⁶⁰³

The first unrealised beauty of the photographed image was the 'defocused', wrote Stanley Cavell.⁶⁰⁴ This is not, however, the 'nostalgic and romantic' beauty associated with soft-focus photography, but rather a high-contrast 'out-of-focus' linked to the uncertainty of perception. Tarr's distinctive, black and white photography, intensified by the greys of the surroundings and blurred by rain, question the 'reality' of perception. As such, these images are no longer recognisable in an ordinary/ habitual sense of perception or cognition. They form a space of creative encounters. All sorts of encounters: memory and imagination, desire and loss, reality and dreams, the neglected, the unarticulated, the unrepresentable, the actual and the virtual all 'entangled' with each other and brought onto the surface of an image. Thus, 'suddenly' the de-focused beauty acquires the radical space of nomadic thinking, where the familiar viewing codes and the confidence of judgment are refused. The image is by definition a moving image insofar as it does not "resemble an object that would represent", writes Deleuze.⁶⁰⁵ The still image offers a space of 'seeing' rather than perceiving representationally, in waiting frustrated by the absence of a before or after. The visual and sound elements enter into internal relations, deleting and displacing the predictable.

⁶⁰² Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 82-83.

⁶⁰³ Temenuga Trifonova, 'A Nonhuman Eye: Deleuze on Cinema', *SubStance*, Vol. 33, No. 2, Issue 104, pp. 134-152.

⁶⁰⁴ Stanley Cavell, *The World Viewed: Reflections on the Ontology of Film* (Harvard University Press Cambridge, 1995), p. 123.

⁶⁰⁵ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 26.

And the perplexing perception becomes questioning, responding, objecting, provoking, theorematizing, hypothesizing, experimenting, in accordance with the open list of logical conjunctions ('or', 'therefore', 'if', 'because', 'actually', 'although' ...).⁶⁰⁶

'Contemplation' of these 'fragments of existence withdrawn from Time', although fugitive, renders the (cinematic) pleasures of affect-thought far 'superior' to social or sexual pleasures of 'action' narrative. Here immobilised time, or liberated from their implication in a ceaseless flow of fragments of time, allows for sensing the 'eternity' and the 'essence of things'.⁶⁰⁷

"Brilliance emerges out of the shadows, as we pass from intensification to reflection."⁶⁰⁸

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 22.

⁶⁰⁷ Keith Ansell-Pearson 'Deleuze and the Overcoming of Memory', p. 3.

⁶⁰⁸ Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, p. 95.

exposure 4:

Textured Soundscapes. Poet(h)ics of the Image-Sound.⁶⁰⁹

The visual image and the sound image are in a special relationship, a free indirect relationship.

Gilles Deleuze.⁶¹⁰

"I have to make it clear that not even for a moment is there a doubt that it is not a technical but a philosophical question that ... The tonal system in question, ... through research, has led us inevitably to a test of faith, in which we ask: On what do we base our believe that this harmony, the core of every masterpiece, referring to its own irrevocability actually exists or not?"

*Werckmeister Harmonies*⁶¹¹

Can you hear that?

What is it?

A machine?

The lights?

Someone singing?⁶¹²

⁶⁰⁹ 'Textured Soundscapes' is the expression coined by Donato Totaro, in 'Sátántangó: And then there was Darkness', http://www.horschamp.qc.ca/new_offscreen/satantango.html. poet(h)ics, by Patricia MacCormack in 'Julia Kristeva', Felicity Colman (ed.), *Film, Theory and Philosophy: The Key Thinkers*, (Acumen, 2010), pp. 267-289.

⁶¹⁰ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 250.

⁶¹¹ *Werckmeister Harmonies* (2000)

⁶¹² *Sátántangó* (1994)

A ticking clock, a whirring fan, the whirr of the refrigerator's motor, the slow, scraping sound of the shaving razor, the constant patter of rain. The recurring distant drone of church bells, a gong, the crack and rumble of pool balls, the howling of the wind, and the music, abstract and autonomous, like a speck of dust in the eye, or a "true foreign body" in the visual image.⁶¹³ Belá Tarr's films' sounds are a collection of vibrations and frequencies, both intensely material and ineffable, sultrily entwined in the construction of what Gregg Render calls a "musico-emotional sensation."⁶¹⁴ Physicality and temporal denseness, which intensify the moment and enhance the sense of an unseen, otherworldly presence, bring together inside and outside, close and distant, particular and universal, weaving a polyvocal 'sound-visionscape' that brings forth the outside of affect-thought. Intensely material and 'otherworldly', like the visual, the sounds of time-image resist.⁶¹⁵ Everyday, mundane sounds, monotonous tonality of music, and detached speech-acts unfold; fabricating a polymorphous unconventional tale, undoing plots and rupturing linearity, rendering it visible and audible. Forming disjunctive compositions with images – both an organizing and disintegrating process – they frame audio-visual encounters of non-relation in-between where image and sound are linked by nothing more than an aesthetic 'resistance'.⁶¹⁶

Therefore, and following on from the previous chapters, what is particularly relevant to my analysis here is the role sound can play in dislodging habitual recognition, and in opening up space and time for creative participations, in both the films and the viewings. Rather than addressing the theoretical and/ or historical discussions around

⁶¹³ Deleuze explains how, according to musicians like Pierre Jansen - or, to lesser degree, Philippe Arhuys - cinema music must be abstract and autonomous; a true 'foreign body' in the visual image, rather like a speck of dust in the eye, and must accompany 'something that is in the film without being shown or suggested in it' Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 230.

⁶¹⁴ Gregg Render, *Deleuze and Film Music. Building a Methodological Bridge Between Film Theory and Music*, (Intellect, 2011), p.34.

⁶¹⁵ The disjunction (between the sound and image) is constitutive of what Deleuze (following Malraux) calls art's resistance (p.323). Here the work of art resists not by providing counter-information in the form of certain content, but by having the sound move in a direction counter to what is seen, such that the two encounter each other in a space set up by the disjunction between them – it is a relation which is a non-relation, of which both elements are a part and apart. Resisting in this way, works of art have a fundamental affinity with the struggle of man; Deleuze characterises this affinity as the 'most mysterious' thing. Deleuze, *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975-1995*, tran. David Lapoujade, Ames Hodges, and Mike Taormina (Semiotext(e) / Foreign Agents, 2006), p. 324.

⁶¹⁶ Similarly to the narrative of (e)motion, and the 'stillness' of the photographic gesture of previous chapters, the sound-image here is that of non-representational affective/aesthetic 'presence' that resists the linguistic structure of signification.

film sound, I will engage directly (experimentally and creatively) with ideas coming forth from the inventive use of sound in Belá Tarr's films, and in dialogue with the more creative or philosophical writings about sound.⁶¹⁷ Thus, sound will be considered here as carrying the 'nomadic force' of the creative process (of being in becoming), emerging through the concepts of rhythm, resonance, and refrain.

The thinking about and with sound is based on the understanding of film as construction, and the artificial creation of image/sound in a complex set of relations, and resonates with the concepts of space, time, and movement. It derives from adopting the concept of the 'time-image' as primarily an audio-visual, or optical and sound situation, where sound is not in service of the visual narrative but (co)exists with(in) the image as a process/formation in time. It is thought of, after Deleuze, as a "living concept, which goes beyond the visual image, without being able to do without it."⁶¹⁸ The analysis will be constructed mainly against Deleuze and Guattari's writings on sound in *A Thousand Plateaus*, and Michel Chion's theoretical work on film sound. The writing will evolve around the ideas of rhythm, resonance, and refrain, as formulated by Deleuze and Guattari, and will follow the conceptual crux of the analysis as a whole in expanding the idea of the (cinematic) image beyond its representational and communicative stipulations.

Throughout the chapter, thinking about sound will be constructed around two ways that sound can be 'perceived'. First, as embracing the physicality of the familiar (creating space), and second, as the unfamiliar, distant, and 'otherworldly' resonating with the outside. Both are interlinked by presupposition of rhythm/time as 'flux, multiple speeds, and reversible relations' (eternity) which bypass the binary opposition of transcendence to take the form(less) of the immanent set of becomings.⁶¹⁹ The question therefore will shift from the relationship of sound to

⁶¹⁷ These will include Deleuze's writings in *Cinema 2* and *Essays Critical and Clinical*; Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*; as well as Michel Chion's writing on film sound: *Film: a Sound Art*, Film and Culture Series, (Columbia University Press, 2009), and *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*. (Columbia University Press, 1994).

⁶¹⁸ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 232.

⁶¹⁹ This is based on Deleuze and Guattari's thinking about the rhythm not as metrical but as force of chaos. According to Deleuze and Guattari, rhythm is not the same as rhythmical meter, or what passes for rhythmical music, as in a military march for instance: "Rhythm is born of movements of intensity that creates unequal expression of time. [...] Whereas meter presumes an even division of uniform

image to audio-visual assemblages, and from harmony/ disorder to a plane of sonorous composition.

Despite many writers' efforts to identify sound solely with image, sound does not have a precise and fixed relationship to it. In sound film, the film is more or less everywhere, writes Michel Chion, but we can't say exactly where between the sound and the images.⁶²⁰ As Deleuze suggested, there is no movement common to the visual and to sound; sound acting as a "stimulant to movement without being its double."⁶²¹ One cannot separate images from sounds, seeing from hearing. In seeing there is always hearing, and in hearing there will always be seeing. Even in silent cinema a film was not really silent. The relation of sound to image cannot, according to Deleuze, be a question of correspondence, either external or internal: "it is a reaction between the musical foreign body and the completely different visual images", an interaction independent of any common structure.⁶²² Moreover, silent or talkie, cinema constitutes an immense internal monologue that is not a language but visual material which is the utterable of language."⁶²³ In the cinema of the time-image, the sound-image relation is that of the irrational cut.

As Chion pointed out, sounds are neither experienced objectively nor named, and therefore might attract various degrees of vagueness and uncertainty.⁶²⁴ The difficulty in discussing/ thinking about sound from the standpoint of definitions stems from its characteristic as sensation (intangible despite the sense of materiality). Sounds take on and render sensations that, in lived experience, are combined, or 'agglomerated' together, thus creating what Chion describes as 'the rush of composite sensations not just the auditory reality of the event'.⁶²⁵ In this sense one can think of sound as a kind of paradoxical entity, combining seemingly separate sensations (sound, vision and even touch) in a sense of their materiality, in a way that is living; in a complex web of

time, rhythm presupposes a time of flux, of multiple speeds and reversible relations" Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*.

⁶²⁰ Michel Chion, *Film: A Sound Art*, trans. Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), p. 217.

⁶²¹ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 230.

⁶²² Ibid, p. 230.

⁶²³ Ibid, p. 232.

⁶²⁴ Chion, *Film: A Sound Art*, p. 112.

⁶²⁵ Ibid., p. 113.

elements which are interconnected almost like living tissues, which despite their complexity, work together.

Music, dialogue, and sound effects can each suggest a mood, evoke a feeling, set a pace, connect otherwise unconnected ideas, characters, places, images, or moments, heighten realism or diminish it, heighten ambiguity or diminish it, draw attention to a detail, or away from it, indicate changes in time, describe an acoustic space, startle or soothe, exaggerate action or mediate it.⁶²⁶ Sound can also be thought of in terms of proximity: what's near and what's far, ideology and pragmatics, immanence and transcendence, inside and outside, and the number of relations these concepts can enter with and out of each other. As will become apparent later in this chapter, sound is in 'dialogue' with vision as "free indirect relation", which is a question of style/aesthetics.

When we accept the cinematic image as an optical and sound 'situation', sound and image need to be 'perceived' as simultaneous and as coexistent, rather than in historically motivated chronological order (sound added to the image)⁶²⁷. Sound and image invade each other, feed off each other; sound and silence playing off each other, neither communicating nor signifying, becoming open to the outside. When sound coexists with image in its own right, it is 'rendering audible',⁶²⁸ thus together with the image (rendering visible) becomes any-image-whatever, a fleeting 'moment' of the visionary 'gesture' open to the future of unlimited possibilities. Here, in the strange un/familiarity of rhythmic tonalities, one is able to hear, losing oneself in a world of sound, where hearing breaks down the defences of the harmonic and melodic ear, and becomes aware of TIMBRE alone.⁶²⁹

⁶²⁶ Chion, *Film: A Sound Art*, p. 112.

⁶²⁷ This is how Chion 'treats' sound in his work *Film, A Sound Art*: not as something opposite and added to the image but that which coexists simultaneously with the image. Deleuze takes it further and develops the sound/ image relation(ship) of the "irrational cut."

⁶²⁸ The task of Modern music, Deleuze and Guattari argues, is to render audible forces that are inaudible: "Music molecularizes sonic matter and thereby becomes capable of harnessing nonsonorous forces such as Duration, Intensity." Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 343. Also as painting for all the time has had the project of rendering visible, instead of reproducing the visible, and music of rendering sonorous, instead of reproducing the sonorous. Deleuze, and Guattari, *Thousand Plateaus*, p. 346.

⁶²⁹ Jean Francois Lyotard, 'Scapeland' in *The Inhuman, Reflections on Time*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington and Rachel Bowlby, (Stanford University Press, California, 2008), p. 183. Timbre could be thought of here as the 'unheard' that is at the same time the real sense of non-concrete or a non-specified kind of 'belief'.

In Tarr's films, all sounds – ambient and composed – are distinctly present, and they often occur one at a time, either as music, ambient 'noise', or speech. In most situations, they do not recede or fade, but remain in focus. The acuity of each sound, and their relation to what is the background noise/sound, at times reduced and at times intensified, becoming over-present, allows the voices or sound effects to be more highly individualised, and to be heard both more finely and more clearly in the context of a more 'profound' silence.⁶³⁰ The rhythmical pattern of a clock, a whirring fan, the hum of a refrigerator motor, or the constant tapping of rain, the repetitive intensified ambient sounds 'physicalise' time, simulating movement without imitating it. Footfalls and footsteps, from the urgent approach to the shuffling feet of drunks attempting some kind of coordinated dance, the plodding of a long trek, 'blocks of sound' relate to time that is not linear measurable progression, and make the image even more physical, earthier, and more tangible. The clocks that are silent, on the other hand, point to "the perpetuity of defenselessness."⁶³¹ The unchanging intensity of sound, and its rhythmical polyphonic materiality encroaching on space, frames it within the immediate response, a kind of 'touching' quality. It is as if the director 'forced' our attention on the details of a sometimes mundane (this) world that seems so evident, or uninteresting, in order perhaps to discover the potential (new) unthought of relations – the virtual time of un-heard, non-articulated, 'foreign' and forgotten '(e)motion'. As with the almost over-present sound of the coal buckets in *Damnation* which, in its quiet insistence, forces itself onto the body/mind of the viewer, pulling him/her into the monotonous whirl of transient sentience – the unknown. It is as if the director, like Klee's artist, adopted first an "earthbound position", turning his attention to the microscopic in order to then open up to the Cosmos to "harness forces at work".⁶³² Crinkling, crackling, rattling, and thumps deliver a high degree of concreteness to the rendering. Rendering audible. These "sonorised moments", as Chion calls them, with added as well as ambient sounds, do not offer "slices of reality" but "observe the real through a prism that separates and recomposes, without

⁶³⁰ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 230.

⁶³¹ "The two clocks show different times. Both wrong of course. This one is too slow. The other, as if it showing the perpetuity of defenselessness. We relate to it as twigs to the rain: we cannot defend ourselves", Irimiás talking to Petrina while waiting in the government building in *Sátántangó* (1994).

⁶³² Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 337.

necessarily making the dislocated elements coincide perfectly."⁶³³ They wring the photographic image from representation, rendering it real. For example, people walk into the distance and, due to the wireless microphones strapped to their legs, the 'gravelly crunch of the footfalls' remains present, and with their changing distance, sound remains the same, just as loud, just as near.⁶³⁴ This confuses the (aural and visual) sensibility, heightens the senses, and enables the sound to be present rather than disappearing into the habitual 'non/hearing' (background sound) of narrative 'reality', allowing it instead to coexist with image as affective intensity, a rhizome of sensation, an interaction without any common structure, and is in line with Tarr's treatment of sound as a character.⁶³⁵ Unequal and yet not hierarchical sounds become a (de)territorialising refrain in a rhythmical composition of audio-visual renderings. Not dramatising or psychologising, Tarr (similarly to Robert Bresson) allows the sounds to have their own value, exerting them according to their own resonance and not as a background soundtrack. Different sounds connect but do not communicate with one another. The sound of church bells in *Sátántangó*, for instance, resonates with the silence of the vast nightly landscape, which is at the same time 'approached' distantly by the melodic iteration of music. Each, however, has its own distinct and apposite place in the assemblage of the vision-sound fabric. The 'aesthetic' emotion arises from the intensified material detail of the everyday mundane rustle or murmur. The sounds' repetitive insistence that 'take time', invade us, impel us, drag us, transpierce us. The recurring distant drone comprised of drums, a gong, a train whistle, and natural sounds, accompany the otherworldly music, suggesting the outside. The 'otherworldly music'⁶³⁶, composed by Michály Vig, circular, repetitive, often monotonous, and excruciatingly insistent, creates an impression of 'being stuck' and 'taking off' at the same time, leaving the characters and the 'story' behind. Partially sentimental, partially 'longing', it attains the strange, hypnotic and hallucinatory quality of a 'drunken' image, where the 'voice' of a faraway void half lost in the

⁶³³ Chion, *Film: A Sound Art*, p. 192.

⁶³⁴ It is often the case in Tarr's films that the microphones are on the actors, not with the camera. See Adrian Chan, *Béla Tarr's Sound Images: Cinema of Proximity*, in <http://gravity7.com/blog/film/2007/01/bela-tarrs-sound-images-cinema-of.html>.

⁶³⁵ As Béla Tarr reminds us now and again in interviews, the sound in his films is a character: "The music is also a kind of protagonist. The music, the set, the landscape, and the actors work together. You cannot separate them. This is the rhythm" Fiona Meade, Interview with Béla Tarr, <http://bombsite.com/issues/100/articles/2909>.

⁶³⁶ Donato Totaro, 'Sátántangó: And then there was Darkness', http://www.horschamp.qc.ca/new_offscreen/satantango.html

shadows of the rainy afternoons, enters the space of remembrance which is also the space of unknown, the "nothingness of being there."⁶³⁷

Circular and repetitive, reinforcing the awareness of space, and of self, it locks the attention in the intensity of melodic reiteration. Here the senses are not heightened but dimmed, quietened, withdrawing the habitual perception, and opening the space for what can be called, paraphrasing Bergson, an attentive non-recognition. Together with the length of shots, this creates a sense of moving frames (rather than being out of the frame).⁶³⁸

Persistent presence (real), neither signifying nor communicating, not inside or outside (in or out of frame), sounds open the image with(in) the world to the 'cosmic' forces of the unknown (not the same as transcending).

Sound owes this power not to signifying or "communicational" values (which, on the contrary, presuppose that power), nor to physical properties (which would privilege light over sound), but to a phylogenetic line, a machinic phylum that operates in sound and makes it a cutting edge of deterritorialization. But this does not happen without great ambiguity [...]. It takes leave of the earth, as much in order to drop us into a black hole as to open us up to a cosmos. [...] Ecstasy and hypnosis.⁶³⁹

The sounds of the physicality of time, the everyday sounds (proximity), and the sounds of the outside (distance) interact, becoming together, without merging, in the 'confused' perception of what is near and what is far, what is outside and what is inside. Hallucinatory 'playing', teasing, on the verge of reality and dream, in between sense and sensation. They are given the time and space to (co)exist with each other and with the images in the process of contrapuntal renderings, when the sound might become the image. The 'banging' noise the Police Chief's children make in

⁶³⁷ Ibid.

⁶³⁸ For Deleuze, 'out of field' was the situation characteristic of the movement-image, and editing, where the frame was open to other frames, and which implied the existence of the whole. In the concept of the time-image there is not longer the Whole but the Outside; the fragmentary, immanent 'space' (both inside and outside) that cannot be thought of in terms of the cause-effect progression. See Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, pp. 17-19.

⁶³⁹ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 348.

Werckmeister Harmonies, or the rhythmical tapping of a dancing man's steps in *Damnation*, the accordion's melancholic and almost 'oppressively' monotonous waltz, the 'detailed' sounds of everyday chores, or the otherworldly sound of the bells in *Sátántangó*. The quiet voice of the opening scene of *Werckmeister Harmonies*, or the screaming silence of the hospital massacre. The forlorn song of a bar singer, the music of harmony and discord. The polyphonic multiplicity of sounds and gestures. The fugal repetition. All in 'harmony' with life, and 'chaosmos' of this world, a rhizomatic multiplicity.

Sound in Tarr's films is a character, with different interacting roles in a rhythmic composition of the sound-image plane. The tangible, felt rain brings forth a sense of space; the detailed repetitive sounds, such as the pool balls, create their own intense presence, away from the main story. Sound is a paradoxically silent 'witness' to, or accomplice in, the process of destruction/entropy. In *Werckmeister Harmonies*, it could be argued, the sounds are trapped, confined to immediate space; an impotent, overbearing presence. The dance, where Tunde and the police officer 'march' around each other to the rhythm of Strauss's *Radetzky March*, for instance, or Prince's eerie voice inside the whale, even the helicopter circulating over the train tracks at the end of the film; the repetitive scramble, effacing all sounds, culminates in the 'silent' massacre where no scream was uttered. They circulate the town in a mute/gagged 'gesture', while the film's music embraces the movement in gentle wondering-questioning, assembling an open structure "freeing matter and tapping forces."⁶⁴⁰

Not leading, interpreting, or communicating, sound wanders among the spaces of images, the memories of viewers, the 'emotions' of films (narratives), constellating new encounters, creating nomadic intensity of becoming and 'viewing'.⁶⁴¹ It carries the image of gesture in suspended reaction. Rhythm, refrain, and resonance enter the unlimited number of variations on a theme (that is, life); a polyphonic, contrapuntal (non)structure of a fugue.⁶⁴²

⁶⁴⁰ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 335.

⁶⁴¹ By viewing, I mean here all sorts of responses: emotional, as well as intellectual.

⁶⁴² In his interview with Nora Demk, Tarr comments: "There is a repetition in a way with this fugue structure. Something similar is coming back, albeit with a totally changed substance, so the meaning is quite different." Nora Demk, 'Filmmakers Act Like Prostitutes', Interview with Béla Tarr.

Sound has also a 'happening', performative character, as an immanent coexistence with other elements in a process of creating that is never finished, outside realism and signification, in the teasing quality of not quite what it seems: the conversation overheard by Valuska hiding inside the whale's body in *Werckmeister Harmonies*, for instance, where the whispers and shouts of the non-visible 'prince', deceptively 'revealing', lead further and further away from any logical conclusions. While in *Damnation*, the repetitive, elliptic movement of melody assisting the camera enters into a rhythmic dance with its opening framing, where the sound of the coal dumpsters connects the outside with the inside through the frame of the window, their 'humming' lingers on the empty space long after Karrer has left his apartment. Even as films' music, sound exists as 'sound' rather than melody or a soundtrack.

Damnation (as film and as 'concept') appears to be porous. "There are cracks in the surface of things," the cloakroom attendant warns Karrer.⁶⁴³ The more attention the director gives to the textures of objects and sounds, the more surfaces seem to be 'cracked'. The image-sound becomes porous, where 'things' escape through the cracks. The rainy 'constitution' of the wall – 'moved' by the faces and sounds – leaks, allowing for something to enter (or escape). It keeps itself and the film from concretisation into a story/narrative, becoming instead sensory surfaces and walls of resonance where the intensity of perception bounces off. While 'the fog gets into the corners and into the lungs, and settles in your soul',⁶⁴⁴ and the rain envelops the world in its rhythmic murmur, words, sounds, and sensations leak out of the walls, the rain, and the mundane, monotonous barrier of uneventful, slow images. Through screen-skin pores, 'things' escape and form new assemblages, new bodies, sometimes 'bodies without organs'; they enter 'matters of expression' and, as Deleuze and Guattari suggested, when liberated from all 'connections' might produce an opening to the Cosmos. Rendering visible and sonorous. Thus entering a different 'plane' of aesthetic 'value' of the film's 'form' and its title's 'content', where, as Deleuze and Guattari write, "the assemblages placed matter and form in a new relation: matter ceased to be a matter of content, becoming instead a matter of expression, and form ceased to be a code subduing the forces of chaos, becoming a force itself."⁶⁴⁵ The effects of such

⁶⁴³ *Damnation* (1988).

⁶⁴⁴ The cloakroom woman's words in *Damnation*.

⁶⁴⁵ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 341.

'operations', as Deleuze reminds us, "can be very diverse but are never symbolic or imaginary; they always have a real value of passage or relay."⁶⁴⁶

The sound takes the form of a 'sign',⁶⁴⁷ different from that which mainstream cinema reserves for signification, and employs it to sustain emotion, to enhance the mood, or to guide the viewer's response. The sign here is a non-structural entity, always in becoming, always in transition, on the move ... non-symbolic, plastic, and unruly. It exists independently, entering at the same time into relations with other sounds, images, and the outside. It is a sound/sign, which puts in continual variation all components; a sound that, as Deleuze put it, "enters the service of a virtual cosmic continuum, in which even the holes, silences, ruptures and cuts have a part,"⁶⁴⁸ like a vibrating note in conversation with other signs, details, shapes, tonalities, dwelling beside and always on the move. Fleshy and earthy, the sign is a 'matter of expression' that now becomes a 'material of capture', a real force that operates outside symbolic representation.⁶⁴⁹

Sátántangó's sounds dwell in its 'bodies', people, cows, and ruins. They stand still and reside in a place until trance 'comes', and then they suddenly change, pulling bodies with them, interlinking surfaces, walls, and faces; the becoming 'spider' of the dancing body cutting across all fixed positions, harnessing unthinkable, invisible, non-sonorous forces. As such, they take a form of signs that are 'real' vital affects resonating with life and its cosmic force, "an enormous force operating in infinitesimal space." The "invocation of the Cosmos", Deleuze and Guattari tell us, does not operate as a metaphor; it is, on the contrary, an "effective operation", artistic/poetic renderings: connecting matter with forces.⁶⁵⁰ And the new is possible by introducing 'affective ruptures' no longer concerned with the content ('the drama of miserabilism') or meaning (symbolic message), but which enter into 'dialogical

⁶⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 333.

⁶⁴⁷ This is what Deleuze calls a 'sonsign' which, like a visual sign (op-sign), is a virtual, not a structural kind of sign, belonging to sensation rather than language Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, pp. 8-9.

⁶⁴⁸ Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts*, p. 24.

⁶⁴⁹ For Deleuze and Guattari, the words 'matters of expression' imply that the expression has a primary relation to matter. This is however the question of molecular material, which has the potential to harness unthinkable, invisible, nonsonorous forces. Music, for example, "molecularizes sound matter and in so doing becomes capable of harnessing nonsonorous forces such as Duration and Intensity." Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 332, 343.

⁶⁵⁰ Ibid., p.343-345

Effects of such 'operations', as Deleuze reminds us, "can be very diverse but are never symbolic or imaginary; they always have a real value of passage or relay.," Ibid., p.333

conversation' with the memory-forgetting of the cosmic 'now' consolidating the material, making it consistent.

Rain-ness and shadow-ness, ... repetitions of fugal noises and whispers, an endless litany of 'hopeless' hope. The slow movement of the buckets of coal in *Damnation*, or an empty 'drone' of a refrigerator, evoking the monotony of labour is, Adrian Chan observed, "time without agency, time without a thought, contemplative subjectivity beholding the repetition of a life,"⁶⁵¹ the repetitiveness of movement/sound 'transgresses' into the realm of eternity. But perhaps this is also, like a visual image, a space-time of heightened attention. Its rhythmical replay, even if mundane and monotonous (or perhaps because of it) creates the space that is not opposite to time but with/in. The space that is much closer, and proximate to the ground, is in our heads, pulling us along with movement, as if we were tracking the shot.⁶⁵² It is the refrain of territorialisation, which is repeated and repeats, but each time differently, the "refrain which is a prism, a crystal of space-time." It acts upon that which surrounds it, sound or light, extracting from it various vibrations, or decompositions, projections, or transformations.⁶⁵³ The 'earthy' sounds of domestic spaces resonate with rain, wind, the rustle of leaves, calling the invisible forces of the 'desert'. The intensity of rain and the force of wind detach themselves from the world, becoming the forces of duration. This refrain fabricates time; it is the 'implied tense' that carries over the space, running in many directions.⁶⁵⁴ As such, the repetition/ refrain constructs the space of opening(s). It carries within the virtual force that envelops the actual matter rendering sonorous what is not yet, the unknown, the 'secret', a gap in the form 'to come' – "certain that something is to come."⁶⁵⁵

The refrain also has a catalytic function: not only to increase the speed of the exchanges and reactions in that which surrounds it, but also to assure indirect interactions between elements devoid of so-called natural affinity, and thereby to form organized masses.⁶⁵⁶

⁶⁵¹ Adrian Chan, *Béla Tarr's Sound Images: Cinema of Proximity*, <http://gravity7.com/blog/film/2007/01/bela-tarrs-sound-images-cinema-of.html>

⁶⁵² Ibid.

⁶⁵³ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 349.

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid., 349.

⁶⁵⁵ The words of newspaper print worker in *Werckmeister Harmonies* (2000).

⁶⁵⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 349.

All is overarched by the rhythm, in its labyrinthine pattern of unlimited number of connections (as becoming). In the use of sound, the style is also extreme. The conductor in the dance scene in *Sátántangó* repeats over and over in every possible variation that Irimiás and Petrina are returning to the town to collect the money from the farm collective. The overbearing, and at times repetitive, music seems to be doing the same. As if something intensely and persistently tried to 'be heard'. The 'phlegmatic' sound of the accordion seems somehow to 'perfectly' envelop the haunting, longing atmosphere of the rainy, wondrous space. Space-time that despite, or maybe because of, the characters' 'immobility' (to progress), is being transformed. Music offers it a different, intensive quality each time we go back to the same place. In this way, it creates the space-time (moved through style) that carries on, somehow paradoxically, the energy of life – the desire to 'dance'.

If, as Nietzsche suggests in *The Birth of Tragedy*, the visual image comes from Apollo, who causes it to move according to a measure, and makes it represent the whole indirectly, "it will be music, which will [...] add the immediate image" (direct representation), the "Dionysian closer to an inexhaustible Will than to a movement."⁶⁵⁷ The music will take the role of a chorus which, as in the case of Greek Tragedy, is the one communicating with the outside, the chaos, the inexhaustible Will.⁶⁵⁸ It will be the chorus not of the redemptive reassurance of Oedipal fate, where ones expectations are confirmed by the dialectic structure, but different from the identifying conception of empathy. Creating language without language, communication without communication; this is a different kind of empathy, empathy that does not involve moral judgment of obligation, but 'consists' of affect, the pre-moral, pre-religious, and even pre-human(istic) force that disturbs the social equilibrium.⁶⁵⁹ It is a question of 'responsibility' to life, or even to death.⁶⁶⁰ Where "the human is not the centre of the world", writes Rosi Braidotti, "and neither is God,

⁶⁵⁷ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 230.

⁶⁵⁸ The relationship between the Apollonian and Dionysian in art is discussed by Nietzsche in *The Birth of Tragedy*. Here the chorus is given the status of opening to the outside, to the unknown, rather than providing the emotion with redemptive quality. Friedrich Nietzsche *The Birth of Tragedy*, trans. Shaun Whiteside, Penguin Classics, 1993. The outside is also the in-between of the irrational cut that Deleuze attributes to the audio-visual cinema of the time-image.

⁶⁵⁹ This is a 'model' of Nietzsche's and Spinoza's 'immanent ethics' that will be brought forward in greater detail in the next chapter.

⁶⁶⁰ "It is dark disaster that brings the light." See Blanchot, *The Writing of the Disaster*, p. 7 and p. 10.

who put him there," there is a space for an "emphatic proximity", an intensive interconnectedness with the world.⁶⁶¹ Beyond human identification and beyond cultural resemblance or imitation, the becoming-intense of the transforming body lies in itself, allowing for uncontrollable rhythmic contaminations among people, objects, sounds, and impressions. Provoking a relay between the corporeal and incorporeal dimension, (de)touching blindly, insecurely, unknowingly; an attitude that requires total trust (even if unconscious) in a process of what becomes(now), of "unheard-of potentialities", the 'mystery' of the everyday and the 'beauty' of creating. This kind of 'Spinozan' empathy is possible through the dignity Tarr offers life and its characters, through weaving the audio-visual 'matter' of encounters without 'solution', "setting love adrift in the direction of other [than familial] assemblages."⁶⁶² The distant bells in the empty ruin of the church at the end of *Sátántangó* announce nothing.

Similarly, the 'yearning', a longing so strong in films' sorrowful (as Biró calls it) and 'freeing' music prevents it from the 'emotional' sentimentality of empathising as identifying, becoming instead a yearning which cuts across the barriers of good and bad, objective and subjective, inside and outside, across gender, class and race, which is more than empathy/identification as we know, it is empathy without empathy.⁶⁶³ This might be a question of proximity (and praxis), and unconscious affect rather than the reason of consciousness, a realm of poetic immanence inherent in the process of creation through encounter, including the spectator. This kind of music (which also enters into relations with other 'otherworldly' sounds within the films, including rain and wind) keeps one on the edge of objective/subjective, body/mind, in a kind of (non)involvement, of feeling-thinking from the outside; neither feeling nor thinking, a

⁶⁶¹ Rosi Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects. Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory* (Columbia University Press, New York, 1994), p. 5.

⁶⁶² This is with Deleuze's and Guattari's 'perception' of the unconscious as a productive state immanent to consciousness. See Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*.

"Unheard-of potentialities entering into other connections, setting love adrift in the direction of other assemblages." Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 349.

⁶⁶³ As Daniel W. Smith pointed out through Leibniz, we are, apart from unconscious perceptions, constituted by "insensible inclinations" or "disquietudes"; desires of which we are not aware, that pull us simultaneously in a multitude of directions. Leibniz termed this the "uneasiness" of the soul, its state of constant disquiet and disequilibrium. Our decisions and actions depend on the "aptitude of the soul" at the certain moment, not the usual schema of judgment. See Daniel W. Smith *Deleuze and the Question of Desire: Toward an Immanent Theory of Ethics*, pp. 72-73.

gape of indecisive emotion, a constructive inability to act. Could this be called a perfect moment of immanent transcendence, a "poethic" immanence?⁶⁶⁴

The 'longing' aspect of the music, and the ambiguous tonality of the sound overall, (which ranges from silence to almost irritating, or at times uncomfortable, repetitiveness) shifts its effect from sentimentality to 'awakened sensation', where according to Valuska in *Werckmeister Harmonies*, 'deep emotion pierces everyone'.⁶⁶⁵ Gentle music carrying over the 'drunken' composition in the pub into the "infinite sonorous silence" of the night is but one example of an amazing sensibility of audio-vision in Tarr's films, where the border between sentimentality and profoundness, cynicism and 'empathy', is undone, leaving the viewer to work out his/her own feelings. The scene where two small boys act out a parody of military authority, bashing on drums and screeching combative rhetoric into an electric fan, is a truly affective image. But the longer we are locked in the grip of this repetitive image, the more disquieting our sense of reality becomes. The scene falls outside its enacting, and becomes the 'terrifying rumble' of order, the uncanny undoing of the norm. In the long opening shot of *Damnation* the black coal buckets move toward us, and we hear nothing but the runner of the wire. The most 'deafening' sound of the massacre in the hospital scene of *Werckmeister Harmonies* is the silence containing all the violence and unspeakable terror. Even the monotonous, rhythmical creaking of the bed, which disappears into the sound of the coal buckets, overtaking everything and everyone in the intensely unemotional love-making in *Damnation*, has its degree of emotion measured by rhythm (poetic discourse) against the meaning of symbolic structure. Here, the sounds of life, real and 'indifferent', scramble fixed ideas and expectations.

This is the Dionysian aspect of the image often forgotten in the Apollonian 'harmonious' form or the negative dialectics of oppositional thinking. In fact, the whole 'composition' of *Werckmeister Harmonies* might be 'seen' as a reflection on the structure – or the lack of it – in music, which not only does not find an answer, but renders the question of order/disorder redundant altogether. At the end of *Werckmeister Harmonies*, Mr. Eszter informs Valuska that he 'retuned the piano':

⁶⁶⁴ 'Poethics' is an expression coined by Patricia McCormack to describe cinematic images as form-less events of memory, that are the realm of poetics and ethics rather than of symbolic structure, in Patricia McCormack, 'Julia Kristeva', Felicity Colman (ed.), *Film, Theory and Philosophy: The Key Thinkers*.

