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JACOB ROGOZINSKI: Each time that I re-read Deleuze, I feel immense admiration, gratitude, and, at the same time, a certain hesitation. I have wondered for a long time why I resisted him. I am beginning to understand why I am not a “Deleuzian,” and my work on Artaud is helping me to see this more clearly. Thanks to Deleuze (and some others, notably Derrida), we have learned to really *read* Artaud, so that we can grasp the force of his thought, of his writing. But the readings that are the most illuminating can also be the most blinding: this is the case for Heidegger’s interpretation of Hölderlin, and for Deleuze’s interpretation of Artaud. It seems to occupy a marginal place in his work: only a few pages, nothing like the long analyses devoted to Proust and Kafka. It is there, however, where Deleuze discovers the motif of the “body without organs,” which will play such a great role in his philosophy; it is also with Artaud that his interest in schizophrenia begins. However, except for *Logic of Sense*, Deleuze’s reading of Artaud remains superficial. It is more often limited to an incantatory invocation: the Momo would be the most exemplary incarnation of radical poetry, the Christ of the poets in a way, in the sense that Spinoza is “the Christ of the philosophers” ... Deleuze created a myth, that of Artaud the Schizo, who would have been “the accomplishment of literature, precisely because he is schizophrenic,” who would have succeeded by virtue of his “psychosis” which dissolved his subjectivity in an anonymous flow of desire.¹ I think that Deleuze departs from the actual experience of Artaud on two decisive points: by his *praise of madness* as a resource for writing, and by his apology for the *destruction of the ego*. Why is this a misunderstanding?

The experience of madness coincides well, in Artaud, with a de-subjectivization, where his personal identity seems to disappear, where he no longer is able to write his own name. But it is above all the test of a disaster: Artaud was not a genius poet because he was crazy, *even though he was*, and his return to writing is the story of an “escape from hell,” a *fight against*

madness. He did not write so many admirable texts because his “schizophrenia” would have fortunately relieved him of the illusory necessity of having to be a me, only for him to reappropriate his me, his name, his body, in order to make them reborn in ripping them out of this dark pocket where they had fallen. Contrary to a romantic apology for the delirium, he must stick to the maxim of Foucault: madness is the absence of the work, the point of collapse where it becomes impossible. Which does not mean that it has *nothing to do* with the work. As is the case with so many great artists, the work happens only in a fierce struggle with the emptiness that feeds, the silence which threatens to interrupt. Whether we are considering Hölderlin, Nietzsche, or Artaud, it is that we can only do work *at the limit* of madness, in trying to resist it, to escape from this ground where art and thought draw their force, but still risk sinking.

EVELYNE GROSSMAN : There is not, I believe, a praise of madness in Deleuze, but a praise of delirium, which is quite different. He understands the word in the well-known etymological sense: what comes out of the furrows, out of the straight line. Therefore, he praises curves, spirals, or those forces which divert the discourse of ordinary law to an outside that overflows. The literature is delirious, it is often repeated, cosmic delirium which haunted the universal story, which has nothing to do with our stories of father-mother—these little, banally oedipal stories. In this sense, there is a profound complicity between the discourse of Deleuze and Guattari and some of the great writings of the end of the nineteenth and of the twentieth century which they interrogate: Proust, Beckett, Blanchot, Artaud, Céline, Kafka, Anglo-American writers, etc. All, according to him, are deeply delirious—and Deleuze too, with Guattari, in a certain sense, endeavors to make philosophical discourse delirious. They did it, as we know, with *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*, books which remain to my mind inexhaustible works of creation.

So for him, without the delirium which invents the processes, the encounters, the events, it is not a creation. This by no means signifies a praise of psychosis; the “schizo” of which he speaks does not meet the psychiatric or institutional definition of the term. It is a conceptual personage, a quasi-romanesque creation; he is a Beckettian tramp wandering on the routes of Lawrence’s nomads. “You do not write with your neuroses,” says Deleuze. “The neuroses, the psychosis, is not the way through, but the states in which one falls when the process is interrupted, prevented, clogged. The malady is not the process, but halts the process, like in the ‘case of Nietzsche.’”² Note that he does not say the “case of Artaud,” no doubt because he knows better than anyone how Artaud was never “fixed,” as psychiatrists say.