⁶⁶⁵ *Werckmeister Harmonies* (2000)

"Now, once again is like any other. Once again you can play anything on it."⁶⁶⁶ What Mr. Eszter seeks in the Apollonian harmony of the spheres is 'seemingly' contrasted with the entropy and distraction, but which 'disappears' in the particular assemblage where the cosmic harmony of creation lies outside the opposition. Here there is no judgment opposing noise to melody, as they cannot function in isolation. The sounds 'need' to find their own harmony through co-existence in the chaosmic polyphony, in poetical meandering, pondering, relating without interpreting or explaining. While Valuska walks the city in rhythmical steps of everyday chores, his uncle enquires into the depth of musical spheres through theory. The two are then reconciled in a brilliant 'silent' shot of both walking side by side to the rhythm of the blowing wind; evoking the rustle of old leaves, the cracking sound of rain drops, the silence of the forlorn look in the window. It is no longer a question of imposing form upon matter, or driving off the chaos as in territorial refrains, but elaborating material in order to "tap intense forces."⁶⁶⁷ The 'heavenly music' of *Werckmeister Harmonies* enters into contact with the 'noise' made by the children, the singer's performance in the bar (*Damnation*) and the nonsensical, repetitive verbiage ("I was plodding, plodding along ...") of *Sátántangó*, which 'disturbs', disrupts, or, to use Deleuze-Guattari's expression, deterritorialises its harmony. They are then re-composed in the prevailing sound of the accordion, only to be overtaken by the heavy materiality of silence. The "sensually heightened realism" – as much a product of a dense soundtrack as of the consistent gaze of the long take – becomes the real of image-sound, assembling in the style of becoming-affect. There is no outcome or resolution. Harmony and disharmony no longer exist on opposite sides of image-sound. The dialectic structure disappears in the crack of in-between.

This is a question of style as nomadic aesthetics⁶⁶⁸; homeless, genderless, subjectless thinking with affect, outside of judgment; the nomadic thinking "despises mainstream communication." It longs instead, as Braidotti puts it, "for the desert: areas of silence, in between the official cacophonies, in a flirt with radical nonbelonging and outsidedness."⁶⁶⁹ Sound makes aesthetics of affect possible. Through vibrating,

⁶⁶⁶ *Werckmeister Harmonies* (2000)

⁶⁶⁷ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 329.

⁶⁶⁸ As intellectual style, nomadism consists not so much in being homeless, as in being capable of recreating your home everywhere. Rosi Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, p. 45.

⁶⁶⁹ Rosi Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, p. 16.

resonating that opens up the space of becoming, fleeting encounters, nomadic wanderings, and becoming that cannot end up in being, it is forever bound to 'creation', even if it takes the form of destruction. The point is not the predictable outcome but the eternal unknown that is always a step ahead: "[t]he danger of rhythm's enigma."⁶⁷⁰ There is no more a question of harmony or disorder, but duration which is inseparable from entropy or degradation.⁶⁷¹ Drenched in atmosphere, sound envelops the senses, and links to the outside that is also the silent stilled image of thought and unthinking. The chorus is the refrain – the unspeakable affect where rhythm inserts time into ethics.⁶⁷² "Why does the grass dry and yet grow again?" Tarr poses the question after the Hungarian poet Endre Ady, while elaborating on the films' focus always being on life, tangibly and specifically.⁶⁷³

Refrain is something that carries both the (un)known and (un)homely. It is that which reassures through its repetitive 'familiarity', bringing us 'home', but it is also that which carries us away into the unknown, beyond the borders of familiar(l). And as the sentimental tune of repetitive composition embraces a child's fear, it opens the body/spirit to the longing of else(where). "The song is like a rough sketch of a calming and stabilizing, calm and stable, centre in the heart of chaos," write Deleuze and Guattari.⁶⁷⁴ However, the song in the Titanic Bar (*Damnation*) is more like a destabilising force of yearning for the outside, deterritorialising the 'norm', be it disintegration through social impotence, or security of the order. "You lose your words, and yet you cannot go ..." the words of the song reverberate, while the sleepy jazz of the band carries off the movement. Abstract shapes, carved in black, silhouetted 'against' the music, gesture silently towards 'outside'. It is the song sung by the woman in *Damnation*'s pub, the repetitive 'plodding along' heard over and over in *Sátántangó*'s 'affairs', the sounds of insistent steps covering the ground everywhere; the song of the man and his life is of no place and every place. One might hear it anywhere at any time. Outside good or evil, neither distressing nor soothing, a 'song' carries life and inexhaustible will, a "pathological clinging to life, pathological insistence" could also be the "continual self-overcoming of man,"

⁶⁷⁰ Maurice Blanchot, *The Writing of the Disaster*, p. 5.

⁶⁷¹ Deleuze, *Cinema I*, p. 131.

⁶⁷² Phil Turelsky, 'Rhythm: Assemblage and Event', in *Deleuze and Music* (Edinburgh University Press, 2004), p. 140.

⁶⁷³ Belá Tarr talking at the press conference in Berlin during the 2011 film festival.

⁶⁷⁴ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 311.

"that longing for an ever-increasing, widening of distance with the soul itself, the formation of ever higher, rarer, more remote, tenser, more comprehensive states."⁶⁷⁵

This might be what Deleuze and Guattari called the 'natal refrain', different from native or innate as it is always in 'communication' with nomadic forces:

Natal refrains, refrains of the territory (the lullaby, the drinking song, hunting song, work song, military song); folk and popular refrains tied to an immense song of the people, bring to play affects and nations, and molecularized refrains (the sea and the wind) tied to cosmic forces, the Cosmos refrain. For the Cosmos itself is a refrain, and the ear also (everything that has been taken for a labyrinth is in fact a refrain).⁶⁷⁶

Becoming-child (of music).

Rain, raining, running, in rivers and in thick sheets, or in hushed continuity ... An almost ceaseless rain, whose stubborn consistency seems to offer no hope of respite, makes the motionless, decelerated quality of time apparent. Time itself, merciless, unstoppable, repetitive. Yet, rain is not 'sad'. Its indifferent, rhythmical quality of a 'whisper' has an almost meditative rhythm, which resists expectations of predetermined outcome. Is the rain more of a sound than vision? Or is it somehow a sound-image, a 'sheet wrapping the scene in textured translucency',⁶⁷⁷ falling in a variety of sounds: into puddles, on roofs, dripping from window sills. Rain is time, rain is the reign of time, and in rain, it is time that rains. Indifferent yet intensive. Tarkovsky's rain, as Adrian Chan observes, is a rain-event, rain falling, in light and

⁶⁷⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, cited in Daniel W. Conway (ed.), *On Morality and the Order of Rank* (Routledge, London and New York, 1998), p. 209.

⁶⁷⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 347.

The refrain may assume other functions than territorial assemblage, amorous, professional or social, liturgical or cosmic: it always carries earth with it; it has an essential relation to a Natal, a Native. ... Forces of chaos, terrestrial forces, cosmic forces: all of these confront each other and converge in the territorial refrain. The Natal is also a musical and poetic notion, as non-subjective, as a place of no place, in the song, rather than foggy categories of the innate and the acquired. "The affect proper to the natal, as heard in the lied: to be forever lost, or refund, or aspiring to the unknown homeland. In the natal, the innate tends to be displaced: it concerns less the act or the behaviour than the matters of expression themselves." Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 312.

⁶⁷⁷ Adrian Chan, 'The Falling Rain in Béla Tarr and Andrei Tarkovsky', <http://unspokencinema.blogspot.com/2007/01/falling-rain-in-bela-tarr-and-andrei.html>.

shadow, rain as sculpture, as a column of rain falling through a hole in the ceiling of a room: "Rain in Tarr is a sentimental field, a wash of mood, used to wipe the lens and the eye and to perpetuate a sentiment even and in spite of action developing within it. Rain is sublime, it arouses thought, and yet in many ways it suggests nothing, nothing at all."⁶⁷⁸ The expected meaning fleets through the cracks of old walls in a crystalline gesture of endless returns, or seeps away with the ceaseless motion. "I'm not attached to anything anymore" confesses Karrer's lover (*Damnation*) when talking about the rain's calming effect. Matter loses its static appearance and becomes an ensemble of dancing molecules.

Tarr's black-and-white films boldly apply the consistency of stylistic and total unity, thus the worlds they present seem whole and even homogenous. It is however, a deceptive homogeneity as the consistency here lies in the intensity, which is never a function of quantity. The heterogeneity of the films comes from labyrinthine and non-exhaustive potentialities of sound-images, even if the actual events often have the feel of total exhaustion.⁶⁷⁹ Stylistic and temporal consistency ('monotony') imply the heterogeneous unity, a 'whole' (without resolution), as if to pacify or hypnotise the senses. Intensified monotony creates the 'paralysing self-consciousness' – perhaps a sonic equivalent of Barthes's *punctum*. It also pays attention to everyday, familiar sounds de-familiarising the expectations. Here, the 'pain' of enduring moves, however, from the subjective, personal loss/lack towards the 'abundance' of creation.

Paradoxically, in the monotony of this world's sounds lies the possibility of another life, life as yet to come, one outside the pre-designated image (a destination), one of nomadic vision of being in becoming. This vision is present at the core of the films' wandering structure. It is their 'soul', and their ethics. It requires different (unknowing) participation from the viewer.⁶⁸⁰

A brilliantly evoked sense of entrapment, intercomposed with the theme of perpetual repetition, circling, 'going nowhere'; rain, repetitive music, and endless walks, create

⁶⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁹ At times it seems as if the situation has collapsed in total exhaustion, without a way out. And on the superficial level that is how Tarr's films might be, and often are, interpreted: as nihilistic.

⁶⁸⁰ Nomadic shifts designate [...] a creative sort of becoming; a performative metaphor that allows for otherwise unlikely encounters and unsuspected sources of interaction of experience and of knowledge. Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, p. 6).

at times a kind of vertigo. As if the music with its sentimental tones, as well as 'otherworldly' sounds, was set to frustrate and provoke. The only way out of entrapment seems to be the 'rule' of tango: six steps forward, six steps back, and yet it is this that paradoxically captures the forces of "immaterial nonformal and energetic Cosmos."⁶⁸¹ While the people of the farm might be locked in mute 'reterritorialisations', which according to Deleuze and Guattari is "the most numbing, the most redundant" force or repetition,⁶⁸² the persistent movement of the dance itself dislodges the numbing resignation. Relations take on a life of their own, forming rhythmic characters and melodic landscapes whose interrelations constantly shift and change. This is the movement of refrain that has been 'there' always as an active shaping including chaos's disorder force (the Natal), even in child's song which in the first instance is a point of order. The refrain of Estike's mute wonderings becomes the voiceover of her uncompromising deed as she lies down in the ruins' courtyard to become "all things" herself: "she knew she wasn't alone for all things and people, her father upstairs, her mother, her brothers, the doctor, the cat, these acacias, this muddy road, this sky, this night down here depend on her, just as she herself depends on everything" (*Sátántangó*). As if all movements and sounds co/existed, to paraphrase Yvette Biró, in the madness of poetic co-creation,⁶⁸³ "in the advent of a new form, neither God nor man."⁶⁸⁴

Thus, the 'foolish' hope remains within the physical intensity of the world, in the ambient sounds intensified and foregrounded by their distinctive singularity of presence, and the 'heavenly harmonies' of the outside.⁶⁸⁵ This is in 'tune' with the ethics of creation and experimentation, always on the lookout for the way forward, different from the idea of progress, that allows, and indeed requires, backward movements, ellipses, waverings ... As Ian Buchanan writes: "this is not an ethics that decides in advance how one ought to proceed, nor does it exercise either a power of judgment or selection; it is, rather, a creative, or experimental ethics, which is always

⁶⁸¹ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 342.

⁶⁸² Ibid., p.348

⁶⁸³ '[M]adness of autopoietic creation, in Evette Biró, *Turbulence and Flow in Film. The Rhythmic Design*, trans. Paul Salamon, (Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2008).

⁶⁸⁴ Deleuze, *Foucault*, p. 132.

⁶⁸⁵ It is an open system interlinked/ enfolded/ intertwined with cosmic forces. Here the cosmic forces are not those of Platonic ideal harmony, but that of chaosmos. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*.

on the look-out for the way forward."⁶⁸⁶ It is thus becoming expressive of rhythm. It is a pattern of refrain as both repetition and stepping back, of hesitation. These are the forces of the mud and the rain, the sound of cowbells in the distance and the silence of the march, the forces of cosmic becoming that do not proceed towards the organising goal of harmony. It is a process of encounters, touching and separating, forming connections and disconnecting, resonating and 'dissonating', composing and decomposing; a countless, limitless state of potential movements/ compositions. It is a refrain that carries on the process of affirmative creation, and transgresses the hopelessness. Whenever bodies stagnate into static, formed, and domesticated 'subjects', they break into dance.

Dance in Tarr's films is everywhere, it never stops; folk dance, ritual dance, the manic dance of automatic movement, drunken dance, 'always on the move'. It has an ongoing formative activity, detaching or unfixing, reorganising the elements into new assemblages.

Dance is Dionysian. It is life.

In the Tango steps, what we hear is the litany of hope. The space is traversed, territorialised, and deterritorialised, constantly on the move. While the spider weaves the net around the space, the dancers' bodies break into fleeing lines, circling and rotating, chasing each other in the 'joyous' madness of momentarily becoming, even if it might be in the first instance perceived as a vicious Satan's Tango. These intensely present musical performances interrupt the narrative. Unaccounted for the 'real world' of the narrative, they enter into different 'unnatural' participations of metamorphosis, and provide the rhythmical sense of transformation and creativity. For a moment, in a dance, through an affective intensity, one that belongs to bodies as vectors of movement devoid of personal or gender organization.⁶⁸⁷

Becoming does not involve the imitation – an action that would merely reinforce social codes – but, as Amy Herzog put it, an unspecifiable, unpredictable disruption of

⁶⁸⁶ Buchanan, 'Introduction: Deleuze and Music', Ian Buchanan and Marcel Swiboda (ed.), *Deleuze and Music*, Edinburgh University Press, 2004 p. 5.

⁶⁸⁷ Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts*, p. 36.

codes that takes place alongside, in a metamorphic zone between fixed identities.⁶⁸⁸ The becoming-movement of dance dislodges the accepted norms and identities; becoming genderless, nomadic, and imperceptible ... In the 'madness' of dance, all is unfixed: moral codes and aesthetic values. The bodies of dancers move by a desire to live, unconcerned with the consequences. Gestural, disjunctive, rhythmic movements happen in a series of involuntary jerks, variable speed relations and incorporeal lines – "Lilliputian hallucinations" as Deleuze and Guattari called them. Not representation but a movement of (inter)encounter, a fleeting moment of vibrating composition of shapes, gestures, volumes, and tonalities. This is a theatre that exceeds representation through vibrations, rotations, turnings, gravitations, dances of leaps that directly touch the body and the mind.⁶⁸⁹ As Herzog observes, becomings reassemble molar identities, the very specificity of the bodies, forming 'unnatural' unions that rupture, transect, and take flight from those stable positions. These combinations are neither genetic nor structural; 'they are interkingdoms, unnatural participations'.⁶⁹⁰ The woman is being pulled around in a dragging-like movement around the room, while her husband dances with a cheese bun on his forehead. Men waltzing with men, women with women, forming a line that moves in labyrinthine patterns and, breaking it up, a mass of bodies interacting with each other, with furniture, and with walls. The man outside a pub dances as if in a trance, stepping rhythmically in a puddle of rain. Exaggerated movements, re-intensified out of the monotone enveloping dancing bodies ... chairs, objects, faces. "We know nothing about a body", Deleuze and Guattari write, "until we know what it can do, in other words, what its affects are, how they can or cannot enter into composition with other affects, with the affects of another body, either to destroy that body or to be destroyed by it, either to exchange actions and passions with it or to join with it in composing a more powerful body."⁶⁹¹ And this is evident in both the hospital massacre in *Werckmeister Harmonies* and the pub dance in *Sátántangó*. The body in music, as Herzog proposes, posits another type of becoming, one that explores the limitations of corporeality, dissolves distinctions between interior and exterior, and forges new alliances between the bodies of living

⁶⁸⁸ Ibid., p.35

⁶⁸⁹ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 18.

⁶⁹⁰ Amy Herzog, 'Becoming-Fluid: History, Corporeality, and the Musical Spectacle' in D.N. Rodowick (ed.) *Afterimages of Gilles Deleuze's Film Philosophy*, p. 273.

⁶⁹¹ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 257.

beings, objects, and environments.⁶⁹² The movement of bodies as if trying out, testing in different rhythms and intensities the neighbouring surfaces. In this sense, bodies of dancers operate as "privileged actualising machine" that allows a passage to the virtual. As such, their flight into dance provides a potentially disruptive force, a point of 'indiscernability', an 'unhooking', a 'discrepancy' of the action⁶⁹³, not as actual (opposition/reaction) but virtual creative transformation. Such is Tarr's films' transforming potential, the power of which lies not in the actual outcome, but in the sense of the 'imperceptible' real embedded in the aesthetics of life.

What a lovely, colourful crowd. A party.

Dance!

Arms and legs, waists and shoulders working in harmony!

The way they speak. Movements, glances that raise the dancer over earthly troubles.

The young are so lovely!

Believe me, there is nothing like finding one another, when there is music that warms the heart.

Two hands clasped together, one foot senses where the other will step.

And follows, not matter where the other steps.

Because it believes they'll be flying from now on. From every swing and turn.

Who knows? Perhaps ... it is flying.⁶⁹⁴

Every dance in Tarr's films is the result of the director's vision and actor's 'spontaneous/chance interacting'. Two simultaneous movements, one towards dissolution, entropy, and death, and the other towards music and pleasure 'interfused' with the viewers' 'bodies/becoming', no longer vibration but resonance.⁶⁹⁵

A circuit of embodiments and dis embodiments, a passage of sensations through bodies – first extracted from bodily perceptions and affections, then rendered perceptible in the expressive matter of the artwork, then engaged by

⁶⁹² Herzog, 'Becoming-Fluid', p. 274.

⁶⁹³ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 64-67.

⁶⁹⁴ *Damnation* (1988)

⁶⁹⁵ As Deleuze reminds us in *Francis Bacon*, "two sensations, each having their own level or zone can also confront each other and make their respective levels communicate. Here we are no longer in the domain of simple vibration, but that of resonance." Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 64.

embodied audiences swept up into the image, and then extended into an infinite field of forces.⁶⁹⁶

According to Deleuze and Guattari, it is in order to join with the forces of the future that one launches forth, hazards an improvisation. But to improvise is to join with the World, or meld with it.⁶⁹⁷ This is Nietzsche's 'tragic' dance, a "perpetually repeated series of dice throws."⁶⁹⁸ Becoming with the world, whatever form it takes, without a known outcome, is the characters' 'ethic' picked up and 'respected' by the films' aesthetic, a parable of grace, "that like the wind, blows where it will." The seeming nothingness as void in this context can be read not as a lack, but as a site of exchange where the encounters are not governed by a moral mandate, but by chance and proximity, the creation of unnatural couplings, an ethics of alterity.⁶⁹⁹

It is this nomadic line that is mechanical, but in free action and swirling; it is inorganic, yet alive, and all the more alive for being inorganic. It raises "mechanical" relations to the level of intuition, Heads [...] unravel and coil into ribbons in a continuous process; mouths curl in spirals. Hair, clothes ... This straming, spiraling, zigzagging, snaking, feverish line of variation liberates a power of life that human beings had rectified and organisms had confined, and which matter now expresses as the trait, flow, or impulse traversing it.⁷⁰⁰

Dance is a collective expression but one that 'forms' assemblages of singular bodies/movements, together with textures, and ambience. A group dance in the pub, and the joyful performance of a man alone outside it; this kind of Bruegelian collectivity, quite different from the forced togetherness of the collectives, like those of the socialist regime's, is present throughout Tarr's films. This is the togetherness of everyday moments, of solitudes, hopes and deceits assembled together without a specific cause/goal. It is nearest to Deleuze's and Guattari's conception of collectivity as that which is not a given but something that must be produced, and that such a

⁶⁹⁶ Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting*, p. 170.

⁶⁹⁷ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 310.

⁶⁹⁸ Ronald Bogue, 'To Choose to Choose – to Believe in This World', in *Afterimages*, p. 121.

⁶⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

⁷⁰⁰ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 499.

functioning entity does not yet exist. It might be shaped through virtual force 'in spirit', in a 'respected' dignity of those who 'assemble' together, even if only to dance, dwelling momentarily alongside each other. The assemblages formed on the ruins of the fallen farm collectives, with all their deceit and moral void, are neither the condemned (post-communist) reality nor nostalgically mourned past, but perhaps the opportunity to begin anew. There is almost a feeling of gracefulness in the physicality of people's ragged appearance, in their awkward, somewhat out of place poses. Perhaps collectivity will never exist as a form of 'being', but always will in becoming, transforming, transgressing, experimenting. Not as collectivism but a unity of multiplicity as being in becoming.⁷⁰¹ Such collectivity, according to Deleuze and Guattari, is "*Dividual*"⁷⁰², a phenomenon where multiple entities come into being and acquire a certain degree of cohesion and group identity, yet do so without dissolving and merging with one another: "The people must be individuated, not according to the persons within it, but according to the affects it experiences simultaneously and successively."⁷⁰³

The power of transforming (metamorphosis) lies here not in a literal (actual) representation of a state of reality or in metaphysical transcendence, but in real/affect, actual and virtual. It would be a multiplicity of subjects who have a different sensibility, and experience life differently, 'genderless subjects of metamorphosis, a creative coupling of 'song' (of Dionysus/Ariadne), as Tasmin E. Lorraine calls it, outside of confinements of identity and gender."⁷⁰⁴ The metamorphosis of the unity of both, open to the multiplicity of becomings, has to create a genderless subject – the beyond-human life-form that is the overman. As such, the Dionysus-Ariadne subject can at each moment affirm the being of becoming as the unity of multiplicity with

⁷⁰¹ Lorraine E. Tamsin, *Irigaray and Deleuze: Experiments in Visceral Philosophy*, (Cornell University Press, 1999), p. 160.

⁷⁰² Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 341.

⁷⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 341.

⁷⁰⁴ After Lorraine, The 'genderless' subject here is thought of as that which is beyond the Nietzschean Dionysian subject, which represents being of becoming when affirmed by Ariadne, as it might still imply the secondary/ additional position of Ariadne (as affirming force- "the loving feminine power", "the mirror, the fiancée, reflection" of Dionysus.). One might think of the Ariadnian subject but this would still fall into the oppositional category (which is not the same as difference) of thinking about gender. Also, becoming genderless instead of becoming woman seems more 'radical' in a sense that woman is already positioned opposite men as 'lesser' or lacking. Lorraine, *Deleuze and Irigaray*, p. 162.

Becoming genderless would thus move outside of oppositions and 'empower' women rather than disempowering men. This transmutation "is the feminine power emancipated" and active creative affirmation outside established borders of identity.

nothing lacking. It is through nomadic movement that one can retain one's individuality; it is by leaving the molar identities of one's self and others behind that one can preserve one's own creative power. This model of subjectivity emerges through an encounter with the others transformed, a becoming in which a subject not only pursues her/his own line of flight, but also attends to how her/his line of flight implicates and forms a web with the lines of flights of others.⁷⁰⁵ The Dionysus/Ariadne subject of becoming defies the Oedipal law of symbolic structure (of being), and 'creates' a different non-structure of encounter-event, or ethics of encounter.

... the other rhythmic, evoking the deep, eternal breathing of the earth.⁷⁰⁶

The earth in Tarr is 'over-humanised' somehow in a non-human sort of way, gathered together in a dance of bodies assembled with different movements and becomings – earthy and otherworldly, intense and imperceptible. Anamorphic rather than anthropocentric.

The people will always be missing, Deleuze and Guattari (after Paul Klee) tell us – this is the nature of becoming, which is always in the process of being produced. Or it can only exist as a virtual (vision) that drives life, an immanence as process, outside ideology: realism or idealism, of the people as a nomadic assemblage of modes of lives, becomings (not identities) dwelling beside, transforming, transgressing, and transversing selves. There is a dispensation with the hero in place of 'unnamed', anonymous, imperceptible wanderer, the idiot-child, passive and visionary, that can accept and produce difference.

Instead of the people and the earth being bombarded everywhere in a cosmos that limits them, the people and the earth must be like vectors of a cosmos that carries them away; then the cosmos itself will be art.⁷⁰⁷

⁷⁰⁵ Lorraine, *Irigaray and Deleuze*, pp. 163-4.

⁷⁰⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 339.

⁷⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p.346

Dance/Sound could also be the form of refrain that is linked to territory. The territory, which after being 'signed', proceeds towards deterritorialisation by a rhythmical crystallity of refrain.⁷⁰⁸ Through rhythm's movement, the territory is never owned or identified, it is always re-created anew, outside structures of domesticity (homeland) in the domain of borderless milieu. In the way sound and vision interact, there is always a sense of space being shifted, (un)grounded, unstable, the any-space-whatever defined by the moving frame/border of the inside-outside embrace.

The earth is this close embrace. This intense centre is simultaneously inside the territory, and outside several territories that converge on it at the end of an immense pilgrimage (hence the ambiguities of the "natal"). Inside or out, the territory is linked to this intense centre, which is like the unknown homeland, terrestrial source of all forces friendly and hostile, where everything is decided.⁷⁰⁹

As bodies break into dance, language brakes into nonsensical musings.

Dear Capitan,

Eternity lasts forever because it doesn't compare to the ephemeral, the changeable, the temporary. The intensity of light penetrating darkness seems weakened. There is discontinuance ... interruptions, holes, then finally the black nothing. There are myriads of stars in an unreachable distance ... with a tiny spark in the middle ...⁷¹⁰

The voiceover, heard in this particular example during the almost static shot of the pub entrance covered by night and rain – of the 'spider function' (vibrating with actual, resonating with virtual) – weaves in and out of situations, landscape, and characters. Sound and image come together in a hesitant (pondering) harmony of suggestion, or diverge into opposite directions, stretching to the past/future infinity of

⁷⁰⁸ "One puts one's signature on an object as one plants a flag on a plot of land" write Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*. The elements from which territories are formed are milieus and rhythms, which themselves are created out of chaos. A milieu is a coded block of space-time, a code being defined by "periodic repetition." Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 313-316.

⁷⁰⁹ Ibid., p.321.

⁷¹⁰ *Sátántangó* (1994).

time. Monotonous, and forever the eternal 'now'. This is the 'momentum' of the missing present enclosed momentarily in the voice of speech sound.

Speech sound, or as Deleuze refers to it while discussing modern cinema, speech-act, is a concrete physical operation. A voice is the mother of all special effects, Chion writes, one that requires the least technology and expense.⁷¹¹ Not so much a special effect in a conventional sense, speech takes a special place in Béla Tarr films, as a character's speech/dialogue, or rather monologue, and as voice-over. Like other elements of his film-world, it does not communicate or symbolise, but rather participates in the weaving of the visionary/ distinct/unparalleled 'living-filmic' cosmic tapestry, which is never completed. It undoubtedly belongs to the category of the speech-act that Deleuze speaks about in *Cinema 2*. At times there is quite a lot of talking in Tarr's films, but it is in a very different voice to the mainstream narrative's dialogue or monologue. Unlike the 'talk' which carries the narrative, clarifies uncertain situations or reveals characters' psychology, the conversations of Tarr's characters are mostly singular and detached from, or only loosely attached to, the 'progression' of the scenes or the demands of narration. Constellations of sayings, inexhaustible verbiage, multiple registers, even dialogues take on an independent, microscopic/molecular worlds of their own, disconnected from their communicative function, and unmoored from the visual image. Literal, indifferent, automatic, echoing Bresson's use of a character's voice, free-indirect speech (Deleuze, Pasolini), objective and subjective, not directed at anyone in particular, half narrating half 'philosophising' is also an important part of, as discussed earlier, free indirect style – discourse.⁷¹² A meandering exercise in voicing or wording, human speech here is 'a closed setting', and it resonates with the space. The doctor's dispassionate narration, the endless speechmaking exercises of Irimiás's false prophecies, the nonsensical verbiage of the drunken, repetitive soliloquy in *Sátántangó*, the cloakroom attendant's musings in *Damnation*, the recordings of Mr Eszter's theory of music. The literalness is 'combined' with the poetic/philosophical content of the speech, having sometimes comic, sometimes 'rhetorical' effect, both creating a non-communicative, non-linear

⁷¹¹ Chion, *Film: A Sound Art*, p. 337.

⁷¹² "With modern cinema," Deleuze writes, "there arises a very special use of the voice, which might be called the free indirect style, and which goes beyond the opposition of the direct and the indirect. It is not a mixture of indirect and direct, but an original irreducible dimension, in various forms." Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 232.

and fragmentary/disjunctive 'performance' of its own. The dialogue situations also feel like exchange of monologues addressed to anyone or to no one, a "to-ing and fro-ing between speech and image', which has to invent their new relationship."⁷¹³ As the camera remains inside the truck with the body of the whale, Valuska, who has just emerged from it, relates to the curious and anxious passer by: "A giant whale has arrived. This mysterious creature from the sea has come from far-off oceans. Most definitely you have to see it too. Nothing wrong with it. Just what a gigantic animal the Lord can create! How mysterious is the Lord ... that He amuses Himself with such strange creatures" (*Werckmeister Harmonies*). In the background the crowd is awaiting – the mysterious Prince? The orders for upheaval? The ethereal speech-act creates the event, "but always placed crosswise over tectonic visual layers: there are two trajectories crossing each other."⁷¹⁴ It creates the event, but in a space empty of events.' The 'nothing happens' of the audio (speech-act) and visual (empty space) non-correspondence, reposition the sight/sound relationship in a way that "what speech utters is also the invisible that sight sees only through clairvoyance; and what sight sees is also the utterable uttered by speech."⁷¹⁵ The strange sense of a voice in Estike's mute 'ponderings' through the empty landscape while holding her dead cat, or through the woods at night, looking briefly in the pub's window where the dance breaks, evokes the solitary, heartless daze. But it also resonates with the muteness inherent in humankind's capacity for language, its speechless dwelling in language, a poetic, pre-subjective state of potentiality – its infancy.⁷¹⁶ The speech-act and the empty space enter into non-rational relations – a 'rhythmic rapture' – not in the sense of juxtaposition but as 'aimless', non-decisive, wondrous movement that resists all forms of causal logic (narrative or montage).⁷¹⁷ The speech act detaches itself from both the speaker and the receiver and passes into the rain, the peeling walls, the empty space of puszta, and the infinite sonorous silence (*Werckmeister Harmonies*).⁷¹⁸ Thus:

⁷¹³ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 237.

⁷¹⁴ To grasp an event, Deleuze writes, is to connect it to the silent layers of earth which make up its true continuity, or which inscribe it in the struggle. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 244.

⁷¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.250

⁷¹⁶ Paul Fleming, 'The Crisis of Art: Max Kommerell and Jean Paul's Gestures', *MLN*, Vol. 115, No. 3, Apr. 2000, p. 529.

⁷¹⁷ Rhythmic rapture as coined by Kristeva, is the place where "language fits the individual only after a hundred thousand of experiments." It is a poetic distortion which creates new possibilities for the future of language and images. See McCormack, 'Julia Kristeva', in Felicity Colman (ed.), *Film, Theory and Philosophy*, p. 280

⁷¹⁸ Paraphrased from Laleen Jayamanne, *Towards Cinema and Its Double*, p. 178.

[t]wo trajectories (the speech-act and the act of faith) are combined to make 'struggle' comprehensible as emergence of the new: not a struggle between two trajectories, but a struggle which can only be revealed through the two, thanks to their to-ing and fro-ing.⁷¹⁹

The speech is also a gesture, a figure of language, of change and of style that lodges itself between the still and movement, vision and sound, as well as between words. As Giorgio Agamben observed in *Potentialities*, the sense of these gestures is not exhausted in communication.⁷²⁰ It does not take place *through* language as medium, but in it. It is the musical, affective, non-signifying side of language.⁷²¹ Gesture is always a gesture of being at a loss in language, a 'gag' logged in the muteness inherent in humankind's very capacity for language (*speechless* dwelling in language).⁷²² The Bressonian voice of the model in modern cinema, where the character speaks as if he were listening to his own words reported by someone else, might be comparable to the figures of *Commedia dell'arte* who, as Agamben reminds us, "emancipated from written texts and fully defined roles, oscillate forever between reality and virtuality, life and art, the singular and the generic."⁷²³ The speech in Tarr's films is not one that has 'lost its gesture'. Partly poetical, partly philosophical musings, often comic and tragic at the same time, this is not the overwording that would either reject or mourn the gesture (silent film). It is rather, as Kristeva would have it, a poetic distortion, gestural, disjunctive and rhythmic immanence of asemiotic elements that "calls into question all that is central to representation", and thus creates new possibilities for the future of language and image.⁷²⁴ In its subjectless indirectness it becomes an 'image' of potentiality, where the mystery of gesture is initiated into life itself (through the 'comical' speeches of the false prophets or the nonsensical verbiage of drunken monologues), 'life purely worldly, purely earthly, purely contingent' where the sacred and profane lose their linguistic power:

Now life is a sacred domain, the only one that remains. And into what does it initiate? Not into its meaning, only into itself. Into something that, in its

⁷¹⁹ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 238

⁷²⁰ Giorgio Agamben, *Potentialities*, p. 78

⁷²¹ Fleming, 'The Crisis of Art', p. 523.

⁷²² Agamben, *Potentialities*, p. 78.

⁷²³ *Ibid.*, 79

⁷²⁴ Which is also a question of style and ethics. Patricia McCormack, 'Julia Kristeva', pp. 276-286

incarnation in beauty, pain, and enigmas, constantly borders on meaning without ever uttering it and while remaining unnameable. [...] the fact that life is assigned this force of initiation gives rise to something new, a mystery of the everyday and the worldly that is [the] poet's possession.⁷²⁵

In the nearly torturous waiting for 'something to happen', the becoming expressive of rhythm takes the form of Beckettian speech-figure: "You must go on, I can't go on, I'll go on."⁷²⁶

... the difficult birth of a new world, under the double forceps of words and things, speech-act and stratified space. It is a conception of history which simultaneously calls up the comic and the dramatic, the extraordinary and the everyday: new types of speech-act and new structurations of space.⁷²⁷

Furthermore, the speech-act of this (modern) cinema, as Deleuze argues in *Cinema 2*, is no longer inserted in the linkage of actions and reactions, but turns on itself; it is no longer a dependent on, or a part of the visual image. The 'speech-act becomes an act of story-telling, the political of story-telling', "neither an impersonal myth nor a personal fiction but a *collective utterance*" where becoming passes between "the people" who are missing and the "I" of the author who is now absent, releasing an utterance that expresses the impossibility of living under domination.⁷²⁸ Similarly to Kafka's use of language, it could be the act of resistance in overcoming the resistance of the dominant text: 'the pre-established laws and the already decided verdicts'.⁷²⁹ "I cling to nothing but everything clings to me ... They want me to look at them. To look at the hopelessness of things ... And they want this irreversibility of things to drive me mad but the next second they want me not to go mad ... I wanted to know if it made sense to speak at all," pronounces Karrer in the indifferent, unchanging voice.⁷³⁰ Or is Beckettian: the comic dialogue in *Sátántangó*, when Petrina tells his crooked companion Irimiás that he is a poet: "We relate to it as twigs to the rain: we

⁷²⁵ Ibid., p. 84.

⁷²⁶ Samuel Beckett, *The Unnamable* (Faber and Faber, 2010), p.134

⁷²⁷ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 238.

⁷²⁸ Daniel W. Smith, "A Life of Pure Immanence": Deleuze's "Critique et Clinique" Project', Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. xlv.

⁷²⁹ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 243.

⁷³⁰ *Damnation* (1987).

cannot defend ourselves" (Irimiás), "Twigs ... and rain? You are a great poet, I tell you" (Petrina); or the bombastic speech Irimiás gives over Estike's body. The tragicomic tone of *Sátántangó* lies in the nearly absurd disjointment of the speech-acts with the 'narrative', which confuses and reverses the intentions and the expectations. As Deleuze observed in *Cinema 2*:

'it is no longer enough to say that the speech-act must be torn from what is resisting it: it is the speech-act which is resisting, it is the act of resistance. [...] The act of speech and music is a struggle: it must be economical and sparse, infinitely patient, in order to impose itself on what resists it, but extremely violent in order to be itself a resistance, an act of resistance.'⁷³¹

The free-indirect discourse breaks off from visual logic of the image becoming-event of audio-visual resistance. The voice/speech of such autonomous character is no longer part of a whole (as in an out-of-field situation); it has broken free from its mooring with the visual images, has lost its omnipotence, it has become questionable, uncertain, ambiguous.⁷³² The relation between the disarray of entropic, or mundane everydayness, and the 'eloquence' of speech, as if in need to "say itself."

The [sound-image] event is always resistance, between what the speech-act seizes and what the earth buries. It is a cycle of sky and earth, of external light and underground fire, and even more of the sound and the visual, which never re-forms into a whole, but each time constitutes the disjunction of the two images, at the same time as their new type of relation, a relation of very precise incommensurability, not an absence of relation.⁷³³

Sometimes voices are at a crossroads: between diegetic and non-diegetic, between dialogue and narration, habitually adopting the position of the powerless – but not 'passive – observers of the characters and events.'⁷³⁴ There are a lot of moments in Tarr's films where it is not clear who the 'voice' belongs to, the character of the 'narrator', either through the camera focusing on the space where the voice is heard

⁷³¹ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 245.

⁷³² Ibid., p. 140.

⁷³³ Ibid., p. 246.

⁷³⁴ Chion, *Film: A Sound Art*, p. 361.

but not seen (as in the shot of beer glasses in *Damnation*), or by the foreground and background voices being confused. This is another kind of refrain-chorus, or what Deleuze and Guattari call "destratifying transversality", in tune with Tarr's use of non-actors and characters that are visionaries, perhaps storytellers, but not heroes or commentators.

The voice comes from the other side of the image. One resists the other, but it is in this always re-created disjunction that the history under the ground takes on an emotional aesthetic value, and that the speech-act towards the sun assumes an intense political value.⁷³⁵

What links sound and image is the aesthetic resistance.

In the same way the monotonous, feeling/freeing music composed by Vig shifts from sentimentality to open form of affective transformation, capable of 'provoking' new assemblages and new modes of 'existence'. A repeated tune is heard, composed with few 'notes' and instruments, intense and somehow stretched over a vast array of responses, from reassuring, lullaby-like, to a more disquieting form.

In classical antiquity and through the Renaissance, as Edward Lipman explains, music was closely allied with the disciplines of arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy, and the concept of the 'harmony of the spheres', which links music to cosmology. For Pythagoreans, the *kosmos* was a word, which 'united the notion of order, arrangement or structural perfection with that of beauty'. In the Pythagorean cosmology, the unlimited, formless, boundless, and chaotic flux, which precedes the cosmos, was transformed into the universe of form, order, proportion, and wholeness. The macroscopic whole and time is made regular through its subjugation to the periodic repetition of the same. ... Order requires a subjection of the many to the one, and the other to the same. As Lippman observes, the entire Platonic enterprise may finally be conceived of as a form of music. "The musician creates harmony in the pitch and duration of tone and in gesture; man creates harmony in the conduct of his life, the statesman creates harmony in society; the Demiurge creates harmony in the cosmos;

⁷³⁵ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 245.

the philosopher creates the harmony of dialectic and the music of discourse."⁷³⁶ In the Platonic sense, music is a mere sensual echo of the more significant music of mathematics. The 'establishment' of high (order) and low (disorder) forms of music developed accordingly. Following this, it could be argued that the whole 'structure' of *Werckmeister Harmonies*, and the 'logic' of a single theme in Tarr's other films, is built around the polemic contemplating of the essence of order and disorder, a polemic without outcome.⁷³⁷

What Michály Vig does with his compositions is something 'equally' outside the harmony Eszter looks for, and of the chaos encroaching the town. His 'cosmic' harmony of 'earthy' compositions, resonating with Tarr's material vision, closes the gap between heavenly and earthly, high and low, as 'actualised' in the breathtaking opening scene of *Werckmeister Harmonies*, when the music joins Valuska (and the film) walking away into the night; or in the 'composition' of the slow, searching camera movement over the 'inexpressive' faces in the pub's doorways, and the rainy textures of the walls, replaying them over and over again to the 'rhythm' of intensely 'moving' music.⁷³⁸ Becoming expressive of rhythm ...

Deleuze and Guattari argue that music is an open structure that permeates and is permeated by the world, and the relationship between the cosmos and music is not mechanical and mathematical, but is machinic and rhythmical.⁷³⁹ When music deterritorialises the refrain and becomes cosmic,

Vig's music does not represent or illustrate the 'harmony' or 'disharmony of cosmos'. It is intertwined with the cosmos, which is a 'living thing', not a circumscribed totality, but an open whole (whose dimensions can never be given as such). It is far from the abstract mathematical forms of classical music, leaning instead towards the popular, almost verging on the sentimentality of an easy, catching, melodic tune. Neither

⁷³⁶ Edward Lipman, *A Musical Thought in Ancient Greece* (Da Capo Press, New York, 1975), p. 41.

⁷³⁷ In a number of interviews, Tarr refers to the idea of making the same film again and again. For Example: Schlosser Eric, 'Béla Tarr and Werckmeister Harmonies. Interview with Béla Tarr', www.brightlightsfilm.com/30/belatarr1.html

⁷³⁸ Vig writes the film music after discussion with Tarr, and before filming. "I need the music before shooting, because music is also one of the main characters." Emmet Sweeney. 'Interview. The Complete Works', <http://www.filmlinc.com/film-comment/entry/interview-bela-tarr-the-complete-works>

⁷³⁹ Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts*, p. 14.

perfectly ordered nor completely popularised, his melodic sounding weaves the (re)dissonant thread of expression in between harmony and disorder, inside and outside. The music and the refrain in the crystal serialization of oppositions of interchanging roles, monotonous heaviness already seeded with the desire to fly, Vig's musical complexity is to be found in the molecular domain of transverse becomings, what Bogue described as the "ametical rhythms of the incommensurable and the unequal"⁷⁴⁰ (of music and the world). Both 'timeless' and intensely rhythmical, it is music that carries the expression of the eternal return of difference, the floating time of haecceities and becomings. His music has no melodic or harmonic arc that would allow the listener to anticipate the moment of coming to cadence.⁷⁴¹ The monotonous repetitiveness seems 'constant', without beginning and without end, and yet endowed with what Yvette Biró described as intensely "palpable sense of musical *freeness*."⁷⁴² It is the rhythm that creates a sense of 'up and down' but in an open structure. Here the sound offers no temporal vectors (it does not vary over time), and as such can contribute to a feeling of fixity, stagnation, or destruction.⁷⁴³ This particular condition of music, comparable to the repetitive, hypnotic state of 'dreaming', is the opening to the outside – to unconscious, 'unbinding', becoming porous that is a condition for a more intensive feeling, affect beneath the hallucination of senses. This evokes a kind of schizophrenic experience of becoming-transition: 'For schizophrenics experience these naked intensities in a pure and almost unendurable state: beneath the hallucinations of the senses ("I see", "I hear") and the delirium of thought ("I think"), there is something more profound, a feeling of intensity, that is, a becoming or a transition ("I feel")'.⁷⁴⁴ This politics of life/poetry is exactly in tune with Tarr's artistic sensibility and his 'earthly' philosophy. The sound-image of music draws out the "polyphonic" nature of contingency, while the strategies of repetition (thriving on their own repetitions) form "ritornello," what Félix Guattari noted as the immanent musical metaphor *par excellence*, and which as he observes, "escapes beyond the

⁷⁴⁰ Ibid., p.16

⁷⁴¹ Chion, *Film, A Sound Art*, p. 266.

⁷⁴² Biró, 'Confined Space', Unspoken, 2009, <http://unspokenjournal.com/i-tarr/confined-space/>

⁷⁴³ For example, as Michel Chion points out, since Francis Seyrig's organ music in *Last Year at Marienbad* (1961) has no discernible direction, it acts to create the feeling that those long tracking shots in the baroque palace are not going in any particular direction either, and certainly not leading to a predetermined destination. Chion, *Film: A Sound Art*, p. 267.

⁷⁴⁴ Daniel W. Smiths, "'A Life of Pure Immanence': Deleuze's 'Critique et Clinique' Project", in Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. xxxviii.

strictly defined limits of space-time. With it time cases to be external so that it can become the intensive center of *temporalization*."⁷⁴⁵

'Cosmic music' is not the harmonious, heavenly ideal but the polyphonic assemblage of becoming (life's expressions). Immanent variations on a theme ... The music acts as a kind of 'amnesiac' catalyst, which allows for forgetting/remembering, creating difference. This references the anti-Oedipal, non-familial remembering (remembering that is forgetting). No longer *my* childhood, *my* home, *my* past, but any childhood, home, past, life, whatever; an orphaned un/consciousness, which enables us to create anew instead of repeating the same (acting from the individual, historical 'past's' point of view), any image-whatever, enfolded in fugal 'insignificance'.⁷⁴⁶ There is a kind of (dis)familiarity of music in all Tarr's films that seems to be playing on the sense of it being heard elsewhere, in another film. Each of his films has its own 'soundtrack', and yet one cannot help but feel that the same tune has been used again. Here, the very fine line between the rhythms of each film carries on the gap, the opening to, what can be called, the 'forgetting-now'. This is a stylistic and ethical choice: a poetic "consistency of matter of expression", and fragmented 'pattern' of never realised becoming.⁷⁴⁷

The music has the structure of a refrain, although there is no direct 'representation' of it. It acts as a carrying a force of becoming rather than interpolating any specific meaning or message. According to Deleuze and Guattari, music takes up the refrain as 'content' in a form of expression, "forms a block within it, and takes it somewhere."⁷⁴⁸ Refrain as repetition, forming connections and assemblages, becomes a catalyst to new, unfamiliar, unpredictable 'melodies'; it is not the repetition of the same. As an 'element' in becoming, it is the repetition produced as a consequence of 'passing' time, even in its eternal stillness. Freed from its structural and symbolic impediment, it is always a repetition of the new. Because of the time unhinged from 'temporality',

⁷⁴⁵ Ritornello is the musical figure of repetition which Yvette Biró to discuss the use of time and rhythm in Tarr's cinematic style. Biró, 'Confined Space'.

⁷⁴⁶ Fugue is also a pathological amnesiac condition during which one is apparently conscious of one's actions but has no recollection of them after returning to a normal state, (*Oxford Dictionary*).

⁷⁴⁷ "There is a repetition in a way with this fugue structure. Something similar is coming back, albeit with a totally changed substance, so the meaning is quite different. This kind of monotony is very close to me..." Tarr interviewed by Nora Demk, in 'Filmmakers act like prostitutes'

<http://www.cafebabel.com/eng/article/2552/bela-tarr-filmmakers-acts-like-prostitutes.html>

⁷⁴⁸ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p.300.

nothing can ever be repeated as the same. Whatever comes back is never the same. This is strongly sensed throughout the many repetitions of the films' choreography, particularly in the emotional 'newness' of repeating scenes. In *Werckmeister Harmonies*, when Valuska leaves his place, first 'followed' by the gaze of Lajos, and then again by the gaze of his wife who does not know that her husband is dead, or in *Sátántangó* where we see Estike's face in the pub's window during the dance, when the encounter between her and the doctor is repeated again. The refrain's 'newness' depends on the contacts and connections it enters, or rejects to enter, on its process of pulsating, and vibrating resonances. In Tarr, the repetitive 'melody' exists in relation to the spaces, characters, moods, and weather, as an active and creative operation. It enters into various 'tones', and intensities of encounters creating rhythms of life open to the earthy existences and the cosmic forces.

Rhythm and refrain are in a perpetual chase – creation of the new, nomadic 'escape' – a fleeting moment of an unattainable 'goal', a progression towards no result, the joy of unknowing in knowing there is (nuance and timbre⁷⁴⁹).

The seeming entropic disarray of Tarr's films is only a hopeless 'disorder' when viewed against the 'macrocosmic' order of celestial cycles (a periodic repetition of the same). Underneath that, however, on the surface of 'time' the molecular becomings and haecceities are pulsating in a-metrical rhythms of life. Melodies, counterpoints, harmonies, refrains ... Monotonous, repetitive, and hypnotic quality of music, avoiding any reference to subjects, consciousness, or cognition, suggests that the cosmic refrain produces itself and is its own explanation.⁷⁵⁰ It has a power to escape or resist the confinements (order or disorder) of definition. However unpredictable and elusive music – and films – are, they are nevertheless powerful forces that, when

⁷⁴⁹ Nuance and timber are the distress and despair of the exact division and thus the clear composition of sounds and colours according to graded scales and harmonic temperaments. Nuance and timbre are what differ and defer, what makes the difference between the note on the piano and the same note on the flute, and thus what also defer the identification of that note. It is also "a singular, incomparable quality – unforgettable – and immediately forgotten – of the grain of a skin or a piece of flesh, as well as timbre or nuance. All these terms are interchangeable. They all designate the event of a passion, a passability for which the mind will not have been prepared, which will have unsettled it, and of which it conserves only the feeling – anguish and jubilation – of an obscure debt."

Lyotard, 'After the Sublime, the State of Aesthetics', in *The Inhuman: Reflections on Time*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington and Rachel Bowlby, (Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 1991), pp. 140-141

⁷⁵⁰ Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts*, p. 73.

actively engaged with, can provoke transformation, disrupting and destabilizing unified models of time, space and identity.

While the image 'tends' to everyday chores, the thickness of the 'atmosphere', and changes in the weather, the 'soundtrack' music carries on the role of the voice-over. Banal and hopeless, in its monotonous consistency, the music seems to be stripped of its taste, colour, and impulse – this is far from the opposite of heavenly. It lacks, as Biró reminds us, even the majesty of pain and suffering. It is merely a vegetative state where living forms take in and unload, empty and decrease, only to slowly fade into this life-forsaken void.⁷⁵¹ The 'obvious' level of films' reality' might invite such interpretations. The stylistic power of ('eternally repeated') expression, however, endows the films with something much more unsettling than the opposition of hell and heaven, order and disorder. It demands the ethical revaluation, forgetting ... Creative blindness. Unremembering. Severalty (Margherite Duras). It is not the 'reality' of the image that is there to be re-evaluated but the already a priori perception of the viewer.

Vig's 'soundtrack' music is indifferent to the situation/ image, but not in the same way as the didactic counterpoint or dispassionate understanding of an idea. It is intentionally emotional (affective) but not emphatic, its 'power' coming from engaging the immediate, profound, and archaic impetus bypassing reading or interpretation. It comes and disappears in the rhythm of audio-visual 'demand'. Michel Chion calls this kind of music 'anempathetic', and suggests, referring to the sense of loss, that its indifference is 'always the mother's indifference.'⁷⁵² However, if we look at it from 'films-life's' point of view, a life that is outside familia(l)r constraints, a life of desire 'haunted' not by a lack, but by what Virginia Woolf called a 'lust of creation'⁷⁵³, 'indifference' takes on a different 'meaning': that of affective tension beyond the mirror reflecting our own (subject's, or viewer's) solitude. The end of *Damnation*, when Karrer 'dances' with dogs or Estike's (*Sátántangó*) 'escape' by poisoning her cat and then herself, for example, are filmed without music. The 'indifference' here might be that of art which makes us un-human, where the tragic or comic, good or evil no

⁷⁵¹ Biró, *Turbulence and Flow in Film*, p. 169.

⁷⁵² Chion, *Film, A Sound Art*, p. 332.

⁷⁵³ Virginia Woolf, *A Writer's Diary* (A Harvest Book, Harcourt, Inc. San Diego, New York, London, 1982), p. 104.

longer 'obeys' the rules of redemptive self-identification but asks, "what am I capable of?", "what is my body capable of?"⁷⁵⁴ The indifference of this music is the base or plane from which all emotions derive: a kind of affective chorus that intensifies rather than clarifies. Thus, an empathetic music, in a way, consists in a reframing: instead of occupying the whole field with the individual fate of the character, this music allows us to 'see' in the background the 'indifferent' world of potentiality. In a number of interviews Tarr very strongly emphasised his desire not to suggest or elucidate anything, but to leave the work of 'listening' to the viewer.⁷⁵⁵ The carefully anonymous sentimentality of the music's cues that seem at first to clothe the individuals' stories in emotion progressively peel off from the characters and pursue its own path, indifferent to the characters' fates.⁷⁵⁶ The mesmerising reticence⁷⁵⁷ wanders between the spaces, characters, and situations, then breaks off from specific characters or events, becoming the music of everyone, which is to say the music of no one in particular. This is achieved through the use of music cues without cultural pretensions or complicated orchestration.⁷⁵⁸ Here Vig's compositions, often created before filming, are in tune with the director's ethos of transgressing the boundaries of art/ film beyond the national or (one)cultural scope. Echoing Béla Bartók's *Mikrokosmos* and Hungarian poet's Endre Ady compositions that embrace both the local and universal, it can be argued that the films' rhythm and their music take on the form of a deterritorialising refrain.

We are the men who are always late,
we are the men who come from far away.

...

We are the men who are always late.
We are never on time with our success,

⁷⁵⁴ That is outside the confines of perception as judgment, a question of desire, which is found through an end to the notion of the human both as spectator and in the world constructed through a signified subject in relation to an object. See Patricia MacCormack, 'An Ethics of Spectatorship', in Ian Buchanan, and Patricia MacCormack (ed), *Deleuze and the Schizoanalysis of Cinema* Continuum, London, New York, 2008), p. 131. It is also in line with Spinozan ethics based not on the moralistic a priori of judgment but on the desire, and capacity for being affected. See *Deleuze, Spinoza*, pp. 19-29

⁷⁵⁵ "Just listen to your heart and trust your eyes. That's enough", Tarr explains in the interview. Eric Kohn, 'Interview with Béla Tarr: Why He Says The Turin Horse Is His Last Film', <http://www.indiewire.com/article/bela-tarr-explains-why-the-turin-horse-is-his-final-film>

⁷⁵⁶ Chion, *Film: A Sound Art*, p.432.

⁷⁵⁷ Bíró, *Turbulence and Flow in Film*, p. 158.

⁷⁵⁸ Chion, *Film: A Sound Art*, p.433.

our dreams, our heaven, or our embrace.

We are the men who are always late.⁷⁵⁹

Deleuze and Guattari write that the refrain as differential, an incommensurable rhythm passing between milieus and territories, has a life of its own; "a nonorganic life that functions only as a creative line of flight; an autonomous, deterritorializing transverse vector of invention."⁷⁶⁰ It is the becoming-expressive of rhythm or melody as its own explanation, which resonating with the vital forces of life, dislodges the sound/image harmony/wholeness of viewing. The soundtrack music in Werckmeister Harmonies accompanies the 'emptiness', the 'nothing happens'; carrying the rhythm of the nonfamiliar/I refrain. This 'nomadic' refrain enclosed in the 'palpable sense of music *freeness*',⁷⁶¹ different from 'heavenly' music of Eszter's theoretical convictions, incarnates a different belief based on the cosmic harmony of (dis)order. Similarly perhaps to Deleuze and Guattari's proposition of the nonOedipal 'structure' of 'unfamiliar/I' becomings – of the 'self-other'.

"When music cries, [...] it is the whole of nature which cries with it. Truly speaking, it does not introduce these feelings in us; it introduces us rather into them, like the passers-by that might be nudged in a dance."⁷⁶² It is somewhere between the crying out and the song that we can hope to find the movement of becoming that will carry us beyond ourselves.

Before providing emotional resonance for a film, music is first and foremost a machine for manipulating space and time, which it helps to expand, contract, freeze, and thaw at will. The music embraces the spectator, envelopes him/her within its rhythms and tones; physical, tangible, 'heavy'. Like the visual depth of field (as discussed in previous chapter) which is an immanent space of memory, musical depth of sound is the space-time of affect. Writing on Tarr's imagery in 'Confined Space', Yvette Biró points out that the large, vacant places and overcrowded backgrounds, underlined with the almost monophonic music from a sorrowful harmonica, lay emphasis upon the similar state of mind: loneliness, abandonment, and despairing

⁷⁵⁹ Endre Ady, *Who Come From Far Away*, <http://www.poemhunter.com/endre-ady/>.

⁷⁶⁰ Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts*, p. 70.

⁷⁶¹ Biró, 'Confined Space.'

⁷⁶² Henri Bergson, 'The Two Sources of Morality and Religion', cited in Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, p. 110

solitude. This sporadic but obstinately returning music, writes Biró, becomes part of the space; it fills it up, makes it more saturated, adding weight to it. One could say that it works as a third dimension, suggesting volume as well as surface, or 'depth of field', as if it were an architectural substance and tension. Quoting Oliver Sacks, she argues that music can appear as a 'three-dimensional container, a vessel ... a subdivided internal space ... therefore it can exert such an emotional hold over people.'⁷⁶³ It does more: it provides a 'space' for what Deleuze called 'the weak connections and floating events'⁷⁶⁴; an open, 'raw' (affective) space of everlasting rhythm, which by its repetitive sameness (actual) allows for the shaping/ moulding of difference (the virtual). Form and content is entwined to the point of imperceptible expression, a "zone of indeterminacy."⁷⁶⁵

The space that sound defines is not the same as the one constructed by the image. Even though it is so full of detail, and even though it is polyphonic, the sound is not 'contained' in the space.⁷⁶⁶ In *Damnation*, the sound of moving coal buckets stretch time and space, or slow time and stretch space. The sound helps to restore the impression of 'vastness', going beyond the confinement of the town. It becomes a nomadic landscape, a desert that frees the space from its circumscription – it takes on the role of 'time', which forms space, which is style.

The melodic landscape is no longer a melody associated with a landscape; the melody itself is a sonorous landscape in counterpoint to a virtual landscape. Expressive qualities entertain variable or constant relations with one another. No longer signature but a style.⁷⁶⁷

Off-screen sound points to an elsewhere. According to Chion, the rarity of active off-screen sound (peripheral ambience, birds, crowd noise, etc.) gives sound a doubly centripetal function: in space, by posing questions whose answers lie within the image, and in time; because no sounds function as anticipation or prolongation.⁷⁶⁸ In Tarr's work the off-screen sound has a kind of teasing force of ambiguity. While the

⁷⁶³ Biró, 'Confined Space'.

⁷⁶⁴ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 1.

⁷⁶⁵ Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, p. 37.

⁷⁶⁶ Chion, *Film: A Sound Art*, p. 120.

⁷⁶⁷ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 318.

⁷⁶⁸ Chion, *Film: A Sound Art*, p. 194.

lack of active off-screen sounds keeps attention within the image (here the moving bodies of sound in space transform the temporal flow into spatial blocks, planes, and volumes⁷⁶⁹), the use of discrepancy between sound and image – where we hear the conversation but do not see its source, for instance – points to elsewhere. The clean, crisp quality of pool balls that 'de-emphasise' the conversations in the bar (*Damnation*), or the voice of the Prince we never see in *Werckmeister Harmonies*, the muted ringing of the bells in *Sátátangó* ... are only few examples. Sometimes the camera proceeds so slowly that we can almost 'hear' its movement. The way in which the sound is 'famed' in relation to the image creates the sense of displacement: a slight disorientation.

Michel Chion defines the visual shot as a *container*, or frame (a container of time and space with definite spatial and temporal borders), and sound as first of all *content* or "containable," with no actual frame.⁷⁷⁰ Within the frame, the flow of images is punctuated by breaks that allow us to segment the film into "shots," while the film's *sound* is not framed. Independent of the image, the sound feels like a formless audio layer.⁷⁷¹ This absence of a frame for sound creates a dissymmetry between what we see and what we hear; forming an irrational cut. In Tarr's films, the long shots and the movable frames within them create a sense of formlessness within the relationship between sound and image, which puts them in a different (to editing) relation, bringing about rhythmical themes of process within and between the actual frames. In this way, sound and image have to be de-framed against each other. As Deleuze writes:

"a sound framing will be defined by the invention of a pure act of speech, of music, or even of silence, which must be extracted from the audible given continuum in noises, sounds, words and pieces of music. [...] the sound image has shaken off its own dependency [like in the image it is dependency on the world]; it has become autonomous, has mastered its own famed. The externality of the visual image as uniquely framed (out-of-field) has been

⁷⁶⁹ Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts*, p. 45.

⁷⁷⁰ Chion, *Film: A Sound Art*, p. 427.

⁷⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 226.

replaced by *the interstice between two framings, the visual and the sound*, the irrational cut between two images, the visual and the sound."⁷⁷²

Thus the sound, although non-containable within the frame, has a specific function (a style) in constructing, together with image, the space-time of attention (thinking). The long shots of people walking with the sounds of footsteps, floating leaves, circling rubbish, and rain, envelope the sensuality of the viewing body, no longer certain what is vision and what is sound. It is not so much the 'content' of the off-screen sound (conversation, distant voice) that is important but the rhythm and the passing of time. Simple sounds such as the striking of a clock bell create "temporal vectors"⁷⁷³ (oriented in the direction from present to future). They might seem outside of time but they are each a tiny story that indicates the irreversible direction in which time is flowing. At the same time, these periodic sounds mark time itself; time that takes on a life of its own, independent of the story or the characters, 'progressing' towards de-psychologising and de-rhetorisation. In addition to sounding, the clocks in *Sátántangó*, by showing different times (at the same time), exaggerate the timeless time, and point to its 'non-one-directional' flow. An ametrical, staggered time of variable intensities; an active, germinal time of flux, a circular and reversible time in which beginning and end are confused; the elusive, fluctuating time of becoming. It thus shifts the narrative from historical to any-time-whatever, and the story to any-story-whatever; a tale celebrating the time of becoming, the hope that is no longer personal, or even human, but living. Sounds embody the non-psychological temporal continuum in which the characters exist. They demarcate the temporal "container" of the characters' actions, but do not become personalized or an agent of action.⁷⁷⁴ They are neither symbolic nor anthropomorphic.

Through its musicality, the spectacle keys into the durations of the everyday, transforming them into suspended refrains. These refrains, like a cracked

⁷⁷² There are no longer even two autonomous components of a single audio-visual image, as in Rossellini, Deleuze argues, but two 'heautonomous' images: one visual and one sound, with a fault, an interstice, an irrational cut between them. Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 241.

⁷⁷³ The term used by Michel Chion in *Film: A Sound Art*, p. 285.

⁷⁷⁴ Chion, *Film: A Sound Art*, p. 270.

crystal, lay bare the strata of the past contained in the present, while rending that present open, at the same time, to the forces of the future.⁷⁷⁵

The woman singing in a bar in *Damnation* fills the whole space of the screen with the voice of the song. Approaching the magic of vocality, the voice of the singer has the power of inhabiting an entire given space, where the verbal structure of the song is broken down, acquiring the flow of an unrelenting sense of exodus. According to Deleuze and Guattari, 'the sentimental or subjective element of the voice internally confronts nonsubjectified groupings of power or nonsubjectified group individuation.'⁷⁷⁶

Music here not only fills the need to subjectively enlarge the cinematography's narrow frame and provide a wider mental space for the experience,⁷⁷⁷ but opens the space to cosmic, depersonalised forces of affect. The velvety, longing voice of the singer, caressing the space, prolongs the 'desire' to escape, while the saxophone's husky tonality encloses the space. The image and sound enter into the repetitive crystalline coexistence of the refrain; exchanging places, resonating with and away from each other and the outside. It leaves the image unresolved, suspended somehow; not allowing itself to be understood, positioned or explained. Only filled by the vague certainty of freedom resonating with the singer's/ lover's earlier pronouncement of 'escape'. Like the song that is "like a rough sketch of a calming and stabilizing, calm and stable centre in the heart of chaos."⁷⁷⁸

There is always sonority in Ariadne's thread. Or the song of Orpheus.⁷⁷⁹

The absence of sound plays equally fundamental role in Tarr's films, in the construction and intensification of visual images and as an independent element of the composition. Sometimes the sound and image exchange their places so to speak, moving in the direction of the imperceptibility (or 'inaurality') of silence. The silence, as Chion points out, can take on different meanings. In most of the films, the silence

⁷⁷⁵ Herzog in 'Becoming-Fluid', p. 276.

⁷⁷⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 342.

⁷⁷⁷ Chion, *Film: A Sound Art*, p. 410.

⁷⁷⁸ Chion, *Film: A Sound Art*, p.311.

⁷⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p.311.

surrounding whispering or restrained voices leads us to sense the presence of a *space that's listening*; on the alert.⁷⁸⁰ In Tarr's films, the impermeability between one sound and another seems to affirm the opposite idea that the world is not listening to humanity. Here, to draw on Chion's examples, the emptiness around sound is not enchanted with supernatural ears, as with Lynch, nor is it metaphysical as with Kieslowski.⁷⁸¹ It is just emptiness, which is not that of existential void but that which accepts/ affirms a cosmic space of 'indifference'. The nothing waiting to happen. Silence offers neither psychical nor transcendental relief – it can be thought of as sound.

Stripping down a soundtrack is just as important as making it dense and sonically rich. A key sequence in *Werckmeister Harmonies*, in which the hospital is ransacked and its patients dragged out of beds, the shot proceeds without sound. Somewhat paradoxically, the random muffled sounds of overturning beds creates a scream; the scream of 'suppressed' vulnerability that is so hard to bear and has nothing to do with psychological 'wounding' or emphatic identification. Creating a 'doubly ambiguous paradox', the scream becomes silence. As the random muffled sounds 'gag' the scream along with the movement, there is a much confusing sense that the whole scene progresses in complete 'silent stillness'. It is a 'pure' affect, a gap(e) that lingers on the verge of endurance, an 'unexplained' absence of sound, neither leading towards, nor resolving. The image screams without a voice, a step further from Tarkovsky's stammering at the beginning of the *Mirror* (1975). Like the receding colour of Munch's painting, there is an aural 'zone of indetermination'.

Image's physicality – earthy, material, gravitational weight, and music's physicality – cosmic, virtual, floating ... resonance. Sound is not closed off to the service of the narrative or meaning; it further opens up the space into the cosmic, eternal becoming, into nomadic w(a)nderings. Rather than sensation being projected onto a calm, material surface, the material rises up into a 'metaphoric' (virtual) plane of forces,⁷⁸² rendering audible the inaudible forces imperceptibly. And affects silently. These 'forces' are not heard in the sound itself, but through it, as the sound enters into a disjunctive non-relation with vision and text/ word. This is different from the 'vague',

⁷⁸⁰ Ibid., p.156.

⁷⁸¹ Ibid.

⁷⁸² Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting, and the Arts*, p.169.

embracing emotion of identification or 'dreaming fantasy permitted for such occasion (film viewing). It demands a particular attention and engagement without easy clues or familiar signposts. The work that foregrounds or abounds with excess invites us to look deeper into it, renewing its "strangeness", and heightening our awareness.⁷⁸³

Rhythm overarches the seemingly chaotic nature of the world/ image, in the consistent, unchanging flow of time (Aion), the order without ordering.⁷⁸⁴ This is not the already ordered harmony of the heavens but the pulsating force of the earth – the surface of the world open to cosmic space in immanent co-existence. Speech, dance, and silence, interpenetrate (with) the world; "whimsically mnemonic," poetic composition. Hanging over the earth, "speaking through intersecting frowns and furrows and falls, the earth's expression, [...] the mysteriously unruly return of rhythms that allow the human subject to seek out his identity with this world ... "⁷⁸⁵

Between improvising and composing, materiality and immateriality, body and mind, the rhythm is not a question of measure, which implies a repetition of the same: a pre-existing, self-identical pattern that is reproduced over and over again. As Deleuze and Guattari point out, it is "the Unequal or Incommensurable, always in a process of transcoding," operating "not in a homogeneous space-time, but with heterogeneous blocks."⁷⁸⁶ Thus, rhythm is difference, or relation – the in-between. It is an ametrical ordering, an overarching style – a form of life. It does not define or represent life but creates from in-between – when the coded milieu is threatened by exhaustion. This is what is: a becoming, a process, a constant change, and dance ... A state of being in becoming. Therefore, it is impossible to predict from a standpoint of the familiar/ milieu. The future is in-becoming, in a state of could have been and yet to come. A simultaneous too-late and too-soon, the rhythm/ time.

⁷⁸³ Matthew Flanagan, "'The Style's Function': Narration in Béla Tarr's *Sátántangó*", Unspoken.

⁷⁸⁴ Drawing on the Stoic opposition of Chronos and Aion, Deleuze and Guattari contrast the measured time of the regulated succession of past, present, and future (Chronos) with an unmeasured and unregulated time that obscures the lines between past, present, and future (Aion); at once an always-already and always-about to be, "a simultaneous too-late and too-soon", Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 320.

⁷⁸⁵ Michel Chion, *Film: A Sound Art*, p. 382.

⁷⁸⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 313.

Rhythm is a creation of life and art – it is also a creation of style. This is the rhythm of films: the rhythm of footsteps, of the length of shots, of falling rain, the slow tempo of the 'drowned out' waltz. Rhythmic wa(o)nderings: territorialized and deterritorialized 'reality' to the 'sound' of tango steps in the process of "productive repetition that has nothing to do with reproductive measure."⁷⁸⁷ That is why it is impossible to accept the 'concept' of negative dialectics of oppositions where the rhythm is concerned. There has always been, and always will be, a crack: an in-between from where the new and unfamiliar, the anarchic other will be smuggled in. In Tarr's films, the rhythm goes against the 'eternal return' feeling of characters hopelessness, it seem to suggest the return of the new in the creative construction of the any-image-whatever, open to the future.

What chaos and rhythm have in common, Deleuze writes, is the in-between – between two milieus, rhythm-chaos or chaosmos: "Between night and day, between that which is constructed and that which grows naturally, between mutations from the inorganic to the organic, from plant to animal, from animal to humankind, yet without this series constituting a progression ..."⁷⁸⁸ In this in-between, chaos becomes rhythm. In the same way the style, and rhythm sustain 'hope' in Tarr's films, with(in) and out of chaos. It is the belief of life as continuously changing process in itself, entirely different from the belief in external causes based on theological doxa.

Rhythm is the Unequal or the Incommensurable that is always undergoing transcoding.⁷⁸⁹ Being opposite to dogmatic, it is critical; it ties together critical moments, it changes direction.

Tarr's films require attention, patience, and a 'simplicity' of willingness to let go of the learned, accepted formulae, in order to 'understand/feel/get' their complex visuality and 'theme'. As he points out in the interview: " ... don't think too much, just listen. ...

⁷⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 314.

⁷⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 313.

⁷⁸⁹ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 313.

Just listen for the details."⁷⁹⁰ It is the faith in the viewer's sensibility and intelligence that also resonates with Béla Bartók's hope for the responsiveness of listener.⁷⁹¹

For Tarr, filmmaking is the process, and a large part of it is 'listening' for the atmosphere, the personalities of the actors, the personalities of the locations, and the actual, real people living there. It is more about creating the situation, with all elements.

The sounds in his films allow for that space of 'listening to film', just as their long takes allow for 'being in film'. There is no longer a need to differentiate between sound and vision. Sensations, as Gregg Redner observed through Deleuze, "are coupled together like "wrestlers" and form a "combat of energies" from which is extracted an ineffable, essence, a resonance, an epiphany erected within the closeworld."⁷⁹² Through an incredible physicality (visual and audible) of their worlds, the films envelop the viewer into an enhanced state of sensual reception into, to borrow Angelopolous's expression, listening to their hearts beating.⁷⁹³ Tarr's cinema is a world crossed with silence and set in time; a long, slow quiet 'endurance'.

⁷⁹⁰ Interview with Fionn Meade, in BOMB 100/Summer 2007.

<http://bombsite.com/issues/100/articles/2909>.

⁷⁹¹ Damjana Bratuz, 'Béla Bartók - On Bartók's Improvisations and the "Pippa Principle"', http://www.damjanabratuz.ca/essays/bartok/bartok_improvissations.htm.

⁷⁹² Redner, *Deleuze and Film Music*, p. 38.

⁷⁹³ Angelopolous cited by Chion in *Film: A Sound Art*, p. 332.

exposure 5:

Fleeing Poetics or Ontology of Becoming: an Aesthetico-Ethical Experiment in Thought. Becoming Artist-Child of Philosophy.