In this sense, Artaud is interesting when he is delirious, like any great writer, and not when he collapses in psychosis. Deleuze has this astonishing formula in *Logic of Sense* when he refers to certain translations that Artaud made of Lewis Carroll in 1944 during his internment in the psychiatric asylum of Rodez: he speaks of Artaud as “a collapse central and creative.” Deleuze’s paradoxical formula speaks the complexity of the phenomena—complexity which, in his indisputable honesty, he does not seek to reduce. He considers a surprising trio whose elements he pivots (he is still structuralist at the time): Lewis Carroll (the experimental poet of the paradoxes of sense), Louis Wolfson (the schizo), and Antonin Artaud. Artaud: poet or schizo? He compares the surfaces of Carroll to the depths of Artaud, and analyzes the language of Artaud compared to that of Wolfson. “Far from Artaud’s genius, he writes curiously about Wolfson’s prose, considering another text whose beauty and density remain clinical.”³ There is beauty in the schizo language, but is it relevant to psychiatry? According to what discriminating criteria? Deleuze does not say. “For all of Carroll,” he concludes, “we would not give up one page of Antonin Artaud.”⁴

J. ROGOZINSKI : My concern is how you demarcate between madness and delirium, between the schizo in the Deleuzian sense and in the psychiatric sense of the term. If any writer, any speech which deviates from the norm is “delirious,” then the word *delirium* loses its meaning. And can we entirely dissociate the concept of “schizophrenia” from its context, from its history—that is of the field of psychiatry—where it was elaborated? I believe that, in Deleuze, these distinctions are not so clear-cut; he is often tempted by a celebration of the subversive and creative madness, which was fashionable (think of the “antipsychiatry” of Laing and Cooper). Just like you, I find this formula on the “creative collapse” of Artaud quite astounding. And I have trouble following him when he distinguishes the vital “process” and the illness as “stopping” the process: there are also processes pathological, (self)destructive, deadly, which are better to try and stop... To understand what is at play here, the passage from *Logic of Sense* which you reference is very important. Deleuze opposes the “language of the surface” of Carroll with that of Artaud, the explorer of depths. In the language of Artaud, he said, “we recognize sorrow: it is the language of schizophrenia.” The first appearance of this notion in his work refers to a sort of disaster, the return to a “bankruptcy of the surface”... It is this diagnostic which leads Deleuze to bring Artaud’s writing closer to that of Wolfson, a schizophrenic in the clinical sense. Thus follows the admirable analysis on the different figures of the schizo body (this is where we find the first reference to the “body without organs”) and what characterizes the “schizophrenic language.” I recall a trait that Deleuze emphasizes strongly: a *language without articulation*. In Artaud’s glossolalia, “the cries together are welded into breath,” just as the parts of the schizo body become fluid and merge into a “glorious body without organs.”

But nothing is more disputable. If he takes the syntax that divides language as the anatomy that separates the body, Artaud does not oppose them in an indifferent fusion, but in an *other articulation*, rhythmic and mobile. He read the glossolalias aloud just enough to hear their rhythmic scansion which operate each time there are cuts in the fluidity of breath. The analogy with the body without organs does not hold—moreover, I do not think that the language of Artaud is “cut into the depths of the body,” that it *immediately* arises from the body’s passions and affects, as if schizophrenia was able (by what miracle?) to abolish any demarcation between the word and the thing, the language and the body. Many have dreamed about it, from the *Cratylus* to Rousseau, and beyond... Artaud is not one of them. You have yourself shown that his glossolalia have nothing to do with a “primitive language” of the body, but rather that they are built through a strategy of writing, by means of anagrams, of graphic and etymological derivations.⁵ Often, these are code words, variations on the phonemes of the name “Artaud,” the name that had been erased, foreclosed by psychosis, and which he tries to reclaim in the matrices of his writing. Without doubt, the subject’s relation to the Name of the Father is more essential than Deleuze thought... Adorno said of the syntactic ruptures we find in Hölderlin: “poetry took them to the zone of madness.” I could say as much of what Artaud called his “invented syllables” and all these seemingly delusional utterances that dot his final texts. These are *diversions* which allow him to replay the madness, to reinscribe it in the poem, to better outwit it. Deleuze treats these poetic inventions as simple clinical symptoms: he confounds the poet and the schizo, Artaud’s struggle against madness and the pathological elaborations of Wolfson. We blame him, and he defends himself in *Anti-Oedipus*. There, he reaffirms that Artaud is “schizophrenic,” but now celebrates the “schizophrenic process” as the most radical “breakthrough,” the most subversive and originary desire. I wonder if we are not dealing with a headlong rush, an escalation which further aggravates the initial mistake.