To live in the world but outside of existing conception of it.

Wallace Stevens⁷⁹⁴

The cinema must film, not the world but belief in this world,

our only link ...

Gilles Deleuze⁷⁹⁵

Creating isn't communicating but resisting ...

Creation takes place in choked passages.

Gilles Deleuze⁷⁹⁶

Belá Tarr's "pure optical and sound situation", 'scrambles' emotions, defies the logic of habitual seeing, and thus thinks. Difficult, not in terms of what it shows but how it intuitively, and unique in the stubborn resistance of 'what is', it forges the 'true' image-world.⁷⁹⁷ Tragedy mingles with comedy, pathos with humour, the material with the ephemeral, in a teasing quality of the 'nothing happens' – the real. Neither the question of politics nor morality, the image-world becomes; never the same with each viewing. No hidden meanings, no answers or messages; what is seen is what it is, and nothing more than that – a vision. A vision, on the other hand, as it will become apparent later

⁷⁹⁴ Wallace Stevens, 'Adagia', in *The Opus Posthumus: Poems, Plays, Prose*, (A.A. Knopf, 1975), p. 75.

⁷⁹⁵ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 166.

⁷⁹⁶ Deleuze, *Negotiations*, p. 133.

⁷⁹⁷ As already discussed in Chapter/exposure 3, truth is used here in the manner proposed by Deleuze in relation to art as the power of the false (which according to Deleuze is the only truth). Similarly, for Nietzsche, truth is not something out there to be discovered or found, "but something that must be created... as processum in infinitum, an active determining..." Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, quoted in Frampton, *Filmosophy*, p. 188.

in the discussion, is not of 'what is' – a perception – but a complex inter-relation of attention and intuition; networks of perception and imagination that create points of view, and that can produce different relations and configurations, that is, an affect-thought. Difficult image: A "fact image"? An aesthetic mode of existence perhaps. 'Pathological clinging to life'?

The question is no longer what we see behind an image but rather, how we can endure what we see in it already.⁷⁹⁸

How thus can we engage with, or endure, the long staring shots of peeling walls, the endless walks leading nowhere, with everyday quotidian 'sameness' stretched to impossibility, with the outbursts of insane dances breaking out of 'the narrative'. Outside the logic of common sense, and outside the habit of expectations. How is it possible to find a language for the images – impossible to analyse or interpret – which can only be sensed and felt: lived with intensely and unknowingly? Furthermore, how can we engage with such an image by having to renounce the a priori of thinking, the mode of a discourse, and a desire to make sense? How is it possible to write this enduring encounter, so 'familiar' and yet so unknown? How is this impossibly reciprocal 'encounter/ event' possible?

"Only belief in the world can reconnect man to what he sees and hears", writes Deleuze. The belief in this world, on the other hand, can only be discovered and restored by certain imagery whose power, like that of modern cinema - "when it stops being bad" - "lies in the affective and conceptual expressing without the need for language, *before and beyond words*."⁷⁹⁹ According to Deleuze,

[w]e do not lack communication. On the contrary, we have too much of it. We lack creation. We lack resistance to the present. The creation of concepts in itself calls for a future form for a new earth and a people that does not yet exist.⁸⁰⁰

⁷⁹⁸ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 230.

⁷⁹⁹ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 166. Italic emphasis mine.

⁸⁰⁰ Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 108.

This would be a question of an aesthetics of affect-thought.

Starting with the proposition that belief in this world is an aesthetic phenomenon, it might be possible to think about life, art/ image, and thinking not in terms of a discourse but in relation to the ethics of immanence, where not the search for truth but "an affirmation of a world in *process*" would provide the model. As Deleuze writes:

It is first of all, an affirmation of a world in *process*, an *archipelago*. Not even a puzzle, whose pieces when fitted together would constitute a whole, but rather a wall of loose, uncemented stones, where every element has a value in itself but also in relation to others: isolated and floating relations, islands and straits, immobile points and sinuous lines – for Truth always has "jagged edges."⁸⁰¹

Tarr's 'difficult' imaging is an ethico-aesthetical 'experiment', where aesthetic experience - rather than setting up hidden moral and ideological foundations of judgment - forms a new image of "an absolute ethics that begins where symbolic-moral mediation leaves off and an aesthetic experience of nonrelation begins"; where it is possible to "affirm a landscape where lying and trickery mingle with "grace and chance", for these are the elements of a world devoid of Truth."⁸⁰² As a "creative act", cinema/ art has a potential not only to dislodge us from familiar modes of thinking, but to become philosophy.⁸⁰³ In *What is Philosophy?*, Deleuze argues that the plane of composition of art and the plane of immanence of philosophy "slip into each other to the degree that parts of one may be occupied by entities of the other."⁸⁰⁴ Thus cinema, as an artistic medium, can produce - or even better, create - its own thinking. The viewer's/ thinker's mind would be intertwined with the formally constructed 'concepts' put forward by the film director and the unexpected relations that film itself 'provokes' through its own thinking. As such, cinema can restore belief in this world by reuniting viewer and viewed in the 'flesh' of the world affectively, "before or beyond words." Such an encounter would push the viewer off the edge of familiar doxa that tolerate or

⁸⁰¹ Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 86.

⁸⁰² Flaxman, 'Introduction', *The Brain Is the Screen*, p. 47.

⁸⁰³ This would be a question of 'doing' (non)philosophy and/ as a creative act of artistic experimentation, rather than illustrating or re-creating existing philosophical concepts.

⁸⁰⁴ Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 66.

put up with almost anything, and become "a cinema of at once fantasy and report, criticism and compassion."⁸⁰⁵ In this strange 'archipelago' of unnatural connections, the viewing can take the form of 'love'/ creation, and the viewer can become the philosopher.

This would be an experience at the limit, an affect-thought which is also the move (of cinematic aesthetics) from seeing behind to enduring what is there already, and the move from 'reading' an image to experiencing it. This is not sensory experience in opposition to the extra-sensory but an experience in 'contact' with the outside, with the "delirious dimension," with "the unbearable."⁸⁰⁶ As both an aesthetic and ethical 'experiment', the difficult image persists, enduring in-between affect and thought.

The chapter will also attempt an aesthetico-ethical experiment with the image, re-thinking the concepts of life, art and thinking. Re-thinking will take the form of poetical rather than dialectical discourse, where the 'action' of what is accepted as thinking will be replaced by 'belief' in opening new problems. The question of aesthetics will be addressed through the Deleuzian concept of immanence, where art and life are neither opposed nor one, but where new ways in which art and life can affect one another in a continual process of becoming something else. This will reposition the concept of aesthetics from transcendence (individual judgment or sublimated idea) to non-subjective pre-personal sensation (or sign). The aesthetico-ethical experiment, where the annihilation of transcendental underpinnings, of any sense of pre-existent structure, imagines a world where "force no longer refers to a centre, any more that it confronts a setting of obstacles. It only confronts other forces, it refers to other forces, that it affects or that affect it."⁸⁰⁷

Accordingly, there will be a 'justification' of the image as affect-thought, which will carry further the sense of belief (in this world) and thus ethics as radical immanence, where the politics of humanistic dialectics is replaced with the non-humanistic ethics

⁸⁰⁵ Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 16.

The flesh of the world is not to be understood here as phenomenological being-in-the world, but as Deleuzian 'transsubjective being in the world', which is the result of becoming, not a perception; the result of a virtual, "impersonal and pre-individual transcendental field that is the condition of any actual conscious experience", which would move away from the habitual forms of perception and conception. Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, p. 102.

⁸⁰⁶ Lisa Akervall, 'Cinema Affect and Vision', *Rhizomes*, 16 (Summer, 2008), <http://www.rhizomes.net/issue16/akervall.html>.

⁸⁰⁷ Flaxman, 'Introduction', *The Brain is The Screen*, p.46.

of "a life." Thus, the concepts of life, art and thinking will be re-examined in the context of the aesthetico-ethical imperative of immanence, in which art and life affect each other in a continual process of becoming. The writing will continue to ask questions and open up problems rather than seek answers or provide solutions.

Stilled, suspended in-between stillness and movement, in the meanwhile of the wo(a)nderous narrative, the difficult image of time hurts, repulses, bores, amazes, astounds, perplexes, and more ... but never leaves one indifferent. It provokes an uneasiness, a not quite known or 'pleasant' emotion, while at the same time eliciting something that persistently demands attention; a strange kind of excitation that creating or experimentation might arouse from an encounter with the unknown. A kind of Spinozan productive 'joyful' encounter comes to mind, which does not necessarily exclude difficulty or pain, but equally does not position the subject within the distancing [I/eye] or 'fix' the self in the identity of a traumatic Real. Instead, it throws the viewing body into the abyss/ boundlessness of, to call on Spinoza again, "all the subtle sympathizings of the incalculable soul, from the bitterest hate to passionate love."⁸⁰⁸ This physical and mental intensity of an encounter – thinking through affect – brings elements of non-thought into thought, or shows 'the possibility of the impossible'.⁸⁰⁹ Thus both joyful and productive might be thought of here in the sense of provoking new ways of thinking, of seeing the world anew, which is also an ongoing struggle. It is not through an intensified 'experience' of cathartic redemption or an aesthetic appreciation of Beauty that 'seeing' and thinking are restored, but through the 'shock' of the encounter with becoming itself – a difference – that enables the overcoming of the present/ 'what is', producing "strange new becomings, new polyvocalities".⁸¹⁰ This would be a question of the singular thought-event, a throw of the dice; "the thought-phantasm", as Foucault called it, which 'happens' between the director/ camera, the world, the viewer, and the 'outside', and "which does not search for truth, but repeats thought."⁸¹¹

⁸⁰⁸ Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 87.

⁸⁰⁹ Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy*, p. 60.

⁸¹⁰ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, pp. 190-1.

⁸¹¹ Michel Foucault, 'Theatrum Philosophicum', <http://www.generation-online.org/p/fp/foucault5.htm>.

This moment of the encounter-event, delinked from action and charged by the senses, is like when one's mouth opens in a silent scream or cry of wonder; "when everything has been said, when the main scene seems over, there is what comes afterwards."⁸¹²

Reality, life, image, immanence ... Life, art and thinking folded in(to) the aesthetics of immanence/ affect? "We are returned to a kind of perception purged of any sensory-motor necessity."⁸¹³ In order to write such an ethico-aesthetic encounter-event with a difficult image, a number of questions need to be asked.

What life?

The doctor slowly gets up, locks the door, walks to the toilet, urinates, flushes the toilet with water from a bucket, returns to his desk, takes out one of his many notebooks, starts writing, stops, and finally stares blankly ahead. In another scene (*Werckmeister Harmonies*), Valuska opens the food bar's door, puts his thermos on the counter and, after exchanging a few words with the kitchen attendant, waits while she puts the food in each compartment, closes the flask, and handles it back. After János leaves, the camera remains for some time in the same position, witnessing a couple engaged in a strange sort of kissing affectation seen now in the corner of the bar's window. At the beginning of *Sátántangó*, while Mrs Schmidt goes about her morning chores, with her husband asleep at the table, Futaki indifferently envisions his future.

"I'm going south, winters are shorter there. I'll rent a farm. Close to a prosperous town. Soak my feet all day, in a bowl of hot water. Or ... I'll be a watchman in a chocolate factory. Or a porter in a girls' dorm. And try to forget everything. A washbowl of hot water and nothing to do. Only watch how this fuckin' life goes." (*Sátántangó*)

'Meanwhile', in a single take within *Damnation*, the singer munches on bits of food at the table while listening to Karrer as he slowly, almost indulgently, in a matter-of-fact way, describes at length and in detail a previous love affair, where he tormented and

⁸¹² Jayamanne, *Towards Cinema and Its Double*, p. 142.

⁸¹³ Trifonova, 'A Nonhuman Eye: Deleuze on Cinema', p. 140.

ridiculed his lover until she committed suicide. And as the night draws in, the cart carrying bodies soaked by the incessant rain moves slowly to the distant sound of an uncertain destination.

Here is Tarr's "logic of life," a collection of events that are 'worth' attending to, irrespective of their value to the understanding of any "story." It is a way of getting closer to people, "so that we can understand everyday life, and so that we can understand human nature, why we are like we are", he comments in an interview⁸¹⁴. An assemblage of singular instants in a collection of other instants, is a question of rejecting what Tarr calls "the logic of the story" – editing one piece of information against another – in favour of "the logic of life."⁸¹⁵ The images are 'justified' by the rhythm of time and the composition of the shots, as much as by the aim of bringing us close to experiencing the life of this or that character. The shabby, slow-motioned movements of the doctor, the detailed textures of interiors, or the strange kissing behind the bar's window ... From the accumulation of materiality (the excess of physical details) Tarr extracts life, and it is life that 'pierces' though his images. Seen and heard but also acutely sensed; complex and intense potentiality, immanently real and "in-human" – "a life."⁸¹⁶ Thus, above all perhaps, these everyday, unremarkable, quotidian moments are radically vital because they "wrest" or intuit life more (or less) than human, more (or less) than organic, and irreducible to either realism or representation. The intensity of material detail, indifferent nature, and black-and-white photography, are forms of expressions that are neither social/ historical nor political, but cosmic; where the 'understanding of the human condition' does not refer to a value of , or a value superior to, it but asks "how is this possible?" And where the question is not that of good or evil, but of "what am I, or better still what is my body, capable of?"⁸¹⁷ The 'distant', static, and dispassionate 'recording' of life, which allows/ renders every unfolding image the time and density to see and hear, is at the same

⁸¹⁴ Béla Tarr interviewed by Jonathan Romney, National Film Theatre, London, 15/03/2001.

⁸¹⁵ Phil Ballard, 'In Search of Truth: BélaTarr Interviewed', *Kinoeye* 4:2, 20, March 2004, available at: <http://www.kinoeye.org/04/02/ballard02.php>.

⁸¹⁶ Deleuze, *Pure Immanence: Essays on A Life*.

⁸¹⁷ This is the matter of ethics not morality where actions are evaluated in terms of existence rather than judged according to essence. Morality is 'defined' by Deleuze and Spinoza as a set of constraining rules that consists in judging actions and intentions by relating them to transcendental or universal values. Ethics, on the other hand, would be a set of "facilitative" rules that evaluates what we do, and think according to the immanent mode of existence that it implies. Daniel W. Smith, 'Deleuze and the Question of Desire: Towards an Immanent Theory of Ethics', *Parrhesia*, No 2, 2007, pp. 66-67.

time an expression of infinite variations, encounters, and relations. Life is enfolded in the style where the "I" point of view and the free-indirect composition intertwine in the movement of wo(a)nderous narrative. The image and the word come together in the web of paradoxical relations outside of subjective/ objective, I/ other distinctions. Merging content and form, Tarr films the world as it is, and also the belief in it. This indecisive relation between form and content might be called a new kind of 'humanism' (metamorphic rather than anthropomorphic or anthropocentric) of "a people that are missing." Here every man and woman remains a "subject-in-becoming", whose "undecided fate" is the affirmation of both what is yet to come with this world, and beyond the human condition.⁸¹⁸ As Deleuze writes,

[t]here is no such thing as either man or nature now, only a process that produces the one within the other and couples the machines together. Producing-machines, desiring-machines everywhere, schizophrenic machines, all of life's species: the self and the non-self, outside and inside, no longer have any meaning whatsoever.⁸¹⁹

In this sense, life 'expressed' in Tarr films is neither biological nor humanist, but what Deleuze called "a Life" – subjectless, "impersonal and yet singular", an inexhaustible virtual force which merely passes through (human) life. Imaged as a material plane of encounters – it manifests itself through this world composed of actual bodies and relations – that is also a plane of pre-subjective "delirium."⁸²⁰ It is a force that exists in each body as its potential for variation that is actualised not by the decisions that body makes but by the encounters it undergoes.⁸²¹ In this sense, life in Tarr's films is both imaged – an actual plane of encounters and relations, and 'expressed' – a virtual, pre-subjective and impersonal force of variation/ transformation.

⁸¹⁸ 'A subject-in-becoming' is an expression used by Rosi Braidotti. Braidotti, *Transpositions: On Nomadic Ethics* (Polity Press, 2006).

"Undecided fate", used by Friedrich Ulfers and Mark Daniel Cohen in 'Nietzsche's Amor Fati: The Embracing of the Undecided Fate', <http://www.nietzschecircle.com/essayArchive9.html>.

⁸¹⁹ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*.

⁸²⁰ Deleuze, *Pure Immanence*, p. 42.

⁸²¹ As Colebrook writes, "in addition to the actual bodies that populate this world in time and space there is also the virtual plane that is thoroughly real and that is infinitely different; it exists in each body as its potential for variation, a potential that is actualised not by the decisions that body makes but by the encounters it undergoes." Claire Colebrook, 'Queer Vitalism', *New Formations*, Number 68, Spring 2010, p. 80. This is what Deleuze refers to as the real conditions of existence.

It could be said that underneath, or rather within, this world and this life, 'bubbles' an inexact and indeterminate virtual power; a vague but real power which is beyond our capacity to measure it.⁸²² This is not only a force of self-creation but creation that is also destruction; it is not opposite to death, as death is also a part of a becoming. As Colebrook suggests, it is a potential that always threatens to destabilise or de-actualise individual being.⁸²³ It is prior to, and irreducible to, identification that attaches us to familial, social, national, or sexual territories, and thus enables potential for new forms of existence. Subjectless and neutral, it is present in all things, and thus always immanent to itself. Deleuze writes: "[a] life is everywhere: an immanent life carrying with it the events and singularities that are merely actualized in subjects and objects."⁸²⁴ Such 'a life', as he proclaimed with Nietzsche, has no value; it is radically 'innocent' and just and, as such, cannot be judged according to the laws of resentment or bad conscience.⁸²⁵ It can only be affirmed. Beyond good and evil, it is the multiple truth found by Dionysus: "the innocence of plurality, the innocence of becoming and of all that is."⁸²⁶

Opening into new creations and inventions.

Contradicting all natural perception – distorting the visible and suspending the invisible, Tarr's 'logic of life' affirms all that appears; even the most devastating, bitter suffering; even death. His tactics of resistance, of moving away from 'what is' by affirming it, are enfolded play-fully and intensely in the aesthetics/ style of the 'tragic' vision.⁸²⁷ The pathological clinging to life Tarr speaks of could be a question of resistance in a sense of both 'diagnosing' and affirming, with no clear cut distinction

⁸²² Deleuze, *Pure Immanence*, p.15.

⁸²³ Colebrook, *Queer Vitalism*, p. 80.

⁸²⁴ Deleuze, *Pure Immanence*, p. 30.

⁸²⁵ Existence is not responsible or even blameworthy ... Resentment (it is your fault) and bad conscious (it is my fault) and their common fruit (responsibility), writes Deleuze after Nietzsche, and are the fundamental categories of thought which are based on the instinct of revenge, and which have "gained such a hold on humanity through the centuries, that all of metaphysics, psychology, history and above all morality bear its imprint." Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 21.

⁸²⁶ Deleuze, *Nietzsche And Philosophy*, p. 22.

⁸²⁷ 'The tragic vision' comes from Nietzsche's concept of the tragic as both chance and necessity, also as an aesthetic and joyful sense of creating ('a play') as both creation and destruction. Thus, resistance would be understood not in terms of overcoming or negating, which always implies new normative images/representations of 'being otherwise', but in terms of mobilising "forces of change from within the act of encountering, understood as the emanation and interaction of potentials always already found in the forces." Colebrook, 'Queer Vitalism', p.77.

between them.⁸²⁸ Recognition of oppression in the figure of amnesiac reality is both a 'subjective' creating of forgetting and an objective 'image-fact' creating from within the world. Here, the diagnosis and affirmation come together in the persistent sensing of the irresistible power of life as creating. Not only in terms of actual events (Valuska's 'creation' of the universe, or Estike 'arranging' her own death) but most importantly in a form of virtual 'lines'; an imperceptible yet real force of potentiality that repeats itself in difference. A manifestation of an open, ungraspable Whole in a concrete instant.⁸²⁹ Thus, getting closer to people or understanding life remains a question not of psychology or metaphysics, but rather of a virtual force of becoming which could be thought of as a strange kind of inhuman humanism. And when it comes to this inhuman life, Tarr, to borrow Deleuze's expression, 'does away' with the system of judgment in the Nietzschean fashion: "there is no value superior to life, life is not to be judged or justified, it is innocent, it has 'the innocence of becoming', beyond good and evil ..."⁸³⁰ Such is the Dionysian, tragic vision of resisting by affirming. Saying "yes" to life in all its forms (even in death) as a choice.

In terms of 'difficult image', we could talk about an intense and experimental spatiality, an "intensive space" that takes us beyond the forms of the "lived body" as described by phenomenology, and leads to what Rajchman calls a "mad zone of indetermination and experimentation."⁸³¹ The heaviness of human existence is momentarily lifted by the aesthetics of affirmation, saying yes to life; by dance.

Existing not as a subject but as a work of art.⁸³²

⁸²⁸ Diagnosing rather than judging or accusing/ blaming is for Deleuze (as it is for Nietzsche, and Spinoza) a way of resisting the moralistic and ideological rules of transcendence. It is in line with the idea of Life functioning as an ethical principle (evaluating) different from morality (obeying). For Deleuze, as Daniel W. Smith writes, artists and writers "are like clinicians or diagnosticians who isolate a particular "possibility of life" a certain way of being or mode of existence whose symptomatology is set forth in their work." Artists and philosophers are those who diagnose the symptoms of their milieu but can also go beyond the symptomatology of a mode of life, and "attempt to trace the virtual power of the nonorganic Life itself"; that is to affirm. The most important question regarding life concerns the conditions that make the production of the new modes of existence possible. Daniel W. Smith, 'Introduction', Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical* , p. xxi.

⁸²⁹ Ronald Bogue, 'To Choose to Choose', *Afterimages*, p. 118.

⁸³⁰ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 133.

⁸³¹ Rajchman, *The Deleuze Connections*, p. 131.

⁸³² Deleuze, *Negotiations*, p. 95.

As mentioned in an earlier chapter, under this film runs another film, no longer the director's but its own image-world (life and art). It is something that has not yet actualised, something unknown and unpredictable, something that can only be sensed, 'inter-imagined' with film, something intimated in the material intensity; "a Chaosmos, a composed chaos – neither foreseen nor preconceived."⁸³³ Because, as Deleuze asserts,

The true world does not exist, and, if it did, would be inaccessible, impossible to describe, and, if it could be described, would be useless, superfluous ...⁸³⁴

The new modes of existence are intuited in the suspension of 'not yet'. The virtual force breaks through the cracks in the false of artistic construction, "irreducible to any of the decided forms that we know in actual existence."⁸³⁵ Nameless, undetermined, impersonal percepts and affects in-between. Thus, what 'actualises' in the materiality of the image-world is only one of many moments, a moment which may or may not become visible/ audible, and which depends on life's non-organic and impersonal power of expression, the 'logic of art'. Thus,

... on the one hand, it is a power of abstraction capable of producing elements that are in themselves asignifying, acosmic, asubjective, anorganic, agrammatical, and asyntactic (singularities and events, affects and percepts, intensities and becomings) and placing them in a state of continuous variation; on the other hand, it is a power of invention capable of creating ever new relations between these differential or genetic elements (syntheses of singularities, blocks of becomings, continuums of intensities).⁸³⁶

Affirming 'what is' diagnoses in the belief of 'what is yet to come', and creates in the affirmation of life-thinking.⁸³⁷

⁸³³ Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 204.

⁸³⁴ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 133.

⁸³⁵ Colebrook, *Deleuze and the Meaning of Life*, Continuum (London and New York, 2010) p. 167.

⁸³⁶ Daniel W. Smith, 'Introduction', *Essays Critical and Clinical*, pp. li-lii.

⁸³⁷ The philosopher of the future is both artist and doctor, writes Deleuze in *Pure Immanence*, p. 66.

A "crumbling, depressive world of mud, alcohol and betrayal"⁸³⁸, the wasteland – dead matter is the potential in which the virtual matter of radically and unknowingly affirming becoming is folded:

... the world as a 'monster of energy' without beginning and without end, a Dionysian world of 'eternal' self-creation and 'eternal' self-destruction, moving from the simple to the complex and then back again to the simple out of abundance: cold/hot/hot/cold, beyond satiety, disgust, and weariness, a world of becoming that never attains 'being', never reaching a final death.⁸³⁹

This is the tragic vision which is also what Nietzsche called an "exceptional kind of health", and which post-war cinema was forced to discover, as Gregory Flaxman observes, "in the nauseating, devastated death-strewn landscape."⁸⁴⁰ Moreover, as Colebrook suggests, waste, debris, and refuse can be seen as "an intimation of unactualised potential" precisely because they cannot be synthesised or recognised according to either 'higher' or 'popular' values.⁸⁴¹ This is not a question of high or low, content versus form, but a transformative power of the false; an artistic becoming.

Here it is the tragic aesthetic that brings life and art together, outside the transcendental conception of the world, including its phenomenological "life-world" condition of perception.

For Nietzsche, the tragic is not the pessimistic turning away from, or reacting to, life – even in its most devastating, cruel moments – but affirming its multiplicity. It is a "plural joy" of the diversity of affirmation which merges the Dionysian *ekstasis* and Apollonian *image*, chaos with order, one with many, the singular and the universal, chance and necessity. As tragic, this joy is not the result of "a sublimation, a purging, a compensation, a resignation or a reconciliation" but of an aesthetic encounter with

⁸³⁸ Jonathan Romney, 'Out of the Shadows', <http://www.guardian.co.uk/film/2001/mar/24/books.guardianreview>.

⁸³⁹ Ansell-Pearson, *Viroid Life: Perspectives on Nietzsche and the Transhuman Condition* (Routledge, 1997), pp. 62-63.

⁸⁴⁰ Gregory Flaxman, 'Introduction', *The Brain Is the Screen*, p. 42.

⁸⁴¹ "It is only by rethinking our relation to beauty – not as active synthesis, self-fashioning and life-forming but beauty as *violently encountered waste* – that we can overcome the resentment of the discourse of modern aesthetics." Colebrook, 'Beauty as the Promise of Happiness', pp. 130-131.

the unknown. This tragic, as Deleuze writes, is not to be found in the anguish and disgust, nor in a nostalgia for lost unity. It is the complex philosophical 'vision' of life as aesthetic rather than moral or theological phenomenon.⁸⁴² Not a medical phrase or a moral solution to pain, fear, or pity, but affirmation. For there is no cure for the 'human condition'. It is a choice to choose with this world, "a joyful refusal of anything other than radical contingency and a force without promise."⁸⁴³ Perhaps that of Ariadne who embraces multiplicity and affirms life, rather than that of Antigone who seeks revenge out of duty, or of Bartleby, who would rather not.

Tarr's depiction of disintegration, the displacement of humankind as the centre of the universe, and "exhausted vitality"⁸⁴⁴, affirmed in the photographic of cinema, outside of moral and Biblical narratives, is a choice of a tragic aesthetic – saying "yes" to the game of becoming, with no 'going back' and no a priori determined future. A case of radically passive vitalism, to draw on Colebrook's reading of Deleuze and Guattari's concept, that which refuses to be 'lived': "a force that is but does not act ... a pure internal awareness."⁸⁴⁵

The world is not determined by some final cause or meaning that serves as its goal, but a play of chance and necessity, a ceaseless, goalless becoming. Becoming, not as 'should be' or will be (predetermined fate), but as 'it happens', is the 'authority' beyond the limits of the world. For Nietzsche, chance and necessity come together as the undecided fate of the dice throw. In the language of Zarathustra, the gods are dice players and the earth is their table. The natural world and everything in it, ourselves included, are combinations that have turned up in this game of chance. But this chance is not opposed to necessity. While the throw of the dice is an act of freedom, it is powerless to determine the resulting combination. Once the dice leave the hand, the rest is left to necessity. It is this sort of nonrational, nonpurposive "necessity" that

⁸⁴² Nietzsche's philosophy is a logic of multiple affirmation and therefore a logic of pure affirmation and a corresponding ethic of joy. Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 17. "Existence and the world seem justified only as an aesthetic phenomenon." Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, p. 141.

⁸⁴³ Colebrook, 'Introduction', Tom Cohen, Claire Colebrook, J. Hillis Miller (ed.), *Theory and the Disappearing Future: On de Man, On Benjamin* (Routledge, 2011), p. 8.

⁸⁴⁴ Andrew Schenker, *The Turin Horse*, Review (Slant Magazine, 2012), <http://www.slantmagazine.com/film/review/the-turin-horse/5789>.

⁸⁴⁵ Deleuze and Guattari, in Claire Colebrook, 'Beauty as the Promise of Happiness', p. 129.

"A pure internal awareness" refers here to the Bergsonian conception of awareness – consciousness that is in things, not of them.

Nietzsche wants to ascribe to becoming. Becoming is seen as a series of dice throws, each of which is complete in itself ("justified at every moment") and have no further end beyond sparking an interest in new throws and different combinations. Whether called an "innocent becoming" or "chaos", such a world is without origin, purpose, aim, unity, or total character. "And it is precisely this that makes it a world of play, for there is nothing to halt this becoming and differing, no transcendent principle to direct or constrain it, or calculation that could totalize it once and for all."⁸⁴⁶ Therefore, becoming (with the world) is the *Amor fati*, the love of life as it is – free from blame and guilt, which unites freedom and necessity. Neither some 'universal love' for all, nor fate as deterministic opposition to freedom.

What Nietzsche calls the *glad tidings* is, as Deleuze argues, that existence is no longer treated as blameworthy, nor does the will feel guilty for existing.⁸⁴⁷ Tarr's image-world is 'innocent', and his aesthetics carry the belief in it, not by (re)acting to the intolerable but by thinking differently, allowing the difference to differentiate. There is 'negativity' that is profoundly productive: the materiality that resists us is also the protean source of being, the essentially vague matrix of things.⁸⁴⁸ The glad tidings are tragic thoughts, for tragedy is not found in the recriminations of *ressentiment*, the conflicts of bad conscience or the contradictions of a will which feels guilty and responsible. The tragic, as Deleuze writes, does not even fight against *ressentiment*, bad conscience or nihilism. According to Nietzsche, the tragic = joyful; therefore, to will is to create and, by extension, it could be suggested that to create is to live. The tragic is pure and multiple positivity. Affirmation is tragic because it affirms chance and the necessity of chance, because it affirms multiplicity and the unity of multiplicity. "The dice-throw is tragic. All the rest is nihilism".⁸⁴⁹ The tragic is where art and life merge and where the choice to choose is possible. In this sense, life becomes an aesthetical phenomenon; an inhuman humanism – an aesthetic-tragic mode. Through the tragic, the aesthetic thinks the belief in this world beyond words.

⁸⁴⁶ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 26.

⁸⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 36.

⁸⁴⁸ 'Vibrant Matter, Zero Landscape: An interview with Jane Bennett', <http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2011-10-19-loenhart-en.html#footNoteNUM3>.

⁸⁴⁹ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 36.

Therefore, accepting life as an aesthetic phenomenon (an *instinct of play*) rather than a moral or religious one, might open up the 'chance' of finding existence blameless, and thus inventing a new (non)humanity; one liberated from not just human centrality and agency, but from the future of man. Because, as Deleuze aptly put it, "it is in man himself that we must liberate life, since man himself is a form of imprisonment for man."⁸⁵⁰

Thus, Tarr's tragic 'logic of life', blameless and "irresponsible", offers a different way of thinking about and 'interpreting' existence.⁸⁵¹ Immanently and aesthetically. What it means is "saying Yes to life", even in its strangest and most painful episodes; to accept the will to life and "its own inexhaustible vitality" even when it witnesses destruction, or even when it anticipates the extinction of its (human) heroes.⁸⁵² Would it be too much to suggest that against the "nihilism" judging existence blameworthy, faulty and responsible, Tarr gives us the empty space of experimentation, "to make us graceful, to teach us to dance, to give us the instinct to play?"⁸⁵³

Once the normalising notions of existence are reconsidered, a new sense of possibility within the impossible might open, a new way of thinking and living based not on judgment but on 'play' (an encounter).⁸⁵⁴ It might be possible to see language, culture, and history as "possessing a force beyond purpose" and, therefore, considered beyond normalising notions of organism, as an opening and joyful, rather than closing or

⁸⁵⁰ Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, trans. Seán Hand (Continuum, 2006), p. 77.

For Deleuze and Guattari, molar forces are those that colonize or territorialize the forces of consciousness and extract a (bad) conscience (Oedipus), these are the forces of judgment, morality, and power to control. Molecular are lines of flight or escape, they are the real life lines, lines of creation and also self-abolition. The unconscious (Nietzsche's system of active forces) is molecular and capable of engaging directly and subordinating the segmentary and molar lines, deterritorializing and decoding them in an absolute fashion. 'Gilles Deleuze', *Encyclopedia Nomadica*, http://www.encyclopedia-nomadica.org/English/gilles_deleuze.php.

⁸⁵¹ The mode of irresponsibility (to give irresponsibility its positive sense) was adopted by Nietzsche against the fundamental categories of Semitic and Christian thought based on resentment and blame, in order to free life from "praise and blame, [...] present and past." Nietzsche and Philosophy, p. 21.

⁸⁵² Nietzsche, 'What I Owe to the Ancients', in *Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche's tragic affirmation of life resonates here with Tarr's seemingly apocalyptic view of humanity: "The whole fucking world is over", and with Colebrook's writings on passive vitalism, including thinking about the future of the earth without the 'human' (particularly in her last edited work entitled *Extinction*).

⁸⁵³ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 21.

⁸⁵⁴ The life of the tragic is not guilty pride but the ceaselessly reawoken instinct of the game which calls forth new worlds. Not a theodicy but a cosmodicy, not a sum of injustice to be expiated but justice as the law of this world; not hubris but play of innocence. Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 25.

pessimistic, affair.⁸⁵⁵ *Amor fati* is also linked to the poetic, to the playfulness embracing the undecided fate beyond truth, and beyond (meaning of) 'words'. This would be the "instinct of the game which calls forth new worlds;"⁸⁵⁶ the aesthetic of creation. Life as art. It would be the ethics of becoming, of singular encounters within the multiplicity of human and non-human durations, of opening to 'a life' as the operative cosmic force of self-differentiated difference.⁸⁵⁷ The player/ -artist- child, as Deleuze suggests with Nietzsche, "temporarily abandons himself to life and temporarily fixes the gaze upon it; the artist places himself provisionally in his work and provisionally above it; the child plays, withdraws from the game and returns to it. In this game of becoming, the being of becoming also plays the game with itself; the aeon (time), says Heraclitus, is a child who plays at draughts."⁸⁵⁸

And ...

The universe has no purpose, and the dice will never abolish chance.⁸⁵⁹ Affirming chance rather than counting on probability, to affirm necessity rather than anticipating a result, is the belief in this world as it is and its creative power of transformation. The Dionysian correlation of chance-necessity, not a probability distributed over several throws but all chance at once; not a final, desired, willed combination, but the fatal combination, fatal and loved, *Amor fati*.⁸⁶⁰ "The dice throw affirms becoming and it affirms the being of becoming." This is a question of difference, of the return of the new and, as such, of a possibility of creating new worlds. Affirming the multiplicity of chance, all at once or the fatal combination of the throw is the tragic play of innocence. The fatal coming together of numbers, the infinite combinations of all that has been and all that could have been, provides us with the notion of multiplicity that is open and changing, the eternal return of difference.

What might the tragic play of innocence be? How does one play/ live such a game?

⁸⁵⁵ Colebrook, 'Introduction: Extinction. Framing the End of the Species', in Colebrook (ed) *Extinction*, Open Humanities Press, 2012.

⁸⁵⁶ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 25.

⁸⁵⁷ Ronald Bogue, 'To Choose To Choose', in *Afterimages of Gilles Deleuze's Film Philosophy*, p. 120.

⁸⁵⁸ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 24.

⁸⁵⁹ Mallarme, 'A Throw of the Dice'.

⁸⁶⁰ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 27.