E. GROSSMAN : Any antipsychiatry aside (and on this point, I agree with you), it seems that Deleuze is also part of, while rethinking, this very old tradition of delirium lent to poets. Levinas, too, evokes this tradition when, in *Totality and Infinity*, he analyzes the delirium of the the *Phaedrus*: the essence divine or not, the voice inspired by delirium is not necessarily irrational, he says; he here means the end of solitary thought or interiority. In an idea not too far from Deleuze’s, Levinas questions in Artaud, as in other writers, what makes him *leave* his language, that which makes him hear, at the interior of his language, always at least one other language (blown by another, as Derrida also heard from Artaud). Inspiration is not the only question here, but also that strangeness to oneself that makes one write—the question, central to Deleuze, of the translation; I will perhaps come back to this. Yet you have

reason, in my view, to wonder about the report (or not) between the schizo in the Deleuzian sense and the psychiatric sense. It might be necessary to say *the* psychiatrics' (plural) senses are so vague, contradictory, and shifting from the old Bleulerian concept to the modern DSM IV (a largely disputed categorization itself). So, admittedly, Deleuze uses this notion strangely, with little respect for the categories used by psychiatry (*the* psychiatrics), and this lends itself to confusion. We could refer here to what he says about the meeting of ideas, flight, capturing the thoughts of the philosopher. So he steals this word from psychiatry, and of course it is surprising to speak of "Beckettian schizoid sequences" for example (*Anti-Oedipus*), or the "schizophrenic vocation of American literature" in the sense that it would make the English language scatter through drifts and derivations (*Essays Critical and Clinical*). We could also say that Deleuze is doing the work of creation (in the sense that, as we know, the philosopher is first and foremost for him a creator of concepts) and therefore for all of DSM IV, we would not give a page of *Anti-Oedipus*. Or, again, we could follow the text's internal logic and simply accept the term as indissociably philosophical and poetic, as Deleuze and Guattari lay out. As an aside, we could also show how Deleuze and Guattari play on anagrammatic echoes between "schizo" and "rhizome" in *A Thousand Plateaus* (there is a poeticity to their writing, as in unison with what they are trying to grasp they continue the lines and detours that are also lines of writing: "We write like a rat and draw like a line," says Deleuze strongly).

To this extent, one can only be struck by the fact that "schizophrenia," in Deleuze's sense, is first of all a question that touches on language (and how, through language, schizophrenia relates the body to space, the journey, the lines...). "Psychosis is inseparable from a variable linguistic process," he repeats, among other similar lines, in *Essays Critical and Clinical*. In this sense, if the comparison between Wolfson, Rousset, Brisset and Artaud comes back regularly in Deleuze, it is to try and comprehend how they tackle language and its transformation. Now, and I wonder if you have the same impression as me, you cannot be struck by the fact that Artaud's work, read by Deleuze(-Guattari), is often unrecognizable. He does not read Artaud like Derrida, for instance, in the sense of a tight, precise, and almost linguistic commentary on the text. Even the analyses of *Logic of Sense* are often a brilliant survey of the heterogeneous fragments just mentioned (such as his translation of Carroll, a rapid allusion to "organ-letters" in the *Tarahumaras*, two phrases from November 1947).