Nietzsche's dice throw as the affirmation of the unknown, is the affirmation of the multiplicity of chance all at once. The throw of the dice is also a 'choice to choose' with life, not against it; a "continuous choice" of undecided fate.⁸⁶¹ In terms of cinema this would be the 'logic' of the irrational cut, or the Markoff 'chain', which introduces chance into the image-flow.⁸⁶² It is also 'accepting' the will to power, the universal and primordial drive of all living things, a desire to live which is different from obedience to morality or law, from the will to survive, and from the individual will to be free or to control. This desire (to create and to resist the present; the will to create), in a way, is not ours; as unconscious, it 'belongs', so to speak, to the realm of pre-individual, pre-subjective, and non-human outside, yet which is also the immanent inside. We belong to 'it'. Thus, the need and necessity to recover the link to this desire (this world) is to recover the sense of creation – our capacity to act outside of what we know – beyond thinking and ordinary perception. It is the power of a life, the power to create difference, beyond the human condition and beyond transcendence; the real 'shimmering' in the idea of becoming-child, taken to its full potential into the future of "creation" (which is essential for artistic invention, for new modes of ethical existence, and for philosophical thinking).⁸⁶³

This is an aesthetic mode of existence, the belief in this world as it is.

In Tarr's image-world there are those who blame (such as Irimiás and the police officer), and those who choose to choose (Estike, János, even Karrer). But even those who blame are not 'blamed' by the "glad tidings" of his films. Events happen in a kind of matter-of-fact way; people plodding along with the weather, wandering dogs and dreams that never come true. Both the human brokenness and vague heroism is enfolded in decelerated time and homogenous texture. Humans, animals, spaces, rain,

⁸⁶¹ Bogue, 'To Choose to Choose', p. 121.

⁸⁶² The "series of dice throws is like a Markov chain, a formal model in which a discrete set of possibilities produces a second set of possibilities, which in turn produces a third, each set in the chain of events being affected and partially determined by the preceding set, yet with each set's potential for subsequent differentiation always being multiple and undeterminable. The relationship between events is at once contingent and necessary, unpredictable yet non-arbitrary. Each set, in its multiple possibilities, exceeds any identity. It is a difference in itself, unfolding into further states of self-differing difference." Ibid., p.120.

⁸⁶³ For Deleuze and Guattari, this radical sense of creation takes the 'meaning' of creating outside the vitality of survival, self-preservation or maintenance, outside subjectivity and outside transcendence. Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* For Nietzsche the will to power is the will to create: to will = to create.

mud, sounds and light are all part of the 'universal', cosmic game of becoming. Moments unchained and rechained again, each being a throw of the dice, a choice to trust the unknowable, and a chance affirming necessity,

against the [...] morality of salvation and charity, a morality of life in which the soul is fulfilled only by taking to the road, with no other aim, open to all contacts, never trying to save other souls ...⁸⁶⁴

Mixing 'tragedy' with comedy, laughter with distress, fleeing from received opinions and beliefs, commentary, politics, morality; dancing with the world (and the viewer) gracefully and 'irresponsibly' in the moment of chance, is the game of trust which Tarr plays with the viewer.

At the same time, of great length, each filmed as one shot, with constant but subtle shifts in the camera, the scenes are the combination of a "great formal beauty" and strange intimacy created by an affective distance – the endurance of the 'unknown'.⁸⁶⁵ These singular departicularised "fact images" – abstract forms rather than filmed 'reality' – cannot, however, be viewed from the point of either alienation or of *sensus communis*. Detached from the synthesising Whole, they require a different perspective; an acute (non)perception, both visual and auditory; "a pure contemplation without knowledge."⁸⁶⁶ The mundane, everyday actions here are not the moments of shared sense experience (the distribution of the sensible), but the shattering of the

⁸⁶⁴ Deleuze, *Essays Clinical and Critical*, p. 87.

⁸⁶⁵ 'The unknown' is 'used' here in the same way as it has been throughout this thesis: that is, as something which startles or makes us recoil in terror or beauty, which is different from both the idea of Beauty and the mode of artistic de-familiarization. It is a result of different non-familiarity, a Deleuzian affective encounter with the Outside (of non-thinking).

⁸⁶⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy*, p. 213.

common sense.⁸⁶⁷ It is not a question of understanding or empathy but of affect-thought that is an aesthetico-ethics tragic of becoming.⁸⁶⁸ Life as art and thinking.

What art?

"Life alone," state Deleuze and Guattari, "creates such zones [of indetermination] where living beings whirl around, and only art can reach and penetrate them in its enterprise of co-creation."⁸⁶⁹

It is art that puts us in a direct relation with the virtual.

The crystalline notions of fabulation and falseness mean the creation of the singular and the new, holding a 'truth' which is not pre-existent, but created. Art wrests from life the percepts and affects that 'force' us to see, to feel, and to think differently; and thus to dance, to choose, to become irresponsible, and imperceptible.

This requires a new perspective, an archipelago-perspectivism that conjugates the panoramic shot and the tracking shot [...]. It requires an acute [non]perception, both visual and auditory, [...], and must replace the concept with the "percept", that is, with a perception in becoming. It requires a new community whose members are capable of trust or "confidence", that is, of a belief in themselves, in the world, and in becoming.⁸⁷⁰

⁸⁶⁷ I refer here to Rancier's concept of the distribution of the sensible, where the sense of 'beauty' present in the aesthetics of certain (pensive) images is a question of the political in art. Stephen Zepke has compared the concepts of aesthetics embraced by Deleuze, Lyotard and Ranciere. "Beauty as a reflective judgment of taste," he writes, "is political for Ranciere because it is a singular sensible experience that creates a new, universal partition of the sensible, or *sensus communis*." Thus understood, beauty for Ranciere, is also the promise of a new equality beyond the current conditions of domination and disparity. In this sense, art's beauty is an eruption of equality in the realm of the sensible; it is a new sensual 'common', and promises the freedom of a new and undetermined community. Zepke, 'Contemporary Art – Beautiful or Sublime? Kant in Ranciere, Lyotard and Deleuze'.

⁸⁶⁸ As Zepke points out, for Deleuze (as for Lyotard), the emergence of the sensation (from the 'sublime' experience) is beyond human comprehension. It is an inhuman emergence of an Idea (a super-sensible but immanent), expressed by asubjective individuation; a sensation-event expressed or actualized in a work of art. The 'people to come' announced by art is never, for Deleuze, a *sensus communis*, it is the actualisation of a virtual difference by which the human being becomes (something else). Zepke, *Ibid*.

⁸⁶⁹ Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy*, p. 173.

⁸⁷⁰ Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, pp. 87-88.

Through tragic aesthetics (brought back/ and forth – through Deleuze – to sensation, outside representation, but also outside phenomenology) affect and thought is possible beyond words. Physicality/ materiality exists within immanence of the outside, beyond the division of subject and object, inside and outside. Aesthetics are the 'figure' of a gap, of an immense wait, the photographic (real) becoming itself. In the rhythm in between images, the nothing that happens suspends movement and stillness, and the nothing that matters still-moving enfolds the ethics of "a life." Instead of the Kantian aesthetics of either the sublime or beautiful, which remains within our capacity to judge and to synthesise, Deleuze connects sensation with experimentation. As such, aesthetics would be the "space of intensity" and an "unjoined time" of experimenting/ creating and thinking; an untimely "form of intuition" that extracts sensation (percepts and affects) from representation. It allows for the matter of art to stand alone, and to resist human recognition and animation.⁸⁷¹ Thus, "the work of art leaves the domain of representation to become 'experience' (or 'experiment'), transcendental empiricism or science of the sensible."⁸⁷²

For Deleuze, this is the intertwining machinic co-creation of mind and body, subject and object, sense and language, world and image, as affect actualised in the matter of poetic 'language' beyond words which, through cinema, is capable of reconnecting us to the world 'as it is'.⁸⁷³ Poetic language, as the language of art and cinema, a language of thought as creative process – an affective thinking with life – connects through a conceptual-affective persona born out of life's chaosmic matter outside meaning and representation which always ties it to a human subject. It is the language of *Amor fati*; "an undecided faith" beyond life understood as self-preserving organism, which takes us from our (human) minds and bodies into a realm of metamorphosis, into a shape/ mould of the unknown (sensible) body, starting to think the unthinkable. This aesthetic experimentation takes the figure of imagining and imaging the world "that consists of Visions and Auditions that no longer belong to any language." These

⁸⁷¹ Colebrook, 'Beauty as the Promise of Happiness', p. 130.

⁸⁷² Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 79.

⁸⁷³ The language of cinema is fundamentally a "language of poetry." Pasolini, 'The Cinema of Poetry', p. 552. For Kristeva, dialogic rather than dialectic, the "poetic discourse measures rhythm against meaning of language structure as is thus always eluded by meaning in the present while continually postponing it to an impossible time to come." In poetic language the subject becomes fragmentary, fleeting and affective, in becoming rather than autonomous and 'fixed'. The rupture here is the modality of transformation. Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, Blackwell, (Oxford 1980), p. 33.

visions are not fantasies, but veritable Ideas that the artist sees and hears in the intensities [...], in intervals.⁸⁷⁴ The aesthetics – not of judgment but of affect-thought – allows the (photographic/ cinematic) image to exist on its own as image-world (rather than of the world), and image-thought (rather than of thought). Such experimentalist aesthetics, against the "debilitating effects of clichés" and against transcendence of "aesthetic pieties", might release the potentialities of a life and restore belief in this world.⁸⁷⁵

What thinking?

To believe, not in a different world, but in a link between man and the world, in love or life, to believe this as in the impossible, the unthinkable, which none the less cannot but be thought: "something possible, otherwise I will suffocate." It is this belief that makes the unthought the specific power of thought, through the absurd, by virtue of the absurd. Artaud never understood powerlessness to think as a simple interiority which would strike us in relation to thought. It is part of thought, so that we should make our way of thinking from it, without claiming to be restoring an all-powerful thought. We should rather make use of this powerlessness to believe in life, and to discover the identity of thought and life.⁸⁷⁶

As it is not 'I' who is thinking,

What is required in order to think is not knowledge of the cogito or the transcendence of received ideas, but an orphaned intuition; a mode of unmediated access to the forces of a life, a certain aptitude of letting go and openness to the outside.⁸⁷⁷ The 'stupid' emptiness of an ungodly belief, or a "bastard logic", assembling undetermined/ unforeseeable moments that open up onto new moments, carrying

⁸⁷⁴ Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 5.

⁸⁷⁵ The art as "higher health" (Nietzsche) is not something defined by some higher realm or transcendence of the other worlds (in form of idealisation or sublimation), but of the vitality and mobility 'revealing' a coexistence of different possible worlds. Rajchman, *The Deleuze Connections*, pp. 138-139.

⁸⁷⁶ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 164.

⁸⁷⁷ This refers to the Bergsonian idea of intuition and 'contemplation', where both recognition and perception must give way to the 'experience' of duration as a whole.

multiple ways of being, *ad infinitum*. One step for life and one step for thought.⁸⁷⁸ Cinema with its own 'cinematic logic' (machinic consciousness) can free us from what Deleuze calls "the representative image of thought"; the metaphysical, metaphoric and dialectical forms of thinking, towards opening up problems, and thus creating new concepts. As it unfolds, branches out and mutates, the image-thought carries the problems along with it, inspiring a need to create new concepts, not through external determinism but through a becoming.⁸⁷⁹ For thought to occur we need to 'be' in/with life-passively, being in or, even better, *for* this world. Experimental thinking is possible only when it dissipates the illusion of transcendence, when it frees itself from the "dogmatic image."⁸⁸⁰ Creating new concepts/ thinking happens to us as a result of encounters with the unknown and the un-thought Outside.

The images come to us, or in us. We do not arrange them in a pre-conceived, symbolic communicative way. The 'I' feel of sensation, when the subject is in the midst of things, interfused with them, injected,⁸⁸¹ where a 'contemplating' mind merges with an *intense* body, imagines new worlds. When recollection seizes it, the "internal vision warehoused in memory," becomes "vision in thought."⁸⁸² When thinking happens to us, it is a thought-event.

To think differently is to allow oneself to become affected, to open the senses to the unknown outside, to create 'passively' – that is, to act instead of reacting.⁸⁸³ Here thought is open to other than itself: to affect, intuition and belief. As the cinema affects the visible in such a way that contradicts all natural perception, Deleuze notes, it produces "the genesis of an unknown body."⁸⁸⁴

Creating new modes of existence is not a question of resisting the present by going back to what we know (history), but by leaping into the future by "scrambling the planes, of going beyond [one's] own plane and [one's] own

⁸⁷⁸ Deleuze, *Pure Immanence*, p. 66.

⁸⁷⁹ Deleuze, *Negotiations*, p. 149, as quoted by Amy Herzog in 'Images of Thought and Acts of Creation: Deleuze, Bergson, and the Question of Cinema', *Invisible Culture: An Electronic Journal for Visual Studies*, http://www.rochester.edu/in_visible_culture/issue3/herzog.htm#22

⁸⁸⁰ Rajchman, *The Deleuze Connections*, p. 35.

⁸⁸¹ Bogue, *Deleuze on Music, Painting and the Arts*, p. 179.

⁸⁸² Kriteva, as quoted in McCormack, 'Julia Kristeva', 278.

⁸⁸³ Nietzsche's conception of acting as different from reacting. Bergsonian intuition

⁸⁸⁴ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 194

condition, in order to finally express naturing Nature" – that is, to finally understand the meaning of "creation."⁸⁸⁵

As when light that touches the surfaces indecisively sliding along met on the way objects' folds and creases, and the shadows embracing fragile moments of uncertain encounters merge in the curious still instant, unfolding blurry thinking. While the camera suspends the world, its movement erases the distance between object and subject, leaving the difference itself shivering in-between.

'Opium [...] thought gathers unique differences into a point, eliminates the background and deprives immobility of its task of contemplating and soliciting stupidity through its mime. Opium ensures a weightless immobility, the stupor of a butterfly that differs from catatonic rigidity; and, far beneath, it establishes a ground that no longer stupidly absorbs all differences but allows them to arise and sparkle as so many minute, distanced, smiling, and eternal events'.⁸⁸⁶

For perhaps that is the secret – to practise aesthetics as an affirmative play of conceptual experimentation and novelty, and not as tribunal and judgment.⁸⁸⁷

What Tarr's films think is a life where the belief in this world is the choice of an aesthetical tragic becoming, and an attitude of "passive vitalism" as ethics of radical immanence.

... the new way of thinking means an affirmative thought, a thought which affirms life and the will to life, a thought which finally expels the whole of the negative; to believe in the innocence of the future and the past, to believe in the eternal return.⁸⁸⁸

Cinema is a living brain, which works by "irrational connections." It thinks in-between images in a kind of irrational lacunar zone, without before or after. Tarr's

⁸⁸⁵ Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, p. 107.

⁸⁸⁶ Foucault, 'TheatrumPhilosophicum'.

⁸⁸⁷ Rajchman, *The Deleuze Connections*, p. 119.

⁸⁸⁸ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 35.

films think within shots as description – *a free indirect discourse* of the steppe,⁸⁸⁹ and in-between as non-relation.

What carries life and art in the aesthetic-tragic figure of thought as difference, is the conceptual/ cinematic persona incarnated in the character. The characters affected through singular encounters, embody a mode of powerless politics (passive vitalism), where the virtual force of difference refrains from realisation, and thinking from falling back onto original 'models'. They point to life and carry belief in their exhausted bodies. The player-artist-child, thinking in between the affective and conceptual aesthetically.

Most of Tarr's characters are played not by professional actors, but by artists, film directors, cinematographers, composers, set-designers, writers, painters; all with distinctive faces and features. As a critic observed, they seem to be matched by the scenery, weather and time, creating the necessary tension with their faces, voices and movements.⁸⁹⁰ In addition to the non-professional 'status' of the 'actors' – who, similarly to Bresson's 'models', 'live the situation' rather than act – they are 'trapped' within the situation, creating it at the same time from what is available – the space and their own 'personalities'. "You can see in their eyes how they are in. They cannot escape from the situation," Tarr comments in an interview.⁸⁹¹ Performing 'themselves', they become with the 'situation', as if the 'situation' has somehow created itself around them. They are seeing and hearing, intuiting not so much the world, but 'a life'; constructing a model for the "passive vitalism."⁸⁹² Enduring 'what is', they resist stagnation. There is neither eagerness nor resistance in the way characters bodies give themselves to the 'action'. János in his kitchen preparing the meal, or in the streets delivering newspapers, does not imply, analyse, or suggest anything 'according' to the

⁸⁸⁹ Zourabichvili connects a free indirect discourse to a living landscape – "the discourse of the steppe", as creating and becoming, "neither an anthropomorphism nor a projection, but the material landscape of the inner life producing itself." See Francois Zourabichvili, 'Six Notes on the Percept', in *Deleuze: A Critical Reader*, p. 196-7.

⁸⁹⁰ Peter Hames, 'The Melancholy of Resistance'.

Of course, the use of non-professional 'actors' is not a new technique; it has become a (filmic device quite common and utilised by many directors. What is new in Tarr's 'creations' is that he works with practically the same people, most of whom he knows personally. His choice of the character is also motivated by a certain unique singularity of the way they look.

⁸⁹¹ *Falling Down, Walking, Destroying, Thinking: A Conversation Between Jonathan Rosenbaum and Béla Tarr*, Cinémascope, Issue 8, September 2001, p. 23.

⁸⁹² Passive vitalism can be understood as a philosophical concept (Colebrook), and as a mode of existence (choosing to choose).

character's psychology, or even to the demands of external circumstances. In a kind of absently present, yet precise manner, he attends to his chores in the same way the doctor (*Sátántangó*) staggers from his chair, 'bounded' by the heaviness of the drunken body; or the couple in *Damnation* who are engaged in, as if resigned to, a ritual of passionless lovemaking. Rather than existing in the world, they somehow co-exist with it, being pulled by momentary encounters rather than by their own, or others', pre-determined motivations or goals; encounters in the process of actualisation that stretch over time but result in no outcome. The encounter between the doctor and Estike at night, or the hospital massacre, have no consequence in the overall 'picture', in the same way as the dance sequences or the close up of the beer glasses at the bar. On the other hand, each person has very strong, singular features; an extraordinary face, each distinct and unforgettable. Estike, János, Irimiás and Petrina, the doctor ... memorable 'faces', 'imperceptible' expressions 'flickering' in the pores of the skin and in the absent looks, where other potentials (to become) seem to be folded. For Deleuze, this would be the way children are before they 'acquire' personalities; all distinctive by the way they smile, tie their shoelaces, look out of the window ... little idiosyncrasies, or "singular essences" in Spinoza's terms. It would also resonate with the clandestine aspect of nomadic cinema, the 'consciousness' that there were no people, but always several people, an infinity of people, who remain to be unified, or should not be united, in order for the situation to change.⁸⁹³ Several or multiple, not molar but molecular, the bodies that 'people' Tarr's films are never one or many, but any-one-whomever. Everybodies and anybodies, these characters 'form' (un)natural connections with walls, animals, the rain, each other; creating other bodies, multiplying in a variety of not necessarily human becomings. Again, Tarr took his inspiration from Bruegel, the 'master' of inhumanly human diversity.⁸⁹⁴ Distinct faces carrying expressionless expressions; the intense looks and absent emotion inscribed in the characters' expressions are, for András Bálint Kovács, a history condensed in human faces.⁸⁹⁵ As Yvette Biró suggested, the uniqueness, the individual features of the profiles of different ages, and the varied social and ethnic characteristics, mingle with the sense of an unerring similarity, defining their bearing

⁸⁹³ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 132.

⁸⁹⁴ Tarr speaks about Bruegel's influence on his imagery in his interview with Phil Ballard, 'In Search of Truth: Béla Tarr Interviewed', [www://kinoeye.org/04/02ballard02.php](http://www.kinoeye.org/04/02ballard02.php)

⁸⁹⁵ András Bálint Kovács, 'Sátántangó', in Peter Hames (ed), *The Cinema of Central Europe* (Wallflower, London 2004), p. 242.

that has brought them together.⁸⁹⁶ This is the 'history' of time out of joint however, without the timelines and without 'identities'. Memorable faces, 'never a mass of unprivileged people'⁸⁹⁷, are no longer the faces of the affection-image but the surface of the any-space-whatever which is also a singular texture of the face in becoming other, in becoming each/any other. This self, according to Deleuze, will live "its own life" – a never complete image, a fable and a myth – "always taken up once more, reassembled, ceaselessly expanding on the way."⁸⁹⁸ The close-up of a face is no longer a question of alienation but a deterritorialising (de-subjectifying, dehumanising) force of the face in the image-world, filled with affecting and affective bodies.⁸⁹⁹ Even the 'real' emotions visible in their eyes are already folded in the subjectless affect, echoing the pensive camerawork, and the inhuman vision-eye.⁹⁰⁰ In *Damnation's* scene, already mentioned in the first chapter, Tarr pans across a blank exterior wall, every so often interrupted by an open door. Inside, crowds of people, their hard faces as expressionless as the wall, stare disinterestedly out at the pouring rain. For some time, the alternating line of people and walls, accompanied by the haunting melody of an accordion, fills the screen. A group of people, but isolated, not forming a whole; as if arranged "on a plane of composition" by an undecided fate. Figure and space interchange as surface, both familiar and unrecognisable at the same time; heimlich and unheimlich, haunted by the Outside in a passage from seeing to enduring the seen. There is no figure(s) and background. One melting into the other, becoming wall, becoming face, becoming landscape. Becoming surface. In the faces-

⁸⁹⁶ Yvette Biró, 'Confined Space'.

⁸⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁸ Gilles Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, as quoted in Zourabichvili, 'Six Notes on the Percept', p. 199.

⁸⁹⁹ As Lisa Akervall observes, Béla Balázs first recognised the deterritorialising force of the face in his writing on the specificity of the human face in cinema. Deleuze goes further, however. Whereas Balázs insists on the possibility of reading the micropsychology within the microphysiomy of the human face, Deleuze's aim is to leave this notion of interiority aside and describe the close-up; the face as essentially de-subjectivising and de-humanising. Whereas Balázs is still overwhelmed by cinema, which for him is the new language of humanity, and of which the close-up of the human face is a basic element, Deleuze strips the face of all its humanity by foregrounding its haunting and uncanny character, putting it even closer to the cinema of the Time-Image. See Lisa Åkervall, 'Cinema, Affect and Vision'.

⁹⁰⁰ "You can get real emotions - anger, joy - from their eyes," Tarr has commented in an interview. 'An Interview With Béla Tarr: Why He Says 'The Turin Horse' Is His Final Film' <http://www.indiewire.com/article/bela-tarr-explains-why-the-turin-horse-is-his-final-film>.

The 'emotion' here is neither psychological, nor concerned with showing the character's character.. It is, as Rajchman commented, a figure freed at once from psychological memory and linear causality, that is, from consciousness. Thus, what holds us or moves is the 'demand' of multiplicities, which is very different from the conscious decisions based on identifications. Rajchman, *The Deleuze Connections*, p. 84.

walls, independent, alienated, subjected to the slow, penetrating 'scans' of the camera, madness and helplessness show the real. The problem posed by those "anybodies", as Rajchman writes, "who can no longer be "qualified" either as individuals or as members of organic wholes" is that of a manner of being that would allow for a "community" of "singular essences" no longer subordinated to the "representation" or "imitation" of anything.⁹⁰¹ Pure potentialities are folded within the any-space-whatever. The departicularisation of 'any-' creates a sense of abstracted forms rather than 'reality' as it is being filmed, but also a sense of universal – any-place, any-one, not in some universalising norms or laws, but as immanent multiplicity in the potential for creating new modes of existence. This possible world, as Deleuze reminds us, 'is not real or not yet but it exists nonetheless: it is an expressed that exists only in expression – the face or the equivalent of the face.'⁹⁰²

Faces and landscapes, not personalities but singularities, every face with unique features, so unique that it paradoxically calls up (by way of their being unaccustomed to 'uniqueness', if not 'estranged ordinairiness') the senseless uniformity of the 'face' obsessed world.

The spaces, 'punctuated' by the blank, expressionless faces, become landscapes themselves; each singular and unforgettable. Not psychological portraits but singular bodies amongst many other bodies. They live with the space hesitantly, uncertainly and yet persistently; their 'actions' neither cultural nor natural, dispersed in a plurality of belonging to sets, "all incompatible and yet coexistent."⁹⁰³ In *Werckmeister Harmonies*, the slow, elaborate, and beautiful 360-degree camera movement reveals, one by one, the faces in the square, illuminated by diffused light. *Sátántangó's* pub dance scene could be a variation on Bruegel's *Peasant Wedding* (1567) and *The Peasant Dance* (1568). Individual 'personalities' with different faces and different looks are not just part of the crowd, although endowed with a strange sense of some primordial types.⁹⁰⁴ To André Bazin, this would be "a documentary of faces" where, in the "drama-through-the-microscope the whole of nature palpitates beneath every pore. The movement of a wrinkle, the pursing of a lip are seismic shocks and the flow

⁹⁰¹ Rajchman, *Connections*, p. 94.

⁹⁰² Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 17.

⁹⁰³ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 196

⁹⁰⁴ Ballard, 'In Search of Truth. Béla Tarr Interviewed'.

of tides, the flux and reflux of this [cosmic] epidermis."⁹⁰⁵ On the other hand, the expressionless and inscrutable, almost numb exhausted figures, 'resemble' Beckettian characters, moving by the force of machinic assemblage. The face and the eye are no longer organs that constitute an observing, rational human body. The face, Deleuze asserts, is not a 'screen' for a person's character. Rather, it is a mask, underneath which there is another mask, and yet another; on and on, into infinity. Faces detached from their proper functions become spaces; bodies deprived of vitality are also a cinematic process of constitution of bodies, not that of presence but belief.⁹⁰⁶ For Tarr, it is another instance of getting closer to life than to cinema. This is the moment when the particular and the universal are indistinguishable, lost in the shimmer of light as it flees from interpretation and from knowing.

Tarr is not interested in the psychology of the characters but their relation to the space or situation that reveals their specific modes of eating, walking, or living. Apart from allowing the time to create its rhythms within the towns' lives, this is also a return to cinema without story; to the potentiality of the (visual – moving and still) image outside of narrative and, as such, to restoring the link to this world as it is. The slow, quotidian, day-to-day chores 'recorded' on black-and-white celluloid film, reminiscent of the first cinema experiences, far from appearing as just 'filmed reality', are stripped to almost abstracted forms. As such, rather than phenomenological presence, they offer the experience/ sense of material virtuality of what is not yet (a belief). It is the way of the Beckettian characters, whose existence lies in the ability to 'simply' carry on, and the intensely 'inhuman' choreography of the shots within shots, which texture the 'absurdities' of life, that take imaging away from both psychological and humanist/ subjective position/ perception. Tarr's characters are any-beings models/ automatons/ mediums, and more (or less) than 'just' human beings.⁹⁰⁷ This any-being is a forger and overman at the same time. Not motivated by a pre-existing set of rules or goals, they are resigned and open to the 'plodding', aimless movement of the stroll. The

⁹⁰⁵ Bazin, *What is Cinema? Vol. 1*, p. 110.

⁹⁰⁶ The bodies, 'colonised' by the master's molar discourse need to be rediscovered again on the molecular level. In *Cinema 2*, Deleuze writes: "The camera must invent the movements or positions which correspond to the genesis of bodies, and which are formal linkages of their primordial postures." Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 194.

⁹⁰⁷ Tarr seems unconcerned with characterisation. One character remains as much of an enigma as any other; most of whom go either unnamed or introduced so casually and obtusely that they might as well not have names. Howard, *Damnation*.

'plodding along' might be the nonsensical gesture pointing toward the unknown and unforeseeable force of life – thinking folded into the movement of the camera, and the stillness of in-between. The nameless and the nomad – extra-beings in the theatre of (real)phantasms⁹⁰⁸ – these characters prepare the way for the 'people to come'. They have the tendency, at once modest but also crazy, to 'become' everyone and everything, Deleuze writes: "an unattributable, mobile subject", who is "able to connect roles or possible lives without lapsing into identification."⁹⁰⁹ It is the schizophrenic, who lives the unliveable on the edge of total disintegration.

The cinema of the time-image, populated not by characters as such but by actor-mediums, who cannot act but are forced to witness 'passively' the unbearable and the beautiful, is a cinema of the seer, no longer an agent.⁹¹⁰ Film thinks while the characters are seeing. A gentle postman, Valuska wanders through the streets at night, gazing at the world, whether staring into the inscrutable eye of the whale, or as a mute witness to violence.⁹¹¹ Karrer, the decadent hero of *Damnation*, circles the town in the hope of catching a glimpse of his lover and peeks from behind the various buildings and walls, which reveals the debris-ridden courtyards, crumbling apartment blocks, desolated landscapes, and rain-drenched walls of the destitute town. The doctor spends his time at his desk looking out of the window at the passing world around him, writing copiously into small school notebooks, each devoted to a particular inhabitant of the farm. Like Tarr's long takes, he watches the world from afar, preferring to describe each minute detail rather than comment on or attempt to change its outcome.

Schmidt ... comes out through ... the back door and stands ... on top of ... the path to ... the sodic meadow. Futaki ... carefully ... slips out of ... the house ... crosses to the stables ... and hides ... by the wall. F. doesn't move ... He waits ... for a moment, then ... he too ... dashes ... to the door, knocks, and

⁹⁰⁸ "Phantasms do not extend organisms into the imaginary; they topologize the materiality of the body. They should consequently be freed from the restrictions we impose on them, freed from the dilemmas of truth and falsehood and of being and nonbeing [...]; they must be allowed to conduct their dance, to act out their mime, as "extrabeings"." Foucault, *Theatrum Philosophicum*.

⁹⁰⁹ Zourabichvili, 'Six Notes on the Percept', p. 203.

⁹¹⁰ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 2.

⁹¹¹ Romney, 'Outside the Whale'.

... comes quickly ... after Schmidt. What a ... hustle ... It has started ... to rain ... It won't ... stop ... till ... spring. (*Sátántangó*)

Estike sits outside the house/ barn staring nowhere. Tarr says he finally decided to make *Werckmeister Harmonies* when he met Lars Rudolph, "whose haggard stare as Valuska certainly embodies the look of the film."⁹¹² Even the cardboard whale's eye seems somehow to 'embody' the satirical edge of the space between creation and destruction.

"Tell me what you see. People are chattering about some Prince."

"Certainly not, Mr. Árgyleán. A giant whale has arrived. This mysterious creature from the sea has come from the far-off oceans. Most definitely you have to see it too."

"I don't like it at all, János."

"Nothing wrong with it, Mr. Árgyleán. Just see what a gigantic animal ... the Lord can create! How mysterious is the Lord that he amuses Himself with such strange creatures."

"It will lead to trouble, János." (*Sátántangó*)

The characters know how to see; often what they see 'is' in their eyes. Here the judging, rational eye relinquishes its perceptive power and becomes "the membrane of the external world", not an autonomous gaze directed towards it.⁹¹³ When Estike walks with the body of the dead cat under her arm, advancing persistently/ relentlessly towards the camera, which is moving in the opposite direction, her inscrutable look lingering somehow on the silent contour of her lips, it seems even more 'unreadable'. Her sober expression is interrupted now and then by a grimace, as if in an effort to stop laughing, to keep a straight face. How do we 'take' these looks, not possible to 'interpret' with the aid of film theory?⁹¹⁴ What visions do the films 'think' with the characters? The characters are 'seers', not only because they point to tragic aesthetic, but "because they know how to extract from the event the part that cannot be reduced to what happens: that part of inexhaustible possibility that constitutes the unbearable,

⁹¹² Romney, 'End of the Road: The Films of Béla Tarr'.

⁹¹³ Zourabichvili, 'Six Notes on the Percept', p. 197.

⁹¹⁴ Neither spectatorship theory nor the psychoanalytic theory of the gaze.

the intolerable, the visionary's part."⁹¹⁵ The camera, often positioned behind, is always moving among the characters but does not identify with any of them: their 'identities' are instead substituted with the director's aesthetic vision. In this way, the character losing his/ her identity enters into a 'free indirect' relationship with the poetic vision of the director, who affirms himself through him/ her while at the same time distinguishing himself from him/ her, allowing for objective and subjective to become 'one'.⁹¹⁶ *A free-indirect vision.*⁹¹⁷ Moreover, we do not see what the character – in the way an individual or personality would – sees. We are caught in-between the human eye and the non-human camera presented in the circularity of unfolding space-time sequences, in the new "Erewhon" – the "nowhere" and "now here."⁹¹⁸ Here the memory of film and memory of the viewer intertwine with the unknown Outside, allowing one to catch a glimpse of new worlds, new becomings, "at the edge of an abyss."⁹¹⁹

Tarr's characters are visionaries but it is a labyrinthine 'view', neither or both subjective or/ and objective, where the film, the director, the viewer, and the outside, coincide and interact. This is the view without a point of view of perception, the view which (multiple, fragmented, schizophrenic) is the 'machinic' coming together of the human and inhuman eye. No longer either the status of a perceiving organ, nor a framing apparatus, it relishes seeing from its Euclidian geometry into the space of creating, and the metamorphosis of unlikely couplings and 'intuited' connections. Likewise, free from the Oedipal gaze of the Other, Tarr's vision, like that of his characters, is outside of any revelation; it persists and resists as affective expression of material intensity, crippling the brain's habitual capacity into non-thinking. Neither the empyrean of the blue skies, nor the netherworld of the underground's depth, it

⁹¹⁵ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 19.

⁹¹⁶ Deleuze talks about the possibility of "knowing subjectivism" (Fellini) or "critical objectivism" (Antonioni) in the cinema of time-image, in *Cinema 2*, p. 6.

⁹¹⁷ "[T]here is no longer the unity of the author, the characters and the world.... There is formation of the 'free indirect discourse', of a free indirect vision, which goes from one to the other, so that either the author expresses himself through the intercession of an autonomous, independent character other than the author or any role fixed by the author, or the character acts and speaks himself as if his own gestures and his own words were already reported by a third party", *What is Philosophy?*, p. 64-65.

⁹¹⁸ The absence of the shot-reverse shot, and 'exhaustion' through excess in the sequence: nothing takes time. "Erewhon" is the anagram created by Samuel Butler, and adopted by Deleuze to move away from transcendence or allegory in using the term 'utopian' (other possibilities of life) in the context of immanence. See John Rajchman, *The Deleuze Connections*, p. 28.

⁹¹⁹ Zourabichvili, 'Six Notes on the Percept', p. 199.

glides over the surface, bringing forth the violated truth – the power of the false, and the force of life. It is a point of view constantly being transformed, metamorphosed into the 'creation of truth' (creation of the new), a constant production of '*shapes*, reliefs and projections' – an art.⁹²⁰ An image-world that, like the world itself, is "just this multiplicity of viewpoints, each of which is a truth of a whole that is nothing other than this expressive multiplicity."⁹²¹

This 'new race of characters', seeing rather than acting, are compelled to witness the world, yet are entirely unsure of what they witness, lost in the grip of some 'uncertainty principle'. These characters do not 'change' anything, do not forward the narrative; they 'flow' with time, registering, seeing, recording. The creatures of the 'to-ing and fro-ing' movement of the plastic fabulation are unconcerned even by what happens to them.⁹²² Subjects-in-becoming, their normative individualities suspended in the process of individuation, and caught in-between form and content in the state of not-yet 'queer' subjectivity, are the figures of an aesthetic indecisiveness of becoming.

[...] angels or saintly hypochondriacs, almost stupid, creatures of innocence and purity, stricken with a constitutive weakness but also with a strange beauty. Petrified by nature, they prefer ... no will at all [...]. They only survive by becoming stone, by denying the will and sanctifying themselves in this suspension.⁹²³

The character without name or identity, a child, a poet and a forger, an orphan, an idiot and philosopher, they intimate this world beyond perception, beyond words, and beyond action. A spiritual automaton and cinematic persona folded into the 'shape' of nomadic subjectivity.⁹²⁴ No longer a character but a figure-image, seeing the non-perceptible and thinking the un-thinkable.

⁹²⁰ "There is no other truth than the creation of the New: creativity, emergence, what Melville called a 'shape' in contrast to 'form'." "The artist is the creator of truth, because truth is not to be achieved, formed or reproduced; it has to be created." Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 142.

⁹²¹ Claire Colebrook, 'Queer Vitalism', p. 79.

⁹²² Plastic hints towards the concept of plasticity (or the malleable plastic subject) coined by Catherine Malabou, which is however separated from the Hegelian foundation. See Noëlle Vahanian, A Conversation with Catherine Malabou, <http://www.jcrt.org/archives/09.1/Malabou.pdf>.

⁹²³ Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 80.

⁹²⁴ Nomadic subjectivity as radical immanence. "This practice has to do with the ultimate phase of the process of becoming, namely the becoming imperceptible." Braidotti, *Transformations*, p. 258.

This kind of character-figure, that might be referred to as a holy fool, who, like the Dostoyevskian "madman", is paralysed and stupefied by the situation or the problem beyond logic of comprehension, would also be a genuine thinker. According to Deleuze, it is the Russian idiot, the "underground man who possesses the necessary modesty" not to manage to know what everybody knows, who is able to venture to the non-thinking. A new, post-Cartesian 'idiot', or an 'ethical' figure "driven to uncertainty", 'outside' of the pre-existing norms of perceptual and cognitive laws. It is also Nietzsche's player, giving him/herself to the undecided fate by radical dismissal of any other but chance-necessity's 'order'; an overman saying yes to life outside ressentiment and bad conscience.⁹²⁵ Impressionable, slow-witted János, the innocent, mentally handicapped Estike, a 'non-sobering' sardonic doctor, or the cloakroom attendant in *Damnation*, musing on the universal order of things, are all figures (of the speech-act) driven by uncertainty, on the verge of absurdity. Their words and their actions escape the structure of language, carrying on instead tragic thinking, in-between the words. Disappearing into the silent vision of the poetic assemblage of "ands", they merge a "supreme passivity with pure act of becoming-active" – thinking.⁹²⁶ As if by no will of their own, they attract the forces of the unknown which pass through them leaving them somewhat perplexed and even paralysed, like the figure of János remaining frozen on the hospital bed at the end of *Werckmeister Harmonies*, or the doctor's withdrawal after discovering the ludicrous source of the distant bells. And yet, paradoxically, it is through their exhausted, battered, and dishevelled bodies that these 'powerless' figures recover belief in the world – "something or I suffocate" – the will to create and to think differently ("in other ways"), or otherwise.⁹²⁷ It is here that art meets philosophy.

"The old idiot wanted truth, but the new idiot wants to turn the absurd into the highest power of thought – in other words, to create."⁹²⁸

⁹²⁵ For Nietzsche, ressentiment, together with bad conscience and the aesthetic ideal, are the constituents of eschatological ethics.

⁹²⁶ The thinking for Deleuze takes a form of ands (and... and... and...) which brakes with the identity and definitions of 'Is'. It is, as Rajchman pointed out, a constructivist logic of unfinished series. Rajchman, 'Introduction', in Deleuze, *Pure Immanence*, p. 11.

⁹²⁷ Thinking otherwise (like resistance) is not used here in the sense of the oppositionistic logic of replacing one thing with another (new or better).

⁹²⁸ Deleuze quoted in, Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes*, p.2001.

Thus, the idiots, drunkards, slow-witted, unable to react, nameless and almost genderless characters, by exhausting every possibility of action, 'go on' carrying the unknown 'yet to come' in their bodies and their looks inexhaustibly. Giving up the presumptions of common sense they turn their "idiocies" into "idiosyncrasies."⁹²⁹ Experimenting freely with life not already given, they forge "conceptual relations."⁹³⁰ They become the bearers of the free-indirect vision, silent messengers of life owned by no one and 'answerable' to nothing other than the *art of living*. This is not to say that children, drunkards or madmen are naïvely innocent or that they may be fitted with some super-human powers, but that a certain kind of powerlessness is needed in order to resist the reactionary, normative forces of bad conscience. It is not to promote degeneration or dismiss the importance of critical thinking, but to find a new sense of power and thinking, which might be, in the Bergsonian sense, a genuine creation, or a (non-organic) vital power of "a life" that accepts life's open character.⁹³¹ In Spinozan terms, this would be an immanence of other powers in the composition of ourselves beyond any "politico-theology."⁹³² Here desire and affect would be the driving (aesthetic) force or becoming-other, and immanent ethics – the real of "polyvocal conjunctions" would prevent the 'self' from assimilation to any great divine or phallic Other/ order.⁹³³

Giorgio Agamben refers to a particular 'type' of character he calls an "assistant" (after Kafka) or "helper." The assistants have no knowledge, no skills, and no "equipment" to offer help, but their smiles, looks, and very postures "seem[s] like a message."⁹³⁴ Their 'existence' lies in "an inconclusive gesture, an unforeseen grace, a certain mathematical boldness in judgment and taste." They prefer to take walks. Seemingly 'useless', these 'assistants' are endowed with a 'penetrating vision', which "recognizes

⁹²⁹ Rajchman, *The Deleuze Connections*, p.38.

⁹³⁰ Ibid., p.20. As 'seeing' personas, they are composed of the disjunctive synthesis of impossible point of view. Zourabichvili, 'Six Notes on the Percept', p. 203.

⁹³¹ As Ansel Pearson pointed out, referring to Bergson's philosophy of life, there can be no overarching category or notion that would allow thought to impose a teleology or history; be it Spirit or Reason. As Deleuze noted: "The living is essentially a being that has problems and resolves them at each instant." Keith Ansell Pearson, *Beyond the Human Condition: An Introduction to Deleuze's Lecture Course*, p. 4. <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/philosophy/people/faculty/pearson/pearson.pdf>.

⁹³² Rajchman, *The Deleuze Connections*, p. 28.

⁹³³ Zourabichvili, 'Six Notes on the Percept', p. 198.

⁹³⁴ Giorgio Agamben, *Profanations*, p. 29.

the men of the invisible realm."⁹³⁵ They 'help' to forget. As what is lost demands not to be remembered and fulfilled but to remain forgotten or "lost and therefore, for that reason alone, unforgettable."The assistant spells out the text of the unforgettable and translates it into the language of deaf-mutes. Their "gesticulations", coupled with the "impassive mime's face", make strange connections which require no knowledge or certainty but, rather, trust that something may come out. The characters of Béla Tarr's films seem like the perfect assistants. Anonymous and non-intending, serving no-one, 'busy' preparing the world to come.

In their motor-helplessness, their 'naïve' innocence, these character-figures are thus capable of 'truly' genuine thinking. Genuine thinking, which for Deleuze means philosophy, is necessarily antagonistic towards the combination of good sense and common sense. Genuine thinking does not attempt to represent or describe, but to make things happen by creating concepts. The simple János is in fact an articulate philosopher with a sense of poetry:⁹³⁶ "And now ... We will have an explanation that simple folks like us can also understand about mortality. All I ask is that you step with me into the boundlessness where constancy, quietude, peace, and infinite emptiness reign ..."⁹³⁷ His 'wonder-full' creative attempt to re-construct the perfect order of the universe with the 'bodies' of local drunks, folded into the elaborate choreography of camera and actors, brings out a strange sense of enchantment in the "evocation of the drunkenness of the universe", the eclipse and re-establishment of 'natural order',⁹³⁸ in what it is to create with chance, improvisation, and unpredictability. "Can you feel it?" János asks the companions-planets as the beginning of the eclipse is evoked. The drunken bodies, as Ian Johnson observed, hardly in tune with János' vision, and the 'symbolic climax' undercut by the owner's sardonic order to leave the pub is off-set by the strange music filling the event, and which continues following Valuska disappearing into the night. "Deep emotion pierces everyone. They've escaped the deep weight of darkness."⁹³⁹ The way Valuska carries the moment, is it deconstruction? Construction? A moment-expression coming forth in a struggle enfolded in the peculiar velocity of bodies. At the end, the "boundlessness of the

⁹³⁵ Ibid., p. 33.

⁹³⁶ Interview with Béla Tarr

⁹³⁷ *Werckmeister Harmonies* (2000).

⁹³⁸ Ian Johnson, 'Seeking Order in Disorder: Béla Tarr's *Werckmeister Harmonies*', in *Unspoken*.

⁹³⁹ *Werckmeister Harmonies* (2000).

infinite emptiness" becomes the space of creation, a fullness of potentiality. Oscillating on the verge of order and disorder, beauty and ordinariness, pathos and sarcasm, this image is as perplexing and enigmatic as *Sátántangó*'s cows. It does not make sense in relation to the film's narrative. Neither an 'allegory' of fascism, despite the interpretations, nor symbolic de-construction of the 'order', the film traverses beyond the dual state of anarchy and order; the choice seems no longer relevant in an open framework of 'powerless politics'. Philosophical thinking rather than philosophy is the not-knowing affirmation of the affect-though; a leap of faith perhaps, like the willingness of the drunkards to be orchestrated into the constellation of the universe, to play along with the game of cosmic chance. Thinking needs art.

The innocent girl in *Sátántangó*, caught in the soulless, corrupted world of the small town, carefully prepares an uncompromising and tragic 'act' as she poisons her cat before taking her own life; an act which cannot be thought of in the context of the moral rectitude of good versus evil. The doctor, sealing off the window of his 'observations' and barricading himself from the world at the end of *Sátántangó*, refuses to provide the outcome of his earlier 'investigations'. Caught in a world no longer possible to place within familiar structures of order or disorder, the characters become 'mediums' of potentialities, agents of 'things' to come. The forger, the 'underground man', child and overman, no longer 'operating' within God's or Human truth, gives the self up to an impersonal and yet singular (a) life of becoming, a 'logic of multiplicity that is neither dialectical nor transcendental'.⁹⁴⁰

It is as if total and anarchic mobilising of the past now responds to the character's [and viewer's] powerlessness.⁹⁴¹

On the other hand, the seemingly helpless characters, Estike and János in particular, are those who in their belief (in this world) are also able to "choose to choose"; to act (rather than react). Despite 'evidence' to the contrary – Estike poisons herself, and János finishes his visionary 'journey' in the asylum – they are capable of not only

⁹⁴⁰ John Rajchman, 'Introduction' to Gilles Deleuze, *Pure Immanence: Essays on A Life*. Transl. Anne Boyman (Zone Books, New York, 2001), p. 10.

⁹⁴¹ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 53.

refusing/ resisting the power of structure, but of becoming imperceptible.⁹⁴²
Clairvoyant-messengers, without a message, of the real.

"Yes", she said to herself softly. The angels see this and understand. She felt serene, and the trees, the road, the rain and the night all breathed tranquillity. Everything that happens is good, she thought. Everything was, eventually, simple. She recalled the previous day and, smiling, she realised how things are connected. She felt that these events aren't connected by accident but there's an indescribably beautiful meaning bringing them. And she knew she wasn't alone, for all things and people, her father upstairs, her mother, her brothers, the doctor, the cat, these acacias, this muddy road, this sky, this night down here depend on her, just as she herself depends on everything. She had no reason to be worried. She knew well that her angels had set out for her.
(*Sátántangó*)

The characters in Tarr's films become with the world, the rain, the wondering, light and dark, dogs, mud, plaster falling of the walls ... And every thing is a character, a player on a cosmic surface of becoming. It might be said that these are the figures of seeing and hearing "in a continually reinvented History and geography."⁹⁴³

Thus, we cannot identify with the characters, nor judge the image from the position of a participating/ active viewer, but must accept the terms of a 'visionary gaze' that ruptures dogmatic thought. Here the profound loss of ground that releases thought from the principle of identity/ unity replaces knowledge and 'faith' with belief in this world, which can reconnect men and women to 'what they see and hear'. Together with the director's vision, "the inhuman eye of the camera, as Colebrook notes, liberates us from a fixed and moral notion of man, and allows us to access the larger material forces that have constituted us."⁹⁴⁴ Thus, becoming visionary as a viewer is to let go of the 'I' (eye) and become imperceptible with the sensation. Letting go of the

⁹⁴² "Becoming-imperceptible," Bogue writes, "is a process of elimination whereby one divests oneself of all coded identity and engages in the abstract lines of a nonorganic life, the immanent, virtual lines of continuous variation that play through discursive regimes of signs and nondiscursive machinic assemblages alike." Ronald Bogue, *Deleuze's Wake: Tributes and Tributaries* (SUNY Press, 2004), p. 73.

⁹⁴³ Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 9.

⁹⁴⁴ Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze*, p. 49.

I and becoming imperceptible with sensation is to become affected as a visionary/ seer with the film-mind, where seeing without perceiving is an act of creation. This would not require a need for identification or criticism and thus allow the space to be open for experimentation, connections, and unforeseeable outcomes. It would become an encounter-event of ethics where the viewer becomes the philosopher.

The 'seer' is a complex 'double' in 'creating' the seen and the invisible, actual and virtual, which is enfolded in the aesthetic of sensation (affect-thought). Image without Image, body without Organs, here pre-personal, non-subjective signs (percepts and affects) are actualised in the process of experience/ experiment where the unknown forces of creating 'merge' life and art. Here life and art encounter each other in the event of 'reciprocal' becomings of (dis)order, outside the represented and recognisable (molar) world in the image. Monstrous or beautiful, plucked out of the void, the staring shot enfolds a flesh-less being of sensation bubbling under the skin-image.⁹⁴⁵ Neither subject nor object but something very different: a 'potential' world. In this sense the characters, in their different becomings (through exhaustion, vision, powerlessness) defy progress, preventing the virtual from realising, thus keeping thought and creating alive (moving), and belief in this world persistent.

Thus, the visionary is the political (non)agent of powerless politics and of a passive vitalism: singular, a-subjective, non-organic, and impersonal becoming that serves no other 'ideal' than to express an ontological movement of differentiating difference. Therefore, the powerlessness acquires a different 'meaning', as power-less but not powerless, which lies in resistance; that is, in the creative impulse, outside of common sense and the logic of predictable 'actions'. The will to power. It is a question of action as thinking and choosing different modes of life; an aesthetic rather than moral or teleological matter. For Deleuze, as mentioned earlier, this is a pre-hodological space before action, which does not point to an indecision of the spirit, but to an undecidability of the body. Here the obstacle does not allow itself to be determined in relation to goals and means but "is dispersed in a plurality of ways of being present in

⁹⁴⁵ "The being of sensation is not the flesh but the compound of nonhuman forces of the cosmos, of man's nonhuman becomings, and of the ambiguous house that exchanges and adjusts them, makes them whirl around like winds. Flesh is only the developer which disappears in what it develops: the compound of sensation." Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 186.

the world, of belonging to sets, all incompatible and yet coexistent."⁹⁴⁶ The space traversed by the characters so intensely, becomes territorialised and deterritorialised at the same time, opening it towards a 'nomadic', even if unknown, future. This is no longer a question of activism versus passivism but a radical immanence where there is no distinction between subject/ object, mind/ body, self/ other, interiority/ exteriority, presence/ absence, "a *carrying forward of the movement of immanence*, that is a belief in this world as it is."⁹⁴⁷ The difference and change is possible through an infinite number of encounters and combinations that precede the eschatological ethics imposed by religious or philosophical/ dialectical systems. Moreover, it precedes the normative image of the (human) self and of identity as an organic life that is tied to self-creating, autopoietic capacities brought out by art.⁹⁴⁸ Affect and thought is not owned by us but is that which happens to us from 'outside'; a result of a co-poietic relation with the world. Potentiality is played out by chance in an assemblage of as many differences as singularities, not necessarily human and organic, which assemble not through dialectics of the whole as unity, but through the model of a qualitative multiplicity, which changes qualitatively with every new connection. It is the dice throw.

The visionary agent takes on the role of a 'bringer', who gestures (links) to this world via the outside. It is the agent of the impossible as possibility, not of the nostalgic loss of gesture as 'mourned' by Agamben, nor the messianic belief of Derrida, but affirmative belief in this world as a figure-image: an 'operative field'⁹⁴⁹ of eventful connections between virtual and actual, the visible and invisible, the real and the imaginary, activity and passivity, spirit and body; an immanent plane of new signs.

They point to nothing but themselves and the situation they are in or, better still, with, and at the same time bring forth the expression of becoming. "The percept mixes the

⁹⁴⁶ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 196.

⁹⁴⁷ Karhrin Thiele, 'To Believe in This World, As It Is', in Marcelo Svirsky (ed.), *Deleuze and Political Activism: Deleuze Studies* Volume 4 (Edinburgh University Press, 2010), p. 39.

⁹⁴⁸ "The normative image of the artwork is tied closely to the normative image of the self, and both are premised on a norm of organic life: the proper self is a well-formed whole in which there is not an imposed or centred form so much as a dynamic interaction of constantly re-engaged parts, all contributing to the ongoing coherence of a well-bound unity." Colebrook, *Deleuze and the Meaning of Life*, p. 69.

⁹⁴⁹ Deleuze, *Francis Bacon*, p. 2.

attractive and the repulsive, vitality and death."⁹⁵⁰ The viewer has to become a 'visionary' in his/ her own right; to become a 'Dionysian machine', not to perceive but (to paraphrase Barthes) to see, to feel, to forget, to intuit, to think.⁹⁵¹

The characters create such a powerful and disarming intensity that, like Melville's *Bartelby*, they depart from the regime of social recognition, becoming singular 'anybodies' whose answer to the rules of obedience is "I would prefer not to." Choosing a mode of existence/ life as "singular essences", no longer subordinated to a representation or imitation of anything, they "act."⁹⁵²

Their 'willingness'/ choice to 'exist' outside subjectivity (individual and social), rupture our everyday human perception and consciousness and, by depriving us of the position of a subject, create the space for becoming other as a 'subject' of nomadic subjectivity, a mode of being no longer based on identity.⁹⁵³ Therefore, the passivity, or what might be perceived as inertia and privation, desolate and without significance in Tarr's films, is actually the act of "tragic thinking"; a moment of grace where positions and oppositions do not take place. By refusing what the cliché (active-reactive positions) suggests is interesting, the visionary (both the character and the viewer) is open to the outside, through holes, voids, white and black spaces.

The 'intolerable' and 'unbearable', also predicated upon change, folded into a style of carefully fashioned, wondrous (archi)texture, 'travels' towards its potential. Becoming the 'artistic point of view', it is the 'essentially affirmative task'.⁹⁵⁴

In the same way as an autonomous block of sensation 'wrests' the affects and percepts from life, the difficult image can 'wrest' the affect-thought from the plane of its

⁹⁵⁰ Zourabichvili, 'Six Notes on the Percept', op.cit., p. 205.

⁹⁵¹ Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, Constantin Boundas (ed), transl. Mark Lester with Charles Stivale (Continuum, London, 2003), p. 263.

⁹⁵² Rajchman, *The Deleuze Connections*, p. 95. It is in line with the Deleuzian/Nietzschean ethos of stepping away from the morals of representing, or being responsible for the other.

⁹⁵³ "Nomadic subjectivity as radical immanence implies a practice of spirituality of the non-theistic, post-humanistic, [...] kind. This practice has to do with the ultimate phase of the process of becoming, namely the becoming imperceptible." Braidotti, 'Affirming the Affirmative: On Nomadic Affectivity', in *Rhizomes* 11/12, <http://www.rhizomes.net/issue11/braidotti.html>.

⁹⁵⁴ Andrew E. Benjamin (ed.), *The Lyotard Reader* (Blackwell, 1989), p.155.

Béla Tarr has been reproached by some critics for both the negativity or darkness of his images, and for their formal aestheticism of supposed self-indulgence.

composition. In this way, the aesthetics (as style) take on a different meaning, outside the definitions (judgment) of art or beauty, becoming a (dis)organised rhizomatic body which produces difference; an aesthetico-ethical process of qualitative transformation, and an encounter/ event of becoming with/ the (non-familiar, unthought, non-recognisable) other.⁹⁵⁵ Béla Tarr's earthy intensity of run down, derelict surroundings, with excessive decay and exhausted lives, is not a return to the earthly origins of organic matter or to human forms. Rather, it is a means of recovering the aesthetic ability to think (new worlds) within this world immanently, without falling back onto the original model. The entropy (and the beauty) cannot be appreciated either aesthetically or critically. Neither social critique nor aesthetics of *sensus communis*, this would be the case of a tragic affirmation of life as multiplicity of human and non-human durations. As such, it carries a potential of something that might not comply to our (human) ideas of either progress or community, and whose actualisation is possible through affective intensity of image which enables an encounter with pre-personal signs. As the "science of the sensible", this inhuman aesthetics can be thought of as experiment/ experience (as difference) that is embedded in the 'real' world but open to the outside, beyond the given data of sense-impressions, beyond human practices of meaning-making.⁹⁵⁶ Thus, thinking life through art takes both life and thinking beyond their existing modes and possibilities.

In *Werckmeister Harmonies*, towards the end of the hospital massacre, two or three leaders enter the hospital room and rip down a shower curtain blocking their path. Standing in a bathtub, a naked, skeletal old man appears in a pool of light, his head lowered slightly. The gaze remains on the body, motionlessly staring, as if startled, for a while. And the crowd silently withdraws. Tarr's tropes of uncertainty, madness, fantasy, and unexpected beauty, all collide in this improbable shot. Moreover, almost a cliché itself, from the pathos of vulnerability exploited by film and media, to so many 'appropriations' of *Psycho's* (Hitchcock, 1960) shower scene, the image once again manages to flee recognition and once again takes us unawares, intensely and relentlessly. Perhaps due to the mute silence that accompanies the event, a kind of

⁹⁵⁵ The other here is understood as an affecting abstract sign in the Proustian sense, different from the significations and associations of representation, and from the emphatic trop of aesthetics as sensation, and feelings, i.e. Schiller which for Ranciere is the mode of a shared human experience.

⁹⁵⁶ This is the Deleuzian mode of transcendental empiricism: thinking born under the constraint of experience as a material power, a force of violence from the Outside.

ceaseless sublime intensity is felt, the pressure of the unspeakable which wants to be spoken.⁹⁵⁷ The image, as if returned from the dead (Holocaust? The war? Resurrection of apocalypse? An aftermath of the trauma?), shatters the present into so many shards that "like flaneurs, we labor to collect, each of us consigned to tracing different, incommensurable lines of this distended world-memory."⁹⁵⁸ And despite the seeming familiarity, it is not possible to recover the shattered consciousness into the logic of *sensus communis*. The thinking is taken outside itself into nowhere – now here. It arises in the gap where nothing happens, between our human time and infinity.⁹⁵⁹ An intensely horrific image of a man at his most vulnerable ... More – a vision, an aesthetic (chance) encounter, and (dis)connection, which 'makes' the crowd withdraw and the viewer 'speechless'. No action determined by sensory motor schema is possible at a point where brains and bodies begin to be deterritorialised from rigid identities in the process of becoming. The 'fact image', stripped of all relations, becomes a pure potentiality; a life 'fixed' immanently as flickering expression. However 'teasing', it keeps from realising itself into any presupposed historical narratives, neither as excavated meaning of the past nor dialectically preconceived future. What wants to be remembered and what wants to be forgotten is a matter of non-chronological, non-linear time. The forces of Visions and Auditions tie the expectations into knots, resisting understanding. The photographic thinking of the still image becomes self-motion of thought. This is not sensory experience in opposition to the extra-sensory, but an experience in 'contact' with the outside, with the "delirious dimension", with "the unbearable."⁹⁶⁰ The truth can only be that which is created. The character, the viewer, and the image become 'visionary' in a "mobile and plastic creation of the self and the other as in between", a difference. Not confronting or 'recognising' the other but becoming other (not in a psychological but ontological sense) which is already the case, as any being is always already a being in becoming. In this sense, as Patricia MacCormack notes, the subject cannot observe; he/ she is

⁹⁵⁷ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p.19.

⁹⁵⁸ Gregory Flaxman, 'Introduction', in *The Brain Is the Screen*, p. 42. Memory is understood here in terms of Bersonian pure memory (or pure past), outside of personal, subjective recollection.

⁹⁵⁹ Antonio Calcagno, 'The Role of Forgetting In Our Experience of Time', *Parrhesia*, No.13, 2011, p. 16.

⁹⁶⁰ Lisa Akervall, 'Cinema Affect and Vision'.

folded as 'the structure self'.⁹⁶¹ The aesthetic experimentation takes all narratives outside of the personal into singular, nameless becoming.

A plane of composition is forged, which is also a plane of immanence: a formless, univocal, self-organising process always qualitatively differentiating from itself; a complex network of forces, particles, connections, relations, affects and becomings.

Tarr's imagery traces life and thought invisibly and imperceptibly through the surfaces of misery, destruction, and inertia, in a truly unique way. One is never certain what to make of the endless returns and contradictory points of view. Expectancy is folded in the style of w(o)andering that is also waiting. Everything takes time and nothing happens in the end. The crowd at the hospital withdraws and we never find out what happens to them, as we will never know what happens to the farm collective. The camera lingers in futile anticipation on the empty space. When nothing happens, Yve Lomax observes, the virtual is trying to keep itself from realisation.⁹⁶² Sometimes it returns as actualisation half way between – a becoming.

There are only relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness between unformed elements, or at least between elements that are relatively unformed, molecules, and particles of all kinds. There are only haecceities, affects, subjectless individuations that constitute collective assemblages.⁹⁶³

Nothing is when thinking happens to us. It takes the form of a shock. The shock: confusing, paradoxical, impossible, incommensurable – neither Eisenstein's montage nor Brecht's distanciation. According to Deleuze, to shock is for the image to have the 'power' to excavate thinking; to think anew, to annihilate any sense of pre-existent structure.⁹⁶⁴ It is the affect at close range, a staring shot where nothing is certain but a process of creating, plodding along, neither progressing nor regressing, or moving in

⁹⁶¹ Patricia MacCormack, 'An Ethics of Spectatorship: Love, Death and Cinema', in *Deleuze and Schizoanalysis of Cinema*, p. 130.

⁹⁶² Lomax, *Passionate Being: : Language, Singularity and Perseverance*, IB Taurus Publishers, London and New York, 2009, p. 61.

⁹⁶³ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 266.

⁹⁶⁴ The shock, Deleuze writes, is not the kind that we find in the arbitrary violence of mainstream cinema, nor in the intellectual strategies of montage, as both rely on the action/ reaction sensory-motor method and are in danger of becoming ideology. Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1*, pp. 33-42 and *Cinema 2*, pp. 151-159.

both directions at once. The automatic movement of film and the staring stilled shot realise the artistic essence of the image "producing a shock to thought."⁹⁶⁵ Something makes us gasp, something intolerable and unbearable, something too powerful or too unjust, but sometimes also too beautiful, something that outstrips our sensory-motor capacities. A gap opens between perception and comprehension. "Something in the world forces us to think."⁹⁶⁶ Certain images (pure optical and sound situations) or signs (opsigns, sonsigns, ...), provoke "vibrations", as Kant would have it, or sensations, according to Deleuze, between faculties, between imagination and reason, that put us in contact with the Outside.⁹⁶⁷ By opening a gap between imagination and reason, film is thinking tragically and photographically. As its own thought, it creates intuitive image-concepts, nonconceptual affects, or fractured perspectives, that meet directly with our own minds; and rather than reconciling the faculties into shared sensibility, it shatters common sense, crippling the brain's capacity to reconstitute any habitus, creating new and unknown pathways of thinking. The shock needs to be produced through the sensations of the unknown, the unthinkable 'lured' by the *durée* of image. The shock prevents re-action, which makes the character and the viewer 'powerless'. It is the question of "the disturbances of memory and the failure of recognition."⁹⁶⁸

Tarr's imaging appears as a somewhat blurry kind of shocking – the slow enduring of hallucinatory becoming. It can be a limit-situation, like the massacre in the hospital in *Werckmeister Harmonies*, or banal, like Karrer shaving his face, where the suspension of the world, by giving the visible to thought, replaces our regular vision (thought) of the world with a different view, beyond familiar definitions, opening up affective possibilities. Chance and improvisation are the essence of thinking. Teasingly verging on actualising, it is never actualised into truth.⁹⁶⁹ The cat torture scene is filmed with

⁹⁶⁵ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 165.

⁹⁶⁶ The sign here points to a pure aesthetics at the limit of sensibility: an Idea of a differential field beyond the norms of common sense and recognition. See Kylie Message, 'Body Without Organs', in Adrian Parr (ed), *The Deleuze Dictionary* (Edinburgh University Press, 2005).

⁹⁶⁷ For Deleuze this is not a matter of the representational 'dimension' of imagination, as it is in Kant, which is in danger of turning "the whole" (a virtual, fragmentary whole that is never given) to the "subject as whole", a collective: mass-art, which has "degenerated into state propaganda and manipulation." Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 157.

⁹⁶⁸ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 52.

⁹⁶⁹ Despite various interpretations of Tarr's films in social and political contexts, there is no entry in his films to any particular interpretation or any sense of a particular concern. It is "the way we see the world", is his answer to the question of 'meaning' in the films.

the same 'disinterested' distance as preparing dinner, with no point of view or perception.⁹⁷⁰ The cinematic image takes on what we cannot think and reflects our initial 'incoherent' thoughts (unformulated linguistically) – those thoughts that are powerful but unnameable, uncontrollable.⁹⁷¹ It is the violence pushed beyond "Oedipal" figures of disobedience, towards the 'mystery' of affirmation, the new notion of time, which beyond tragic "cycles of revenge", and which might allow for an "affirmation of Life", and the presubjective, presignifying violence that is inseparable from it.⁹⁷² What forces us to think, Deleuze writes, quoting Blanchot, is "the 'inpower of thought', the figure of nothingness, the inexistence of a whole which could be thought."⁹⁷³ This is the moment when the sublime cannot be synthesised into human perception. Perhaps this is the moment of the radical, tragic thinking of total affirmation; not shared experience, but *difference* so alien it seems to the world locked in the habitual and deterministic structure of reacting. This shock-thought is the aesthetic of suspension and waiting which is never resolved, and where thinking, not judging, happens to us as a result of an encounter with the unthinkable (through art) which takes the sublime further into the realm of nonhuman aesthetics; an aesthetic happening-event without closure, and without promise; a process of becoming imperceptible. Unthinkable thinking without the Image. We need art in order to think.

When nothing 'happens' we also encounter a different visuality.

Tarr creates spaces that allow for the impersonal "pure memory" to float amongst and through things and situations, opening the senses to new and unforeseen encounters. Sleeping, daydreaming, forgetting, are the indirect forms making possible lateral connections that recall something entirely unrelated to our present situation. This is a space of haptic visuality, as already mentioned, which Laura Marks 'discovered' in intercultural cinemas.⁹⁷⁴ The formal and textual qualities: grainy, unclear images; the depiction of characters in states of sensory activity; close-to-the-body camera positions and panning across the surface of objects; changes in focus; under- and over-exposure; and decaying images, are the formal strategies that evoke such

⁹⁷⁰ This is not to be confused with the tactic of Brechtian distanciation.

⁹⁷¹ Daniel Frampton, *Filmosophy*, p. 70.

⁹⁷² Rajchman, *The Deleuze Connections*, p. 108.

⁹⁷³ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 162.

⁹⁷⁴ See Laura Marks, *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment and the Senses* (Duke University Press, 2000).

memory of the senses. Haptic visuality sees the world as though it were touching it: closely, unknowingly. Combined with non-chronological time and the non-human eye of the camera, it materialises thinking outside (human) consciousness: "[w]e are not in the world, we become with the world, we become by contemplating it."⁹⁷⁵ The rain, mud, vast landscapes, decrepit interiors of post-communist facilities (hospital, government office), black-and-white photography that might recall communism's greys, the play of light off bodies in bed, the drunken revelry of a fog-ridden dance, unflattering greys of blocks of flats and desolate roads, empty streets with dogs wandering in the rain, and a melancholic waltz running through the images. The films invite to be viewed with the muscles and skin as much as with the eyes. Tarr is much closer to the ground than Tarkovsky for instance, whose images are also visually intense. He is in our heads, pulling us along with movement, as if we were tracking the shot, as if we were there; aware, perceptive, but also captive.⁹⁷⁶ This kind of cinema implies a kinaesthetic way of experiencing space and images stored in our memory, which are embodied and haptic, as well as being virtual and imagined. It forgets as well as remembers, forging something we may have or have not seen before. Films force thought to think the unclear, blurry, dispersive outside. Such no-place of orphaned, nomadic thinking, neither nostalgic nor traumatic, but in a sense 'unmourned', and as such existing in a state of potentiality and belief.

Haptic visuality also invites a kind of (non)identification in which there is a mutual dissolving of viewer and viewed, subject and object, where, Marks writes, looking is not about power but about yielding.⁹⁷⁷ Haptic images push us out of cinema's illusionary depth and invite our eyes to linger on the surface of the image. Rather than pull us into idealised space, they help us feel the (non)connectivity between ourselves, the image, and the world to which the image links us photographically. Like the characters, certain aesthetics bring forth the experience of force (of becoming-other) through collapsing the symbolic/ unified space of the familial/r. Forging false and nomadic 'landscapes', it puts truth into crisis. It puts identity into crisis. "I is an other." To become other is not to identify, identify with, become like or become the same as. Deleuze finds that the "I" only ever refers to contingent effects of interactions

⁹⁷⁵ Deleuze, and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 169.

⁹⁷⁶ 'Béla Tarr's Sound Images: Cinema of Proximity', <http://www.gravity7.com/blog/film/2007/01/bela-tarrs-sound-images-cinema-of.html>.

⁹⁷⁷ Marks, *The Skin of the Film*, p. 191.

between events, responses, memory functions, social forces, chance happenings, belief systems, economic conditions, and so on, that together make up life. It is a case of 'transcendental empiricism', where the impersonal virtual intensities actualise in situations: muddy street, old scraps of wallpaper falling off the wall, overflowing ashtrays, a drunk asleep in the corner, or the spider web. At the end of *Damnation*, Karrer, "snarling and swirling around like a belligerent wild dog", becomes the earth, the dog, the rain, the world. The powerless power therefore, is that which relents to a recognition of powerlessness: "to think the whole and to think oneself, thought which is always fossilised, dislocated, collapsed."⁹⁷⁸ To become (through) 'intensity' is thus to question one-self.

The viewer, also free of identification, becomes any-body amongst other bodies affectively.

The time-image 'forces' us to think by putting us in contact with the outside, and by allowing us to become haptically with the intensive time-space. Non-subjective, (in)human encounters with 'this world' – is an ethic of affect-thought. No longer a question of judgment or understanding but of metamorphosis.

This is no more a question of passive versus active viewing, but rather of powerless, tragic thinking, where the viewer is 'shocked' into immobility; a kind of stupor of the unknown or the not-recognisable; not in the image itself but 'through' it, in the sense of it. Suspended between motion and stillness, in a sort of indecisive uncertainty, the spectator is free to create with the image-world; that is, to think and live differently without the need for overcoming or 'being otherwise'. Becoming-spectator is therefore an ethical position of seeing and hearing, which is a result of unforeseeable singular encounters, possible not through knowledge but intuition. Not reacting, but seeing in such encounter, is to allow for vision-thought to persist as difference in itself.

The time-image's notion of cinematic experience as enduring is thus bound to a new way of seeing. Hallucinatory perception, dreams, blurry images difficult to recognise by common sense, create an 'atmosphere' conducive to vision. From the affect as

⁹⁷⁸ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 162.

"quasi-traumatic" encounter, through a differential transformation of the faculties, to a visionary way of seeing; in going through "the unbearable" and enduring, the seen vision becomes visionary, provoking new thinking (outside and unknown). As Lisa Ackerwall writes, the faculty of vision no longer corresponds to the model of recognition – as the model of ordinary vision – but rather to "cognition" as visionary vision, where vision itself becomes other, where vision becomes visionary.⁹⁷⁹

"The purely optical and sound situation" writes Deleuze, "evokes a function of clairvoyance, which is at the same time critique and sympathy, fantasy and observation."⁹⁸⁰

In this way, despite Tarr's pledge of "going downwards" because "the whole fucked up world is over", he starts again from the middle, in a kind of Nietzschean *positive negation*, saying "yes" to life outside its human agency.⁹⁸¹ 'Going downwards' is an aesthetic choice, "becoming more simple, more pure."⁹⁸² Still, in the evolving 'simplicity' of the narrative, there remains an intensely choreographed image-world, imagining perhaps the world without the 'human condition'. No more stories, no more 'investigations'. Just the seen and the heard. Karrer chooses to isolate himself for good, becoming in the process "less than human."⁹⁸³ In what might be seen as the ultimate degradation, and how most critics perceive it, the encounter/ relation with a dog at the end of *Damnation* might, paradoxically, be an act of liberation anticipating different relations between human and the world. Like a Deleuzian spark of a single mind and a pack of wolves⁹⁸⁴ outside of solidarity based on laws of obedience, or normative molar structures, communities other than Human, beyond the human condition, are possible. A blind monk, towards the end of *Sátántangó*, warning about approaching Turks in the ruins of a chapel, becomes an absurd materialisation of the film's opening – a 'heavenly', distant bell. In the last scene, the doctor is blacking out

⁹⁷⁹ Akervill, 'Cinema, Affect, Vision'.

⁹⁸⁰ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p.18.

⁹⁸¹ "Positive negation in the manner of Nietzsche [would be] a joyful refusal of anything other than radical contingency and a force without promise." Claire Colebrook, 'Introduction', *Theory and The Dissapearing Future: On De Man, on Benjamin*, p. 8.

⁹⁸² Interview with Tarr, <http://www.indiewire.com/article/bela-tarr-explains-why-the-turin-horse-is-his-final-film>.

⁹⁸³ Howard, 'Damnation'.

⁹⁸⁴ The pack of wolves for Deleuze and Guattari is bringing together without abolishing what makes us singular. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, p. 243.

the window. At the end of *Werckmeister Harmonies*, the image-world dissolves into the vision of the huge whale's body disintegrating in the centre of the square. There is no resolution, and no closure. Tarr sets the world in motion, then traverses it slowly and curiously, allowing his work to live on a personal or particular, as well as cultural or universal, plane of creative consciousness; as the 'collective brain' without necessity for the collective subject. The result is a profound loss of ground that releases thought from the principle of identity/ unity; that is, a return to the same plane or repetition which is difference.

There are only necessities: there is no one who commands, no one who obeys, no one who trespasses.⁹⁸⁵

It is not that there are not positive actualised outcomes that make these films 'hopeless'. On the contrary, the hope is in the lack of outcome, of non-existence of any original models. The change is time itself - unpredictable, impossible to foresee, the non-clock time. The 'hope', or rather belief, is in the movement of (e)motion and in stillness of thought, vibrating in-between, on the surface, in the style of virtual-material force of untimely creation. The only way we can speak of Béla Tarr's cinema as being political is through his aesthetic vision, an artistic will to create, through the richness of distinct moments of memory and sensations that allow for a different encounter of 'genuine thinking'.⁹⁸⁶

In one of the most beautiful moments (in *Sátántangó*), the human poise and nonhuman camera come together in the poetical pause, where the aesthetic of immanence unfolds in a fragmentary imperceptible 'description', hovering gently above bodies asleep on the floor of the newly found location. While the silent and hypnotic camera watches over the sleepers, the voiceover gently narrates each dream. Chiaroscuro light, the owl perched in the window, and the singular moments of hesitation vibrate within the uncertain hope found in the desolated space of the half-

⁹⁸⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Nietzsche: The Gay Science : With a Prelude in German Rhymes and an Appendix of Songs*, trans. Josefine Nauckhoff and Adrian Del Caro, (Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 110.

⁹⁸⁶ For Deleuze, genuine thinking is a result of an encounter with the forces of the 'outside'. It is a violent confrontation with real-ity, an involuntary rupture of established categories.

ruined building. Here the trust in the unknown, grace, and "deep emotion", come together as sound-vision-thought ...⁹⁸⁷

Halics was pursued by a hunchback with a glass eye. And after all sorts of trials he ran into the river but he started to lose heart; every time he came up for air the little man hit his head with a long stick. And each time he shouted: "Now you'll get it."

The schoolmaster persuaded a man wearing an old suit to go with him to somewhere he knows; the man agreed like someone who can't say no. He could hardly control himself and when they turned into a deserted park, he even pushed him to reach a bench surrounded by bushes. He made the man lie down and he jumped on him, kissed him on the neck ...

The ground trembled under Schmidt's feet. As if he was walking on the moors. He climbed up into a tree, but he felt that started to sink too. He was lying on the bed and tried to get the nightgown off his wife. But she started to yell, he jumped after her, the nightgown was torn. She laughed and the nipples on her enormous breasts were like two beautiful roses.

Mrs. Halics was washing Mrs. Schmidt's back; the rosary on the rim of the tub slipped into the water like a snake. Mrs. Schmidt said she had enough, her skin was burning from the scrubbing, but Mrs. Halics pushed her back into the bath and went on scrubbing her back ...

Mrs. Kráner heard the noise from outside but she didn't know what it could be. She put on a fur coat and left for the engine-shed. She had almost reached the road when she had a bad feeling ...

Mrs. Schmidt was a bird flying over the clouds, happily. She saw that someone down there was waving at her ... She felt the warmth of the sun on her back, she came down a bit. She wanted to snatch a bug.

Futaki's shoulders were beaten with an iron bar. He couldn't move, he was tied to a tree. He stretched out and felt the rope loosen. He looked at his shoulders and saw a long wound; he turned his head, he couldn't stand seeing it ...

(Sátántangó)

⁹⁸⁷ In addition, this is the scene where dreams are told as if they were happening at the same time.

Tarr replaces perception with vision, giving us access to this world as it is, where the belief in this world is a life immanent only to itself. Thinking the world differently, when 'belief' replaces 'knowledge of' the world, turns the world from something given into something to be explored, always to be constructed and created; again, this is not according to the measure of 'what is' but according to 'what this world is capable of'.⁹⁸⁸ Such thinking is inseparable from belief as tragic passive vitalism, that is, also an ethical choice.

No longer bound by the signification that "perceives in order to read and reads in order to know", but by love (the encounter between desire and grace), the 'seeing' subjectivity "opens up to the potentialities of thought without a compulsion to convert images to meanings for knowledge."⁹⁸⁹

An ethics of spectatorship ends the war of signification and shifts cinematic pleasure from a situation of death to an act of love.⁹⁹⁰

The screen does not love us, Patricia MacCormack writes. However, if we think of other, not necessarily conscious, relations between the image and the viewer – the virtual, momentarily fleeting intensities that involve other singularities in the assemblage of creating – we might think of reciprocal relations – not in a phenomenological sense – but as forces in mobile systems which include the world, filming (photographing), viewing, and the outside (affect-thought). Hybrid aesthetic encounters.⁹⁹¹ It would not be the 'love' of harmonious existence, but saying "yes" to life in the tragic sense of chance-necessity.

Strange and (in)human, this 'love' is of the 'new health', neither the "morality of salvation" nor the schizo- of analysis. It is the love of the dice throw, of the unthinkable, the new, the risky ethics of singular encounters (outside the eye/I politics) in the multiplicity of relations (within and between) human and non-human. The *Amor fati* – the love of life that is of chance and necessity, undecided rather than pre-established, deterministic fate. The passion of 'passive vitalism', of the unknown,

⁹⁸⁸ 'To Believe in This World as It Is', p. 33.

⁹⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 131.

⁹⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹⁹¹ MacCormack, *An Ethics of Spectatorship*, p. 137.

of this world and without promise. Experimental becoming-child of philosophy; an artist poet.⁹⁹²

"The power of art is ethical: the power not just to present this or that affect, but to bring us to an experience of 'affectuality' – or *of the fact that there is affect*", writes Colebrook.⁹⁹³ Tarr's imaging 'affectuate' in the empty time of celluloid: "nought as matter, it creates itself as from".⁹⁹⁴

Neither identification, pity, or empathy, nor redemption ... It is an altogether different connection from both within and on the surface; a connection of intensive moments, sympathising ... Expressions merge for a tiny moment, enough to collide in divergence, producing change, after which 'nothing is going to be the same'. This is the freeing of the difference, which, as Foucault writes,

requires thought without contradiction, without dialectics, without negation; thought that accepts divergence; affirmative thought whose instrument is disjunction; thought of the multiple – of the nomadic and dispersed multiplicity that is not limited or confined by the constraints of the same; thought that does not conform to a pedagogical model (the fakery of prepared answers) but attacks insoluble problems – that is, a thought which addresses a multiplicity of exceptional points, which is displaced as we distinguish their conditions and which insists upon and subsists in the play of repetitions.⁹⁹⁵

An ethics of immanence will disavow its reference to judgments of good and evil, right and wrong, as according to a transcendent model, rule, or law. Rather, the diversity of living things and particularity of events will demand the concrete methods of immanent evaluation (ethics) and immanent experimentation (creativity); a poetic embracing of vibrant matter.

⁹⁹² Insofar as they create, the artist and the writer are constantly renewing contact with childhood as viable vitality, in a mode of becoming rather than remembering: child-becoming, block of childhood Francois Zourabichvili, 'Six Notes on the Percepts', p. 211.

⁹⁹³ Colebrook, 'On the Specificity of Affect', p. 199.

⁹⁹⁴ Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, p. 370.

⁹⁹⁵ Foucault, *Theatrum Philosophicum*.

The belief (in this world) is stored in looks and gestures, not seeking to know but able to see without perception; that is, to imagine a future without Future. This is the lived ethics of virtual becomings, outside of political or moral judgments, and possible through an aesthetics of immanent difference. Pragmatism as an attempt to transform the world, to think a new world or new man insofar as they *create themselves*.⁹⁹⁶ 'Empiricism' as expressing the logic of life itself.⁹⁹⁷ This is the ethics of radical difference, not difference from but difference as a creating force of (non-human) life as becoming without end and without destination.

The ethics of resisting cliché (a dogmatic image of moral judgment) – in defence of a 'difficult' image ...

The ethics of 'hope', of belief in this world, and of "choosing to choose", is the question of non-human, vital reconnection with life; neither phenomenological nor cognitive but affective, thinking through the machinic assemblages of new connections being affected by bodies, images, impressions, weather, the screen ... The ethics of encounter: the new, and becoming produced through singular encounters that affect each other. Leaps of faith folded in momentary intensities, vibrating polyvocally in the fleshless 'flesh' of the world's immanence. A 'powerless politics' of 'passive vitalism', not of the organism as a self-creating vital entity, but that of a singular spark – 'a' life that "might or might not exist, that comes into being and passes away."⁹⁹⁸ It is the ethics of imperceptible becomings, of the force of potential that can only be 'sensed', emanating from the image.

It is a 'hope', like that of Gerard Richter, "that something will emerge that is unknown to me, which I could not plan ..." ⁹⁹⁹ This is a becoming through the image, "that will inflect or deflect any creative force from simply realising itself."¹⁰⁰⁰ This is the return

⁹⁹⁶ Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, p. 86.

⁹⁹⁷ Pierre Macherey, 'The Encounter with Spinoza', in Paul Patton (ed), *Deleuze: A Critical Reader*, p. 147. This is of course what Deleuze calls a transcendental empiricism when referring to his philosophy of immanence.

⁹⁹⁸ Colebrook, *Deleuze and the Meaning of Life*, p. 135

⁹⁹⁹ Peter Gidal, 'Endless Finalities/Endlose Endlichkeit (Gerhard Richter's Painting)' (Parkett, March, 1993), p. 47.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Claire Colebrook, *Deleuze and the Meaning of Life* p. 135.

of the new (of) thinking, thinking that does not require a model or a destination; an amnesiac thinking of a theatre where "blind gestures signal to each other."¹⁰⁰¹

All those apparently desolated and deprived also maintain an "undeteriorated dignity." This is not a social or critical commentary but the affirmation of life in a most difficult and most affirmative sense; the tragic. The deliberate delaying of the reason these people are gathered and waiting for challenges the spectators' activity – the wait, exhaustion, the void – becomes a constructive energy,¹⁰⁰² and yielding grace. As McCormack writes,

[g]race is the expression of openness which cannot know the effects of opening and which offers the self as available for an encounter of becoming with an element which is not knowable and hence not necessarily desirable. Grace is found in the opening to relations, love the relation itself for an irredeemably inapprehensible other.¹⁰⁰³

Watching this kind of film is like experiencing a hallucinatory vivacity, a "very special being in the world, on the edge of sleep." This very special being in the world "steers us closer to the shores of that "other locality" where Freud first took his bearings: another space, another scene, the between perception and consciousness."¹⁰⁰⁴

The art of encounter: fragmentary, ephemeral, piecemeal, missed encounters.¹⁰⁰⁵

Starting with life, 'writing' through art, and now returning to life again; extending aesthetics to life as a mode of existence (passive vitalism); a state of becoming where thought and creation are the means of an ethical choice (belief in this world and its power of transformation).

¹⁰⁰¹ Foucault, *Theatrum Philosophicum*.

¹⁰⁰² Yvette Biró, 'Confined Space'.

¹⁰⁰³ MacCormack, 'The Ethics of Spectatorship', p. 132

¹⁰⁰⁴ Victor Burgin, 'Barthes Discretion', Jean-Michel Rabaté (ed), *Writing the Images After Roland Barthes* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), p. 29.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 2.

... Unity of life and thought ... one step for life, one step for thought. Modes of life inspire ways of thinking; modes of thinking inspire ways of life.¹⁰⁰⁶

The will to power is 'tested' here not only through its various figures but also through 'doing away with judgment'; by creating the situations – illogical and paradoxical – that persist where light mingles with darkness in the cosmic dance of shimmering becomings.

The will to power as the will to dominate is blurred within the uncertain non-dialectical movements in-between. There is never a clear sense of where it might be located and how it can be 'judged'. The violent force of the hospital massacre has only a vague connection to the implied; its obviousness – in relation to what it refers to – disappears somewhere between the deceptive strategic proceedings of Esther's wife and the nonsensical/ hysterical threats of the invisible 'Prince' hiding in the belly of the cardboard whale. Valuska walking into the darkness of immense possibility is no longer bound to the human laws. Beyond choosing and non-choosing, looking in the eye of the whale, he is 'resign' to a chance-necessity suspended between the order of the eclipse and the massacre at the end of the film. A holy fool and celestial body, metamorphosed in the stillness of the moment, and whiteness of the hospital room at the end of journey. An uncanny scenario where the human Image is banished and a new sense of this world starts to feel itself from within(out) what is unknowingly another plane of composition. The will to power is also recognition of the power of the image, of the possibility of seeing (differently), outside the help of narrative, and of language. Is Estike's quiet gesture of straightening her skirt manifested later in the body laying itself to rest after taking the poison, the will to power? With no more real or apparent worlds, there remain bodies, as Deleuze points out – after Nietzsche – bodies that are nothing but forces, darker and more agitated world: bodies and qualities which are also bodies, breaths and souls are bodies, actions and passions themselves are bodies."¹⁰⁰⁷ In this sense, the 'will to power' is the power to affect and be affected rather than act from the centre of consciousness. It is no more a reaction to obstacles but a relation between one force and another outside judgment.¹⁰⁰⁸ "Beyond

¹⁰⁰⁶ Deleuze, *Pure Immanence*, p. 8.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Deleuze, Deleuze, *Dialogues II*, p. 47.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 129.

good and evil" does not mean renouncing their existence, but rather than opposing, resenting, or accusing the "exhausted, descendent, and degenerating life", finding/choosing a mode of life capable of transforming itself in relation to the forces it encounters, increasing the powers of life by opening new 'possibilities'¹⁰⁰⁹ in the materiality of living thought. It is empowering through affect that allows for new, untried connections and genuine thinking.

It is not a matter of judging life in the name of higher authority, which would be good, the true; it is a matter, on the contrary, of evaluating every being, every action and passion, even every value, in relation to life which they involve. Affect as immanent evaluation, instead of judgment as transcendental value.¹⁰¹⁰

It is, above all, raising "the false to its highest creative or transformative powers"; an artistic will; the becoming-child of philosophy – becoming-artist.¹⁰¹¹ Estike's choice, the dignity offered not so much to humanity but life, the intensity of encounters, the light revealing nothing, and the enacted eclipse, are acts of choice in the nonhuman becoming of man. Those who "choose to choose" affirm the potential of multiplicity in singular everyday gestures, as long as gestures keep themselves from realising, that is, stagnating into norms. They leap beyond rational and moral certainties into an open Whole, trusting the new and unknown. Tarr, in his artistic will to resist judgment, forges life where "there is no longer truth or appearance," but where the 'truth' is created in the 'shape' of the New, in the mould of a delicate power of the false. These suspended moments of uncertain 'beings' (another film running within the stagnation and entropy) are the moments of belief in this world. This is the only

¹⁰⁰⁹ As Rodowick points out, after Nietzsche, the "moral universe defines an ontology of descent and ascent, destruction and creation, a base will to power fuelled by resentment and the will to truth, and a creative or artistic will that affirms life and its powers of transformation, while seeking the possibilities for enhancing these powers and this life. Between this two wills lies the deepest ethical problem: the problem of choosing a mode of existence defined by the possibility of choice.", D.N. Rodowick, 'The World, Time', in *Afterimages of Gilles Deleuze's Film Philosophy*, p. 103. This is the power to choose, or "choose to choose" as the mode of existence, which is also analysed by Ronald Bogue in the same volume, pp. 115-132.

¹⁰¹⁰ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 136.

¹⁰¹¹ D.N. Rodowick, 'The World, Time', in *Afterimages*, p. 103.

"The artist is the one that becomes, i.e. he is the one that, in the act of contemplation, joins the world, mixes himself with nature, and enters a zone of indiscernability with the universe." Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, pp. 176-7.

chance, Deleuze writes, "for art or life, the Nietzschean, Melvillian, Bergsonian, Wellesian, and now we could add 'Tarrian', chance ..."¹⁰¹²

¹⁰¹² Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 142.

epilogue:

Without conclusion; as such

... films are our only means of authenticating our lives.

I really don't know why I make films.

Béla Tarr¹⁰¹³

If I knew the names of things of acts of places

I would not write, I would name, and everything would be said.

Helene Cixous¹⁰¹⁴

*'I think of life, all the systems that I shall be able to build will never match my cries of
a man engaged in remaking his life ...'*

Antonin Artaud¹⁰¹⁵

Has the desire to open up the photographic real, and to think differently about the image 'materialised' through the above Tarr-Deleuze or film/image-philosophy encounters?¹⁰¹⁶ Has the challenge to think in terms of 'doing' (creating, constructing and experimenting, where thinking happens to us from without) been achieved? I believe it has, if composing a number of planes where radical re-thinking of 'what is' (stillness and movement, art and life, politics and aesthetics) took the form of uncertain and unrealised becomings. And it has, if sensing the real photographically through the moving-still wondering in between 'aesthetics' and 'the real' encouraged different thinking and different writing. Begun from the middle, and moving

¹⁰¹³ Why I Make Films, Béla Tarr, during preproduction for *Damnation*, 1987
<http://csac.buffalo.edu/harmonies.pdf>.

¹⁰¹⁴ Susan Sellers (ed. and trans.), *The Writing Notebooks of Hélène Cixous* (Continuum, New York, 2004), p. 5.

¹⁰¹⁵ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 165.

¹⁰¹⁶ As throughout the thesis by 'Tarr' I mean films/ images, and by 'Deleuze' the philosophical concepts he proposes, which is neither the 'authorial' (auteur theory) approach to the filmmaking nor adapting Deleuze's ideas to interpreting films.

alongside the borders and edges of the labyrinthine irregular construction, in between theory and practice, the "writing of the image" has no ending. Neither contributing to nor reinforcing an overarching argument, this project aspires to invite further openings, (mis)interpretations and creations. Its expectation/ wish is to carry on thinking and creating differently each time with every new reading.

How?

Tarr-Deleuze Encounter

The earthy materiality of minute detail is caught in the duration, becoming duration itself; a wo(a)ndering thought, an empty time. Particular and universal merge as photograph(ic) thought is enfolded in molecular becomings. Body becomes the intense of transforming body and static matter an ensemble of dancing molecules. The sounds of domestic spaces call the invisible forces of the desert, and monotonous heaviness is already seeded with a desire to fly. The space, traversed by the characters so intensely, becomes territorialised and deterritorialised at the same time, opening it towards a 'nomadic' future. Personal and political meet on a plane of creative consciousness becoming a collective brain. Leaps of faith are folded in momentary intensities, vibrating in the fleshless flesh of the world's immanence. The rhythm and the passing time. Pulsating force of the earth and cosmic virtual floating resonance. Unresolved contradictions are not contradictory (they escape the dialectics of either/or), but encompass a paradox of immanence-life.

As has become apparent throughout the thesis, bringing together Tarr's difficult imagery and Deleuze's equivocal concepts has been necessarily constructed around oppositions where mind and body, imaginary and real, self and other, could no longer function as 'decidable' qualities. Disjunctive (divergent) rather than dialectical (where one is replaced by another) synthesis of Deleuze's philosophy of immanence allows the oppositions to coexist in the affirmation of both/and, rather than to be negated in the structure of either/or. Tarr's imaging, both haptic and incorporeal, demanded, on the other hand, that such (seeming) oppositions remain unresolved. Thus, the paradoxes are embraced in the style of "nomadic distribution" where the oppositions are neither contradictory nor collapsed into one but where the difference (vibrating in-between) lingers undecidedly with/in the rhizomatic web of multiplicity.

Tarr's vision, outside any revelation, persists and resists as affective expression of material intensity, crippling the brain's habitual capacity into non-thinking. A 'worlding' or 'thinging' that becomes inhumanly unfamiliar, intolerable and excruciatingly beautiful, embraces mind/body tensions. Neither abstract, nor phenomenological flesh, the 'matter-vision', both an exhausted body and incorporeal virtual force, is encountered as the "unknown body" and de-subjectified experience. Hovering on the edge without either falling over or transcending the gap, Tarr balances on the verge of chaos, of total disintegration almost all the way, almost reaching the 'void', and yet returns again and again, only to start with a new vision repeated differently 'ad infinitum'. The material, crude, everyday brute 'reality', is necessary to sustain the in-between, to become the extraordinary, to call forth the non-definable, imperceptible virtual forces. A profoundly productive 'negativity' of non-human humanism where the 'order' is created on the verge, in-between, and the intensity of desire is able to sustain itself without breaking down. Not opposing degradation or destruction with hope but by constructing such compositions where the 'hope' would rise up precisely from degradation, entropy, and struggle, he stretches things to the point of impossibility, unthinkable, unimaginable. The force of the image grabs and repels, pulling us into the image-world-void, where neither affection/cognition nor identification is possible. Intensity so great that it shatters every attempt to arrive at any commonsensical conclusions. Here it is not "I" who feels. Tarr's incredibly uncanny ability to compose an image where impersonal and unintentional, subjectless expression would render itself visible in the style that enables the image to think the unthinkable and to sense the impossible, affirms all. Not either/or but both/and. Haptic visuality and imperceptible affect, intense physicality and non-human, are becoming in the tragic aesthetics of 'undecided fate.' Tarr weaves the thread of this chance-necessity, balancing on the edge, keeping unforeseeable potential from ever realising and the 'hopeless hope' in this world, and this life, alive. Details vibrate in a web of relations where 'everything is connected to everything else', and yet the connection is of a fragmentary nature where the fragment (un)forms itself in the process of differentiation, not as part of the whole but as opening - a gap. Verging on the impossible, he keeps the gap open and alive, holding the resolution away. It is the politics of tragic aesthetics; the real(ism) where powerless and exhausted bodies force us to think, where the intolerable, unthinkable image-world is the sight-plane of transformation and becoming, where the power of the false as both creating and

diagnosing, resists doxa. It is both cinema of body and cinema of brain, being of becoming.

Thus, thinking with Tarr's imagery through Deleuze's philosophy of cinema resulted in a style (fragmentary, poetical writing) and methodology (critical and creative) where the paradoxes are not resolved and the structure remains open; where the 'problem' is allowed to express itself on its own, and the difference and change to happen through an infinite number of encounters and combinations. A 'rhizomatic' thinking without a fixed centre or order so much, as a multiplicity of expanding and overlapping connections. Thus, to think and write with the tensions, the critical and creative film philosophy project required the aptitude of a playful poetics of affirmation that is a 'strategy' of embracing rather than resolving. Outside of judgment, in "genuine thinking" without hope and without promise, the opposing forces needed to find their own (co)existence in the poetic meandering, encountering-relating outside interpretation or explanation. Furthermore, unresolved paradoxes enabled experience of the real as immanent intertwining of the physicality/materiality, its movement as time, and the virtual outside as actual-virtual becoming; as creating/ experimenting (tragic aesthetics) and as thinking (hallucinatory becoming) with films. Only through the paradox remaining open can the expression of affect express itself, and thinking as incorporeal, virtual force happen to us from the outside.

Filmosophy

The thesis brought together photography and cinema in the image that is not realised in knowledge and thus has the capacity to disrupt/ affect and produce other 'knowledges'/ thinking. It has been constructed as the plane of virtual potentialities, where the critical and creative interventions coexist in a variation of 'voices' and 'visions', repetitions and intervals. This consisted of writing 'with' Tarr's film images philosophically in a Deleuzian sense of creating, bringing together film, photography and thinking with images as potentiality for new connections and new relations, while at the same time extending the theory toward practice (as writing) in order to collapse both into the process of emergence (new outcomes). The movement of reclaiming took the means of intuitive sensing rather than knowledge, and wished to function as

'active forgetting' and affirmative experimentation with what is yet to come, rather than as memorisations and identifications of 'what was/is'.¹⁰¹⁷

Béla Tarr's imaging fleets from so called 'new' aesthetics and politics alike, bringing forth impersonal, inhuman cosmic affects-thoughts, creating visual and aural landscapes in which one loses oneself and thus can see and feel in new and unforeseen ways. Existential and earthy, its aim is not to bring us to nature or to critique the world we live in. Nor is the choice of black and white celluloid the return to authentic or original forms of expressions. Tarr's imagery traces life and thought invisibly and imperceptibly through the surfaces of misery, destruction, and inertia in a truly unique way. He is not interested in representing or recording reality. His films are 'realistic' not in attention to social content, but rather through the invention of a new kind of image capable of showing the "intolerable"/ unimaginable for which neither language nor law pre-exists. It is also new materiality and new realism, a new time-image; the real which is both a material physicality and imperceptible sensations - percepts and affects, landscapes and faces, visions and becomings;¹⁰¹⁸ where physical and mental are entangled and (dis)connected in the 'structure' that remains open. Gestures and 'brute reality', as well as dreams and memories, are events fluctuating between human and nonhuman in the poetic communication of 'the false'. People, dogs, rain, moods, textures, details, neither particular nor universal but cosmic, enter into 'larger vision'. Spaces, places, movements, gestures, worlds, signs and bodies - a thousand tiny perceptions in an assemblage of actual and virtual expressions. They happen with the matter of the world and the spirit of vision as a multiple one. Outside the history and humanism, intensely earthy in its virtual sensing/intuiting of a pre-personal, non-organic life and its 'tragic'/ecstatic thinking, this new time-image is material but where perception is decentred from the subject and disconnected from narrative. Neither abstract universal nor flesh of the world, it does not show what the world is but senses new worlds through vision that is thinking, tactile, visceral and non-human/ impersonal. Here the amnesiac reality embraces both a process of entropy – an eternal return of the same – and a potentiality of what is yet to come which lies in this world. It is a new sense of being-in-the-world, belief in this world by creating it, even if it seems devoid of meaning, even if it is destined to extinction. Neither social nor

¹⁰¹⁷ Rajchman, *The Deleuze Connections*, p. 133.

¹⁰¹⁸ Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 177.

cultural but 'cosmic', it deals with 'the human condition'. This cinema – a uniquely intense and insistent vision, not exclusively confined to the sight, and devoid of judgment, is capable of extracting life itself as a complex potentiality in all its infinite variations different from the habitual and normative logic of existence. Its intention is not to save us or perfect us (or to damn or corrupt), but rather to complicate things, to create more complex nervous systems, and to release the potentialities of life - new worlds and new modes of existence within this world.¹⁰¹⁹ In the case of aesthetic this would be the question of the 'tragic' inhuman humanism where the (hu)man is only one mode of existence amongst many other, and where life gives meaning to itself in a (tragicomic) 'play' in which new forms are continually created and destroyed. An ethics, as Nietzsche would have it, not that of hubris but of the ever newly-awakened impulse to play which calls new worlds into being.¹⁰²⁰

In the same fashion Deleuze demands a new logic which calls for a truly creative and experimental disposition towards life, outside of what is known and accepted, including art and politics. This new logic, or new kind of 'sense' is characterized by a principle of singular encounters, rather than on a-priori judgment. For him, as Colebrook points out, thought, the ethics of thinking in any form lies in how something works and what it can do, and not in any of its already given terms.¹⁰²¹ Here art, life and philosophy merge in the process of virtual becoming imperceptible.

Nomadic subjectivity instead of subject/ object, atheist metaphysics instead of spirit/ matter, intense singularities instead of intellect/ sensation, affect-thought instead of mind/ body, affirmation of this life or belief in this world rather than judgment based on transcendental moral oppositions, such is the Tarr/Deleuzian image-world in becoming.

Not philosophical in the disciplinary sense but a disruption of a discipline, or experimental intervention (seen as a catalyst of expression rather than subjective or objective argument) this project is an assemblage of 'Ands', neither progressing nor advancing, but hesitating in between image and thought, matter and concept, in what

¹⁰¹⁹ Ibid, p.138.

¹⁰²⁰ Nietzsche, *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*, cited in Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p 62.

¹⁰²¹ Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze*, p. 36.

might be called a "fleeting and fragile perception;"¹⁰²² a desire to bring forth the virtual unknown differently. Not in order to develop a totalising argument but to experiment with thinking through the "non-standard aesthetics,"¹⁰²³ of fractured immanence. Not in terms of what is accepted as aesthetics or politics but in collapsing the distinction between form and content, art and life. Here, by both the films' philosophy and my own thinking where 'I is another', the affects and concepts are teased out of the chaomic texture of Tarr-Deleuze's image-worlds (filmosophy) in the formulation of a 'free-indirect discourse' which 'simulates' and which brings truth into question.

Putting opposing concepts in 'conversation' created an encounter which would call forth the powers of the false, "suggesting to thought 'something to incommunicate', the unthought..."¹⁰²⁴ It allowed the impersonal expression as difference to sustain the undecidability of a gap which is now autonomous as well as both/ and. Opposites brought into 'contact' interact, resist, overlap, 'becoming' on the surface, forming and 'unforming', keeping the forces of chaosmos from dying. It is the logic of "And". Not the search for truth but affirmation of the world is embedded in a process unfolding through the w(a)onderous aberrant movement and repetition of difference. Amnesiac reality and hallucinatory becoming come together in the space of "here and now" which is "nowhere" outside forms and subjects. Thinking with And instead of thinking Is, on the other hand, made it possible for both/and of the event to return to prevent it from settling into either/or. The point was to let the outside forces flow, co-creating with or alongside them.

The project thus mirrors both imaging and philosophy in a crystal where the films' and my own thinking chase each other in a repetition of a difference which wishes to carry on the unrealised power of becoming.

Photographic thinking

We do not need communication. On the contrary, we have too much of it. We lack creation. *We lack resistance to the present.* The creation of concepts in

¹⁰²² Colebrook, Deleuze and the Meaning of Life, p. 166.

¹⁰²³ Laruelle, *Photo-fiction: An Exercise in Non-Standard Aesthetics*, The talk given at Goldsmiths College London, May 2012.

¹⁰²⁴ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, op.cit., p. 183.

itself calls for a future forms, for a new earth and a people that does not yet exist.¹⁰²⁵

Percepts, affects, sounds, words, haecceities, this is not a narrative-based argument or abstract reasoning but a w(a)onderous re-thinking – fractured, disconnected, aberrant, and fragmentary assemblage. Image, time, space, becoming... Photographic thinking, far from looking for the truths wishes to 'discover' the sense of image as life, as power of becoming, as thinking that takes thinking beyond itself; in "a joyful refusal of anything other than radical contingency and a force without promise".¹⁰²⁶ Here the essence of the real and the photographic come together in an infinite 'fractality' of immanent becoming where nothing is given including the real. Photographic thinking produce a poetic-philosophical machinic connecting of images, sounds, theory and writing (as art/practice) in a constellation that takes photography as its model, but which is not itself photographic in the 'technical' sense.¹⁰²⁷ In between exposing and developing, a practice of thinking keeps itself from realisation, intention, and fulfilment. A fugitive being. Not communicating but 'affectuating' – an ethical power of art. All sorts of encounters: memory and imagination, desire and loss, reality and dreams, all 'entangled' with each other and brought onto the surface of an image '(in)formed' this 'un-certain' film-philosophy project.

Repetition, description, and point of view are intertwined, entangled in a framed space with no position from which to 'enter' the image. "To open up to the inhuman and overhuman ... to go beyond the human condition ..." ¹⁰²⁸, bodies overcome through exhaustion are images in themselves – of potentiality, and a brain only an interval, a void between stimulus and response.¹⁰²⁹ Both and in-between, an instant where 'both' collapses into in-betweenness, it is the terrifying meanwhile, the outside, which is also the inside that 'yanks' us out of the habitual human 'I' identity (psychology and perception) into the realm of unthinkable and unimaginable where encounter with the affect-thought is possible. Fragmentary and fractured identity in the last instance – being in becoming. Here material/ virtual opposition disappears in the interstice -

¹⁰²⁵ Deleuze, and Grattari, *What is Philosophy*, p.108.

¹⁰²⁶ Colebrook, 'Introduction', in Claire Colebrook, J. Hillis Miller, Tom Cohen (ed), *Theory and the Disappearing Future: On de Man, On Benjamin*, Routledge, 2011, p. 8.

¹⁰²⁷ Laruelle, *Photo-fiction: An Exercise in Non-Standard Aesthetics*.

¹⁰²⁸ Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, op.cit., pp. 27-8.

¹⁰²⁹ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, op.cit., p. 62, 203.

intolerable, unbearable, hallucinatory haptic, visceral seeing, turns into vision - the paradoxical intensity of in-between. The tensions that are 'captured' in the space of in-between cannot be resolved. They are exposed to each other in an encounter-event both too late and too soon. This space of affect-thought is necessary for keeping the movement of stillness from fixing and thinking-becoming from ever realising, to give the concepts life rather than meaning, to maintain the struggle of persisting (the real) rather than progressing. If a unity, it would be, through Deleuze, that of multiplicity of singular viewpoints in a whole that is expressive of this multiplicity.

Thus, instead of connecting or synthesising the findings into meaningful progressions, the film philosophy project disrupts the linearity and disciplinarity of a discourse in favour of a construction that is a multiplicity of singular encounters. The lack of coherent structure (or fragmentary structure) repeats the style of non-linear montage and momentary exposures creating a rhisomatic intuiting in-between. "De-centering randomness".¹⁰³⁰ "A photo-fiction as a chaos yet more intense than that of a photograph."¹⁰³¹

It is a new thought – and it is so by virtue of its mode of being or its relation to the real, not its aesthetic or technological determination. Far from being a sublimated tracing of the object, of its re-folds and folds, the folds of Being, it postulates an experience of the real-as-Identity.¹⁰³²

Aesthetico-ethical experiment

The modern facet is that we no longer believe in this world. We do not even believe in the events which happen to us, love, death, as if they only half concerned us.¹⁰³³

Opening of the image-world requires belief in this world, and in experimental creating whose outcome cannot be known in advance. In order to discover the identity of thought and life, Deleuze suggests, we should replace the model of knowledge with

¹⁰³⁰ Colebrook, 'Introduction: Extinction. Framing the End of the Species', <http://www.livingbooksaboutlife.org/books/Extinction/Introduction>.

¹⁰³¹ Laruelle, *Photo-fiction: An Exercise in Non-Standard Aesthetics*.

¹⁰³² Laruelle, *The Concept of Non-Photography*, pp. 36-37.

¹⁰³³ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, op.cit. p.166.

belief, we should make use of this powerlessness to believe in life.¹⁰³⁴

Such is the “effectual force” of Tarr’s audio-vision’s amazing sensibility where the border between order and disorder, sentimentality and profoundness, cynicism and empathy, total disintegration and belief, becomes ragged in the choice of *amor fati*. This is not sensory experience in opposition to the extra-sensory but an experience in ‘contact’ with the outside, with the “delirious dimension,” with “the unbearable.” As both an aesthetic and ethical ‘experiment’, the difficult image persists, enduring in-between affect and thought. Powerless, tragic thinking which creates new possibilities despite or in spite of itself, it is a Nietzschean “plural joy” or Deleuzian “double becoming” merging ecstasy and image, chaos with order, one with many, the singular and the universal.

Perhaps cinema is closest to philosophy in the sense that philosophy is life. If life is understood in a Nietzschean/ Deleuzian sense as impersonal becoming (as ‘passive vitalism’), than philosophy like art (or science) creates with (or from within) life, creates fabulas or tragedies, not in search of truth but in affirmation of a thinking passion – a capacity to affect and to be affected. In this sense, passion must be the only truth, the only ethics life can be lived with. Without passion life is dead, so is art and thought. Philosophy as life creates life in becoming, in process, in transformation where becoming is not a simple unfolding of identity but where it produces difference at each new encounter. Life (not opposite to death) as art and as aesthetic thinking; perpetual creation of what is yet to come, never ending, never realised, never defined or known. Always unactualised potentiality, including a freedom for the end of a world (Deleuze), and the possibility of a world without human (Colebrook). The mystery of thought between sensation and sense, the pleasure of not knowing, of chance, of participating “in world’s joyful birth of itself: a dancing star”¹⁰³⁵ is ‘the impossible’ of a belief (in this world).

Black-and-white, sodden, heavy, translucent image and poetic rhythm that unburdens life, between life-forsaken void and lifting spirit of creation. Satan’s tango of tragicomic mingling of the exhausted bodies brings forth the invisible transforming

¹⁰³⁴ Ibid., p.164.

¹⁰³⁵ Zepke, *Art as Abstract Machine*, op.cit. p. 8.

potential, and the dance – an “inexhaustible Will.” Light mingles with darkness in non-expressionistic cosmic manner of becoming beyond good and evil. Outside good or evil, a pathological clinging to life, pathological insistence becomes the continual self-overcoming of man. The time and space (co)exist in the process of contrapuntal renderings of the polyphonic (non)structure. This is a haptic visuality where the touching eye is already disembodied (through the non-human eye of the camera), where the image thinks ‘through’ the unthinkable and the viewer becomes through the unimaginable; where the world without meaning becomes a reservoir of unforeseeable potential, where rain, mud, light, texture, empty and disconnected spaces, exhausted bodies, and wandering dogs, become the “nonhuman landscapes of nature” and the “nonhuman becomings of man”.¹⁰³⁶ An aesthetico-ethical experiment where “lying and trickery mingles with grace and chance” becomes a tragic vision that is also an exceptional kind of health.

Spinozan expression: "one substance that expresses itself now as thought, now as matter and in all the different modes that make up the world,"¹⁰³⁷ presents the ethic of thinking a potential that is not locked into the image of a meaningful world perceived by a unified subject. As human disorgan-ised “I” and cinematic/ photographic camera with its non-human ‘perception’ is able to bring forth, life *activates* thought, and thought in turn *affirms* life.¹⁰³⁸

The hopeless hope vibrates in-between, on the surface of this world, in the style of material-virtual power of untimely creation. Saying yes to life in a tragic sense of chance-necessity; such is Tarr’s films’ transforming potential, the power of which lies not in the actual outcome, but in the sense of the imperceptible real embedded in the aesthetics of a life. The eye can ‘touch’ but only after the subject becomes non “I”. This is materially expressive affectivity – “a jubilant communion of collapse and re-emergence of the organic and inorganic, the a-temporal and a non-oriented spatial without the capacity for anchoring, signification, without knowledge, without reflection or structuration [...], lived experience and liberated a-humanity.”¹⁰³⁹

¹⁰³⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy ?*, op.cit., p. 169.

¹⁰³⁷ Colebrook, *Deleuze and the Meaning of Life*, op.cit., p. 84.

¹⁰³⁸ Deleuze, *Pure Immanence. A Life*. op.cit., p. 66.

¹⁰³⁹ McCormack, ‘The Ethics of Inhuman Art’, in *Actual Virtual* #15 ISSN 1752-5624; <http://www.hssr.mmu.ac.uk/deleuze-studies/journal/av-15/>

Thinking-life – an impersonal expression, resonating, vibrating, and (dis)connecting, expresses itself immanently. We must think of philosophy as a force, to think beyond our human condition.¹⁰⁴⁰

Thinking does not provide consolation or happiness. Like a perversion, it languidly drags itself out; it repeats itself with determination upon a stage; at a stroke, it flings itself outside the dice box. At the moment when chance, the theatre, and perversions enter into resonance, when chance dictates a resonance among the three, then thought becomes a trance; and it becomes worthwhile to think.¹⁰⁴¹

To sum up ...

The thesis can be seen as an encounter with images that are intensely difficult, that demand attention, slow time, force to think through endurance, scramble the faculties, and resist cliché. Everyday 'titbits', and profound events, equally important moments, enfolded in the black-and-white 'reality' of the photographic, break the continuity into imperceptible expressions. Brutal facts are at the same time the indescribable impersonal haecceities that speak to us from no one and no place, through the language of 'things' – through the vision of the nothing-matter. They interact, becoming together without merging, in the 'confused' perception of hallucinatory vision establishing a surface of "weightless immobility" that no longer absorbs all differences but allows them to "arise and sparkle as so many minute, distanced, smiling, and eternal events".¹⁰⁴² The eye-body-brain feels the image but does not act or decide what to do. Earthy physicality, and material details, so 'tangible' and unfamiliar at the same time, suspend the viewer's habitual perception and her/his synthesising 'power' of thinking. These are the moments when we are confronted with something outside ourselves, moments where we cannot comprehend what we 'see' with what we know. These are the images that offer something different from the pleasure of instant gratification, an (e)motion between violence and contemplation.¹⁰⁴³

¹⁰⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 69.

¹⁰⁴¹ *TheatrumPhilosophicum*.

¹⁰⁴² Foucault, *TheatrumPhilosophicum*, op.cit.

¹⁰⁴³ Different violence and different contemplation: "[w]hen the violence is no longer that of the image and its vibration but that of the represented, we move into a blood-red arbitrariness. When grandeur is no longer that of the composition, but a pure and simple inflation of the represented, there is no cerebral stimulation or birth of thought." Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, op.cit., p. 159.

Out of frustration, rejection, choked passages, too much beauty or pain the new becoming with the image is possible, each time differently, in a process forever delayed, forever yet to come. So long as the image keeps resisting 'what is' of representation, a life can be affirmed in its fleeting insistency of an instant, and the world becomes in its immanent belief as creation. Affect and intuition takes us out of the 'viewing' thresholds and opens up the space of becoming/ transformation. Belief replaces knowledge and carries on the never finished 'impossible' of creation.

The play of 'ideas' and affects, matter and vision, conscious and unconscious sensing rather than judging, proceeding 'blindly' open to encounters, and forming the unnatural alliances, 'dancing in the fog', was an attempt to 'free' the discourse from authoritarian and molar systems, to keep becoming an artist-child-philosopher 'uncompromisingly' and singularly.¹⁰⁴⁴ Truly affirming life, like Tarr's nonconforming vision, real, tragic, humorous, and 'full of boring holes', which is not a matter of reproducing or inventing forms, but of capturing forces.

Poetic language is the language of art and cinema, a language of thought as creative process, an affective thinking with life. Conceptual persona born out of life's 'chaocosmic' matter outside meaning and representation which ties it to a human subject. It is the language of *Amor Fati*, an undecided destiny beyond life anthropomorphised into a self-preserving order, that 'disfigures' us from familiar minds and bodies into a shape of the unknown mind-body starting to think the unthinkable.

Am I thinking? Is thinking happening through me? Am I thinking because I'm questioning/ wondering and wandering? Am I thinking still, even if I cannot articulate the thought? What is new thinking after all? Am I in the 'new thinking' mode? How am I to express the movement of thinking captured into (un)thought? Am I not thinking yet?

¹⁰⁴⁴ The philosopher of the future is both artist and doctor – in one word, legislator.

This image of the philosopher is also the oldest, the most ancient one. It is that of the pre-Socratic thinker, "physiologist" and artist, interpreter and evaluator of the world. how are we to understand this closeness between the future and the past? The philosopher of the future is the explorer of ancient worlds, of peaks and caves, who creates only inasmuch as he recalls something that has been essentially forgotten.

I am left with a feeling not of finishing but of beginning again.

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Almanac of Fall, Hungary (1983), 120min.

Damnation, Hungary (1987), 120min.

Sátántangó, Hungary/ Germany/ Switzerland (1994), 419min.

Werckmeister Harmonies, Hungary/ Germany (2000), 145min.

The Man From London, Hungary/France/Germany (2007), 90min.

The Turin Horse, dir. Béla Tarr, Ágnes Hranitzky, Hungary/ France/ Germany/ Switzerland/ USA (2011), 146min.

Werner Herzog, *The Enigma of Kaspar Hauser* (1974).

Andrey Tarkovsky, *Stalker* (1979).

appendix:

Glossary of Deleuzian Terminology

Actual/ Virtual

For Deleuze actual and virtual are not opposed (ie. actual and virtual or reality, or real and imaginary) but both coexist as real. The virtual is not imaginary but real in the sense that it is the reservoir (potential) from which the actual is unfolded. Actual is not so much something that actually exists (as already formed system) but something that is already 'pregnant' in a sense with a richer potentiality. Actual and virtual circuit is conceptualized by Deleuze in *Cinema 2* through the 'image' of crystal (the time-image) where actual and virtual (past/present, imaginary/real, memory/reality) exchange places becoming indiscernible. What he calls a "crystalline regime" is the actual which is already passing into virtual and virtual as a potential for actualization. The virtual image is not actualised directly, but appears in the form of another, different image, which "plays the role of virtual image being actualised in a third, and so on to infinity."¹⁰⁴⁵ Actual thus is unfolded from virtual potentiality and at the same time intuit different reality becoming virtual. What we see in the crystal, Deleuze says, is time itself, a perpetual foundation of non-chronological time. Time is the potential for different actualizations, the non-organic Life which has no end and is unforeseeable.¹⁰⁴⁶ Crystal is forged in terms of *splitting*, *exchange*, and *indiscernibility*. The product of this doubling or splitting in two, this coalescence is (new) "vision".¹⁰⁴⁷ It is a production of time and also through (as) time, production of the new. The virtual thus is not merely the possible that can be realized, and actualization needs to be understood as something new rather than something that resembles the virtuality it embodies.¹⁰⁴⁸ We cannot think virtual/ actual relation in terms of analogy, resemblance or transcendence but as a repetition of difference. The actual in this context would be that which renders visible or incarnates the virtual

¹⁰⁴⁵ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, op.cit., p. 54

¹⁰⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 79

¹⁰⁴⁷ Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, op.cit., p. 63

¹⁰⁴⁸ Deleuze, *Dialogues II*, op.cit., p. 97

(difference) imperceptibly and as such creative rather than representation. The immanent virtual/actual coupling carries difference preventing the virtual power from ever realizing. It is becoming where the future ‘remains’ infinitely unpredictable, and thus is a question of immanent belief/vision rather than transcendent promise. Thus the virtual counterparts of our actual multiplicities make possible continued movement and change, even at the points where the world of actuality seems most rigid and oppressive.

Affects and percepts

Percepts are not perceptions and affects are not affections (feelings or emotions), but impersonal, nonrecognizable and a-signifying sensations . They are independent ‘beings’ that stand for themselves, outside any lived experience. Percepts are “independent of the state of those who undergo them” (they make visible the invisible forces) and affects, rather than arising from subjects, pass through them. Deleuze and Guattari refer to them as nonhuman landscapes of nature (percepts) and nonhuman becoming of man (affects).¹⁰⁴⁹ They are created by art as “blocks of sensations” independent of the creator, character or viewer in the sense that artists (through a particular style: writer’s syntax, painter’s lines and colours, musician’s rhythms) intuit, ‘catalyse’ or bring forth percepts that in turn affect us in a non-personal way. Percept is not what we perceive but what we ‘see’ in the image when our sensory-motor ‘mechanism’ is suspended. Combray in Proust, or oceanic percepts in Melville, Cezanne’s landscapes, or any-spaces-whatever in cinema are examples of such percepts where the characters are becoming with the world by contemplating it (disappearing into the landscape or becoming ‘visionaries’).¹⁰⁵⁰ In turn, we are affected not in a sense of understanding the meaning, or feeling empathy as such - not responding to what is outside me - but creating new connections, as becoming that happens to and through us. To be affected, thus, is not to feel the affect, but to become with the world/ image by contemplating it, that is by a certain attitude of non-acting or reacting, but allowing for ‘other’ forces to vibrate with ours. It is a question of (nonpersonal intensity and change through the force of the image, where the action of the body is suspended and the ‘self’ is produced from the “zone of

¹⁰⁴⁹ Deleuze and Guattari *What is Philosophy?*, op.cit., p.169

¹⁰⁵⁰ Deleuze and Guattari *What is Philosophy?*, p. 164

indetermination”.¹⁰⁵¹ Thus, it could be said that percepts are visions that challenge the conventional notions of seeing and thinking, and affects enable molecular, imperceptible becomings through the encounter with the force of image as something that is not ourselves. “One become universe. Becoming animal, vegetable, molecular, becoming zero.”¹⁰⁵² Through a radical loss of ground, we “become universe”, and start thinking the unthinkable. In this sense art “wrests” percepts from perceptions and affects from affections, and increases our capacity to be affected and to affect, and consequently to think/ imagine different (other than personal or human) modes of existing with the world. For Deleuze and Guattari, the aim of art is thus to invent new affects and consequently to create new ways of perceiving and experiencing.¹⁰⁵³

Assemblage

“On a first, horizontal axis, an assemblage comprises two segments, one of content, the other of expression. On the one hand it is a *machinic assemblage* of bodies, of actions and passions, an intermingling of bodies reacting to one another; on the other hand it is a *collective assemblage of enunciation*, of acts and statements, of incorporeal transformations attributed to bodies. Then of a vertical axis, the assemblage has both *territorial sides*, or reterritorialized sides, which stabilize it, and *cutting edges of deterritorialization*, which carry it away.”¹⁰⁵⁴

Assemblages as conceived by Deleuze and Guattari, are complex constellations of objects, bodies, expressions, qualities and territories that come together as a body or a thing for a period of time. An assemblage is any number of "things" or pieces of "things" gathered into a single context. For example, a human body is an assemblage of genetic material, ideas, powers of acting and a relation to other bodies, or a tribe, is an assemblage of bodies.¹⁰⁵⁵ A book is an assemblage of lines of articulations, strata and territories, lines of flights – pieces put together that can produce any number of effects.¹⁰⁵⁶ Deleuze calls this “machinic assemblage” which is different from an organized and coherent whole. There is no beginning or end to assemblages, no pre-existent structure or law. They are created from connections and interaction. There are

¹⁰⁵¹ Ibid., p. 173

¹⁰⁵² Ibid. p. 169

¹⁰⁵³ Ibid., p. 179

¹⁰⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 88

¹⁰⁵⁵ Colebrook, *Understanding Deleuze*, op.cit., p. 24.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, op.cit., p. 3-4.

judiciary assemblages, familial assemblages, deterritorialising assemblages (becoming animal), “machinic assemblages of movement images” (plane of immanence). The individual is constituted only by being assembled. Every machinic assemblage has two poles in a sense: one side faces a stratum that makes it a kind of organism, or signifying totality, the other faces the body without organs. Every assemblage also refers to a field of desire in which it is constituted, each of us combine both molar (large social assemblages of reproduction), and molecular (local, individual desire of experimentation). Thus individual experience oscillates between a retreat into preconceived forms of thinking and behaving, and freeing the force of affect thus recovering the power to feel and to think differently .¹⁰⁵⁷

Becoming

“A becoming is neither one, or two, nor the relation of the two; it is the in-between, the borderline or line of flight. If becoming is a block (a line-block), it is because it constitutes a zone of proximity and indiscernibility, a no-man's land, a non-localizable relation sweeping up the two distant or contiguous points, carrying one into the proximity of the other - and the border-proximity is indifferent to both contiguity and to distance.”¹⁰⁵⁸

In "becoming", one piece of the assemblage is drawn into the territory of another piece, changing its value as an element and bringing about a new unity. The process is one of deterritorialization in which the properties of the constituent element disappear and are replaced by the new properties of the assemblage—"becomings-molecular of all kinds, becomings-particles.”¹⁰⁵⁹

"Becoming" is a process of change, flight, or movement within an assemblage understood not as an organic whole, but as relationships between the "discrete" elements of the assemblage. We can become as a result of encounters with bodies, the world, works of art, through the affective force that is impersonal and a-subjective. As Deleuze and Guattari remind us we can be thrown into becoming by anything at all, by

¹⁰⁵⁷ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, op.cit., p. 260

¹⁰⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 293.

¹⁰⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 272.

the most unexpected, most insignificant of things.¹⁰⁶⁰ It is neither the a question of identity nor identification, imitation, conforming to a model or establishing corresponding relations.¹⁰⁶¹ In becoming, one does not become another, rather each encounters the other and becoming is something (this something) between the two or outside the two. It is a question of assembling machines, contagion, symbiosis. We do not abandon what we are to become something else (imitation, identification), but another way of living or sensing haunts or is enveloped within our own and “puts it to flight”.¹⁰⁶² Becoming ‘effectuates’ from the ability to affect and to be affected, to form assemblages that nevertheless respect the heterogeneity of their components, blocks of becoming. A “block” is the encounter or the relation of two heterogeneous terms that mutually “deterritorialize” each other. In Deleuze's example, the wasp and orchid create a “becoming” or symbiotic emergent unit.¹⁰⁶³

Everything that exists is an effect of becoming, nothing is fixed and stable. Life is becoming, a change without purpose, particular goal or end-state. In both the actual and virtual sense, becomings: ‘becoming-animal’, ‘becoming-intense’ or ‘becoming-imperceptible’, are not metaphors or imaginary terms (filiation) but real processes of virtual transformation, of symbioses of different ‘realms’, a radical change or potential. As Deleuze and Guattari write, concrete and always singular becoming is not a generality, it is a reality. Becoming produces nothing other than itself.¹⁰⁶⁴

Becoming cannot be ‘explained’ through history, or evolution understood by descent or filiation. For Deleuze, becoming ‘moves through’ every event, it is simultaneously start-point, end-point, and mid-point of an ongoing cycle of production which he theorises through the Nietzschean concept of ‘eternal return’. To become is not to progress or regress along a series.¹⁰⁶⁵ Unlike history, becoming cannot be conceptualised in terms of past and future. Becoming is its own time, the real time in which change occurs. “Becoming-intense”, “becoming-molecular”, “becoming-imperceptible,” “becoming—everybody/everything,” are the most radical, desirable becomings of absolute deterritorialisation, anorganic, asignifying, asubjective. In this

¹⁰⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 232.

¹⁰⁶¹ Ibid., p. 231

¹⁰⁶² François Zourabichvili, *Deleuze: A Philosophy of the Event, together with The Vocabulary of Deleuze*, op.cit., p. 149.

¹⁰⁶³ There is a block of becoming that snaps up the wasp and the orchid, but from which no wasp-orchid can never descend. Ibid., p. 263.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 262.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Ibid.

sense, becoming is one of the poles of the assemblage, where content and expression tend toward indiscernibility in the composition of an “abstract machine.”

Conceptual persona

The conceptual persona, as discussed by Deleuze and Guattari in *What is Philosophy?*, is the figure of thought which gives a concept its specific force, life. It is “what animates a concept.” It is something that 'happens' to the thinker/ philosopher. Conceptual personae are neither psycho-social types, nor philosophers themselves, but are like concepts created, and related to the plane of immanence. Descartes’s idiot, or Nietzsche's Zarathustra, Dionysus, the last man, are such personae. It could be argued that conceptual persona in a sense creates (writes) itself.¹⁰⁶⁶

Difference

Difference is usually understood either as 'difference from the same' or difference of the same over time, and as deriving from stable identities. To the contrary, Deleuze, rather than seeing difference as a difference between two things, thinks of difference as the continual movement of self-differing, a process of continual variation across time. Apparent identities are thus effects of difference, and are composed of endless series of differences. This is creative difference internal to a singular thing or event that is also a multiplicity of transformations, change in all changes repeating itself differently in becoming.

For Deleuze there is no pre-existent identity; we can see evidence of difference in every aspect of reality. Difference is not grounded in anything else. The particularity or 'singularity' of each individual thing, moment, perception or conception testify to such difference.

Deleuzian difference is stripped of all resemblance. It is a concept that has freed itself from similarity and contrariness, opposition and contradiction, a concept of productive virtual difference; a differentiating force without purpose, goal or end. It could be thought of as a desire, a “will to power” or “a life” outside identity, organism, life or death. It is a force of self-differing or a power to differ, a continual movement of repetition (of difference). In *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze gives an

¹⁰⁶⁶ Deleuze and Guattari *What is Philosophy?*, pp. 64-67

example of Monet's Water Lilies, a series of paintings where, according to Deleuze, each water lily repeats the first, but is never the same. Instead, it repeats the pure difference of the 'original'. In *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, he speaks of the eternal return as 'being of difference as such'.¹⁰⁶⁷

Expression

"One can never assign the form of expression the function of simply representing, describing, or averring a corresponding content: there is neither correspondence nor conformity".¹⁰⁶⁸

Deleuze came to the concept of expression through Spinoza for whom there is no world of set relations outside the 'subject' waiting to be expressed. Expression is in the world. It has nothing to do with representing, designating or describing of what already exists (a world of content) but a creative sensing or grasping of virtual potentialities, movements and relations. What is expressed cannot be dissociated from the act by which it is expressed. The world is a plane where different unfoldings or potentials of life are expressed as variations of difference in an open series of relations. As "impersonal worlding" or expressive immanence, expression can be seen as the creation of concepts (thinking) and power to act ('expressive being'); a 'result' (intensity) of intuiting and resonance rather than knowledge or understanding. As image, it is an image in time, not an image of something (representation). As asubjective and asignifying, it cannot be confused with expressionism (as in art). It has a primary relation to matter but this is the question of molecular material, which has the potential to harness unthinkable, invisible, nonsonorous forces.¹⁰⁶⁹ Neither common form nor correspondence, it is a logic of power and a logic of movement which is different from the logic of representation based on identity.¹⁰⁷⁰

Event

The event is defined by an instantaneous coexistence of two heterogeneous dimensions in an empty time in which the future and the past perpetually coincide and encroach on one another, distinct yet indiscernible. The event is what comes, what

¹⁰⁶⁷ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, op. cit.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, op.cit., p. 86.

¹⁰⁶⁹ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, op.cit., p. 332.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Pierre Macherey, 'The Encounter with Spinoza', in Paul Patton (ed), *Deleuze: A Critical Reader* (Blackwell Publishers, op.cit., p. 147.

arrives; an emergent dimension not yet separated from those that precede it. The event is the coming intensity.¹⁰⁷¹ It is time going in both directions at once, something that happened and something that has not happened yet – something about to happen. It is what happens actually and the potential for something else. It is never what it is. In this sense the event is something that can never be really actualised. It is of the logic of immanence, a belief in this world. Event is not historical and it cannot be explained historically. It is affirmed not as resignation or acceptance of 'what is', but in recognition of its potentiality. It is becoming or haecceity. As François Zourabichvili observes, the event is paradoxically both purely “expressible” and an “attribute” of the world and its states of affairs. The event is both sides at once – in language, it is that which distinguishes the proposition; in the world it is that which distinguishes states of affairs. It is thus inseparably both the sense of statements and the becoming of the world; it is that of the world which allows itself to be enveloped in language, thereby enabling the latter to function. “We can think of event as the condition under which thought thinks (the encounter with the outside that forces thought), and the special objectivities of thought (the plane is populated solely by events or becomings, and each concept is the construction of an event on the plane).“¹⁰⁷²

Free indirect discourse

Free-indirect discourse is the term coined by Deleuze after Italian director, Pier Paolo Pasolini (free-indirect-style) It describes the operation of cinematic imaging where the director's 'vision' and the non-human camera's point of view come together as something new, which is then rendered 'visible' through the character's 'speech-act' or through the virtual percepts. In the formation of the ‘free indirect discourse’, of a free indirect vision, which goes from one to the other, either the author expresses himself through the intercession of an autonomous, independent character other than the author or any role fixed by the author, or the character acts and speaks himself as if his own gestures and his own words were already reported by a third party".¹⁰⁷³

¹⁰⁷¹ François Zourabichvili, *Deleuze and Philosophy of the Event*, op. cit. p. 135

¹⁰⁷² Ibid, p. 172.

¹⁰⁷³ Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 64-65.

Immanence

We will say that THE plane of immanence is, at the same time, that which must be thought and that which cannot be thought. It is the nonthought within thought. It is the base of all planes, immanent to every thinkable plane that does not succeed in thinking it.¹⁰⁷⁴

For Deleuze, immanence is not immanence to something which still oscillates within the oppositionistic mode of thinking but immanence to itself, a 'space' of becoming where everything takes place as a process of relations, encounters and assembling. It is at once an infinite and finite virtual-material plane, populated by bodies and conceptual personae, thinking and nature. In a certain sense it is a chaos punctuated by the influx of perceptive, affective, intellectual instants which are aleatory and unrelated, chaos over which art, philosophy, and science "casts planes".¹⁰⁷⁵ It is the creation where creator and creation are one, one impersonal, non-subjective and singular (a) life that is also a creation of everything.¹⁰⁷⁶ It is also a mode of overcoming hierarchical dichotomies of mind/ body, matter/ spirit, intellect/ sensation, transcendent/ immanent. Creation and thinking are not attributes of transcendence but part of "this world" where "experimentation replaces interpretation, now molecular, nonfigurative, and non-symbolic", and the unconscious no longer designates the hidden principle of the transcendent plane but is the process of the immanent construction.¹⁰⁷⁷ Chaos, or what Deleuze calls chaosmos is thus both the intimate threat and the source of philosophical creation. Immanence is the belief in this world as a world of divergence, heterogeneity and impossibility where the state of completion or equilibrium will never take place. As a radical immanence, thought through the concept of univocity (Spinoza) it is what Deleuze calls "transcendental empiricism" or (with Guattari) a virtual "plane of immanence", where the concepts come to life, where "one is said with a single meaning of all the multiple", and where everything is unified as flux and modification.¹⁰⁷⁸ As "pure difference" it is conceptualised through Nietzschean eternal return (affirmation of becoming) where the virtual potential is prevented from ever realising. It is a plane from which all concepts are created. Thus, a plane of immanence can be conceived as

¹⁰⁷⁴ Ibid., P.59.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 203.

¹⁰⁷⁶ Colebrook in *The Deleuze Dictionary*, op.cit. p. 293.

¹⁰⁷⁷ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, op.cit. p. 313.

¹⁰⁷⁸ Ibid. p. 281.

a surface upon which all events occur, where events are understood as chance, productive interactions between forces of all kinds. As such, it is the field of becoming a 'space' containing all of the possibilities inherent in forces. On this plane, all possible events are brought together, and new connections between them are continuously made and dissolved.

Intensity

Deleuze uses the concept of 'intensity' to describe elements at the limits of perception and affection. He describes intensities as pure differences, forms of ontological difference that give rise to 'actual' or perceived entities.¹⁰⁷⁹ As qualities of pure difference, intensities are virtual, though nonetheless real. They cannot be directly perceived or felt. Rather, as Deleuze suggests, they can only be felt, sensed or perceived in the 'quality' they give rise to. Deleuze uses the term 'extensity' or 'extensive' difference to describe the way intensities are homogenised in everyday perception.¹⁰⁸⁰

As '*sentendum*' – that which can only be sensed, or felt – it is the being of the sensible. However, this sensing cannot be achieved through the ordinary exercise of sensibility. Intensity can be remembered, imagined, thought and said. As qualities, intensities are virtual yet real events which cannot be directly perceived or felt in the quality they give rise to. A virtual, intensity 'exists' nowhere in the extended that it constitutes. Deleuze invokes the concept of "body without organs", "nonstratified, unformed, intense matter, [as] the matrix of intensity = 0."¹⁰⁸¹ It is unthought within thought, a transcendental field or pure plane of immanence – a virtual, pre-subjective (a) life, an empty time. In philosophy intensity is 'produced' as the unthought and expressed as an abstract concept. In art, sensation is intimately related to the intensity of the forces that it does not represent; art ruptures extensive or everyday perception because it draws attention to singular 'intensities' (such as the vibrancy of a colour). As affect, neither subjective nor objective, it is both at once: we become in sensation and at the same time something happens because of it.¹⁰⁸²

¹⁰⁷⁹ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, op.cit. pp. 144, 264.

¹⁰⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 230.

¹⁰⁸¹ Ibid., p. 153.

¹⁰⁸² Constantin V. Boundas, 'Intensity', in *The Deleuze Dictionary*, op.cit. p. 132.

Multiplicity

“Multiplicity must not designate a combination of the many and the one, but rather an organization belonging to the many as such, which has no need whatsoever of unity in order to form a system.”¹⁰⁸³

As Jonathan Roffe has pointed out, multiplicity is arguably Deleuze's most important and most difficult concept to grasp because of the many different ways and contexts in which he creates it throughout his work. It can be found in almost all of his philosophical writing, and it is the basis for other concepts such as rhizome, assemblage, and 'concept' itself. It is also one of Deleuze's most difficult concepts to grasp because of the many different ways and contexts in which he puts it to work.¹⁰⁸⁴

In the most basic sense it is a complex structure that does not reference a prior unity. Multiplicities are not parts of a greater whole that have been fragmented, and can not be perceived as a variety of expressions of a single concept or transcendent unity. Neither One nor Many, multiplicity refuses opposition in all of its forms. Moreover, multiplicity is considered as a multiplicity, and not multiplicity of something. There are virtual multiplicities (intensive movements of change) that are real without being embodied in the world and actual multiplicities (states of affairs), combinations of which constitute existence. It is the inter-fused world of virtual and actual emergences of all kinds. “Each individual is an infinite multiplicity, and the whole of Nature is multiplicity of perfectly individuated multiplicities.”¹⁰⁸⁵ The virtual and actual multiplicities are interrelated and effect changes in each other in a way that the changes in actual situations also effect the change in virtual multiplicities. Thus any change to a particular multiplicity means a total change. Multiplicity is in the "and", and this AND is neither one thing nor the other, but always in between.

Outside

Deleuzian outside, which he derived from Maurice Blanchot, cannot be confused with the outside exterior to something. For Deleuze, the Outside, beyond the difference between exterior and interior, is that which is unrepresentable (a field of relations outside of representation) and unthinkable (non-thought within thought), an empty

¹⁰⁸³ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, op.cit., p. 182.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Jonathan Roffe, 'Multiplicity', in *The Deleuze Dictionary*, op.cit. 176.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, op.cit. p. 280

space of Aion. It is the “outside more distant than any external world because it is an inside deeper than any interior world: immanence”; material and virtual force of potentiality; an unconscious as an immanent space (both real and imaginary) of desire that is not dependent on the Oedipal familial structures; a space ‘populated’ by the impersonal, pre-subjective, virtual forces of becoming; an absolute potentiality. As unconscious desire, this would be a force of positive production, not lack or negativity (as in a psychoanalytical structure). It is a transcendental field which Deleuze also calls the plane of immanence where nothing is presupposed, “the incessant to-ing and fro-ing of the plane, infinite movement.”¹⁰⁸⁶ In cinema the outside is conceived in relation to the time-image where a whole, paradoxically thought of as a gap or interval (in-between), becomes the outside. Now it is an open whole where the common sense perception or understanding of things is suspended.

Potentiality

Potentiality cannot be confused with possibility which is something that can be predicated (that somehow ‘pre-exists’ representational real), that is something that ultimately remains the same. Possibility is something that can be ‘realised’. Potential, on the contrary is a virtual force (a difference) which cannot be foreseen, realized or represented. It is a real force which can only be actualized in various modes in time. For Deleuze real conditions are not those which must be presupposed by the actual but the potentials of life from which different conditions such as the brain, subjectivity or mind emerge. It is something that we neither perceive nor think, what we are not yet thinking (“we do not know what the body can do”). It is a question of belief (in this world) rather than knowledge, an affirmation of the relation with the outside.

Powers of the False

Powers of the false – the power to create – Deleuze sets against the dogmatic ‘image of thought’ (an accepted definition of what it is to think, what is true and what is false) and against a normative fixed ‘model’ of existence (life as a fixed set of systems and rules). Following Nietzsche, who saw the false not as error or deception but as the highest value of creation, Deleuze argued that truth is not something that needs to be

¹⁰⁸⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 59.

excavated, achieved or reproduced but has to be (is) created. Seen through the ‘eyes’ of creation, philosophy, art and cinema, each according to their own modes put Truth into question and raise falsehood to its highest affirmative power, which is not a question of form but of transformation. Affects and percepts in art, and literature, the free-indirect-vision(ary) in cinema, and conceptual personae in philosophy, are the aesthetic figures of powers of the false or what Deleuze calls “intercessors”. By bringing forth (incarnating) the outside that affirms the powers of the false, they take seeing and thinking outside the ordinary habitual perceptions and everyday opinions, transforming expression and creating new concepts.¹⁰⁸⁷ The certainty and fixed ideas of the transcendental otherworldly truth is replaced by the false of immanence, at once worldly and experimental. By destroying every model of the truth, the powers of the false shatter the system of judgement (through affect), and cannot be separated from multiplicity. For Deleuze as for Nietzsche, there is no other truth than the creation of the New.¹⁰⁸⁸

The creation of truth is a process without predetermined points of departure or ends. This is not a dialectic in the sense of a negation that produces a higher unity, but a dialogue, an interrogation, where one term is able to question, interrogate, or falsify the other in a process of thinking as creation.¹⁰⁸⁹ We can think of powers of the false in terms of fabulation, as a meditation on critique, as a creation of concepts, as a practice of creative commentary which resonates with the Deleuzian-Guattarian concept of the rhizome. Experimenting, belief in this world, simulation, time as becoming, and immanence are concepts affirming the false. Through such ‘transformations’ as crystalline narration, false continuity – irrational cut, simulation of the story – metamorphosis, crystalline description – hallucinatory state, character – forger creating truth, cinema has become creator and producer of truth.

Rhizome

“Unlike trees or their roots, the rhizome connects any point to any other point, and its traits are not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature; it brings into play very different regimes of signs and even nonsign states. The rhizome is reducible neither to the One nor the multiple... It is composed not of units but of dimensions or rather

¹⁰⁸⁷ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, op.cit., p. 102.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p. 142

¹⁰⁸⁹ Rodowick, *Gilles Deleuze's Time Machine*.

directions in motion. It has neither beginning nor end, but always a middle [milieu] from which it grows and which it overflows. It constitutes multiplicities.”¹⁰⁹⁰

As Deleuze and Guattari discuss in *A Thousand Plateaus*, the rhizome is a new image of thought resisting the organizational structure of the root-tree system: seeking roots or ancestors, searching for the origins of "things", and looking towards the pinnacle or conclusion of those "things." They oppose it to an arborescent conception of knowledge, which works with dualist categories and binary oppositions. A rhizome establishes connections between all sorts of things, any point of a rhizome can be connected to any other but is “composed not of units but of dimensions.”¹⁰⁹¹ It “brings into play very different regimes of signs, and even nonsign states.” It works with ‘horizontal’ connections. Deleuze and Guattari explain that the rhizome “has neither beginning nor end, but always a middle (milieu) from which it grows and which it overflows.” The rhizome is a “self-vibrating region of intensities whose development avoids any orientation toward a culmination point or external end.” It could be thought of as a mode of theory, model of society or style of writing ‘forged’ by bifurcation, unforeseeable encounters, and non-communication; a real becoming in the middle. It is the interplay between rival sign systems in the production of new “variation[s], expansion[s], conquest[s], [and] offshoots.”¹⁰⁹² Thinking is thus experimentation. Rather than narrativise history and culture, the rhizome presents history and culture as a map (rather than trace) with no specific origin or genesis. For a "rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo".¹⁰⁹³ The planar movement of the rhizome resists chronology and organization, instead favouring a nomadic system of multiplicity. As the One ($n-1$) dimension, it designates what is ‘real experience’ (of multiplicity), which is never “in general” or simply “possible,” as opposed to representational concepts.¹⁰⁹⁴

¹⁰⁹⁰ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, op.cit. p. 21

¹⁰⁹¹ Ibid., p.99.

¹⁰⁹² Ibid., p. 23, p. 24, 7.

¹⁰⁹³ Ibid., p. 25.

¹⁰⁹⁴ François Zourabichvili, *Deleuze: A Philosophy of the Event*, p.208

illustrations:



Damnation (1987), 120min



Damnation (1987), 120min



Damnation (1987), 120min



Damnation (1987), 120min



Damnation (1987), 120min



Sátántangó (1994), 419min



Sátántangó (1994), 419min



Sátántangó (1994), 419min



Sátántangó (1994), 419min



Sátántangó (1994), 419min



Sátántangó (1994), 419min



Sátántangó (1994), 419min



Sátántangó (1994), 419min



Werckmeister Harmonies (2000), 145min



Werckmeister Harmonies (2000), 145min



Werckmeister Harmonies (2000), 145min



Werckmeister Harmonies (2000), 145min



Werckmeister Harmonies (2000), 145min



Werckmeister Harmonies (2000), 145min