J. ROGOZINSKI : Difference of style, of tempo... While Derrida patiently follows every meandering of the texts, Deleuze flies over them at high speed by connecting them to other texts. This produces brilliant short-circuits, but the author is often unrecognized. This is how he invented the myth of Artaud-the-Schizo, which has become an obstacle to reading. On the relationship

between poetry and delirium, you're right to mention Plato, even if he is more devious than we believe. Reread the *Ion*: the poet is delirious, but the philosopher is not, because he speaks *in truth*, in the name of truth. By pretending to praise them, Plato wants to belittle the pretensions of the poets by rejecting them in madness, that is to say, in non-truth. This is the kind of exclusion that Artaud attacks when he attacks psychiatric pseudo-knowledge. He discovered that there is a *truth of madness*, a dangerous truth, infinitely exposed—madness, he said, is “Truth or death”⁶—but he learned, from having endured in its flesh, that it is also a *counter-truth*, an illusion, a “force of death” which opposes at the birth of the poem. Illusion in the sense that his own word seems to him “breathed” (at once dictated and stolen) by an evil Other. It is this knot of truth and counter-truth which is completely obscured when one apologizes for delirium or schizophrenia. One wonders why Deleuze privileges schizophrenia over other types of madness: why he implies a “schizo,” a dissociation, a dissolution of the ego, and considers the ego as an illusion that must be foiled. He shares what I designate as a position of egocide with many contemporaries: Heidegger, Sartre, Lacan... What makes the Deleuzian egocide special is that he is not content with a theoretical critique, but calls for a *real* process—the famous “schizophrenic process”—to “undo one’s self.” Already in *Logic of Sense* or *Difference and Repetition*, he defines the transcendental field as a network of preindividualized singularities “which does not involve either Me or I.” He then designates an “ante-me” which generates the self as a derivative instance, through a process of individuation.⁷ The problem is that he cannot really show how a concrete self, as a determined individual, emerges from this impersonal field. The process of individuation that he describes is only for a “vague” me, on the model of the “vague Adam” of Leibniz, where Adam = X, defined by the minimum predicates necessary to belong to the maximum of possible worlds, to the greatest number of variants of the same history.⁸ But this indeterminate point-X is not the singular self that *I am*, that we are each time. No doubt because it is impossible to constitute the ego from a native non-me: the ante-I must already be an I. This is why I think it necessary to return to Descartes, to determine the *ego cogito* as a first truth that gives itself. However, Deleuze goes completely in the opposite direction, as in *Anti-Oedipus* he rejects any ego, any personal individuality as an illusion “excessively” paranoid, contrasting it with the anonymous flow of desire. We then pass from the ante-I to the anti-I. By becoming radicalized, the removal of the ego is transformed into pure and simple destruction. We then meet the aporia at which every egocide becomes radical: is it possible to totally eliminate the ego? Do we not find, at the heart of delirium, an irreducible halting of saying-I? There is a surprising passage at the beginning of *Anti-Oedipus*, where Deleuze and Guattari claim that delusions and hallucinations “presuppose an *I sense* more deeply,” “an ‘I sense that I become a woman,’ ‘that I become god’ which is neither delirious nor hallucinatory” (p. 25). But this track will not be explored. They will insist

that “there is no self in the center” of the field (p. 105)—even when Nietzsche declares, at the moment of collapse, that “all names in history are me,” even when the Mōmo writes “I am Antonin Artaud, I am my father, my mother, my son/and me.” It is the enigma of this “and me” that it is time to question. When Artaud emerges from delirium and returns to writing, in Rodez in 1943, he says that he strives to “clear (his) true me” and returns to signing his own name. He will describe his experience later as the fall into a “gulf without name,” that of madness, followed by a rise, a re-naming that will leave “the gulf between the syllables of the term: AR-TAU.” As if he already knew what misunderstanding would distort the sense, he added that “some insiders have wanted to argue that this was a designation of force and not of an individual”—and he responds in advance to all the egocides superbly: “Now, I am this individual. I am, me, this dark force.”⁹ If he presents madness as a “transplantation without essence” where the outside and the inside, the self and the other, are at risk of being confused¹⁰, it is for him opposed to his “intransplantable me,” a me which would have *falsely* believed that it was, entered and devoured by the “larvae of the non-me,” while he did not cease to be. It is this affirmation which underlies the most paradoxical, the most “mad” declarations of his last writings—“I always knew that I was Artaud the dead,” “it is I who am appointed God, me, Artaud”... That he reenacts the paradoxes of Valdemar for Poe (“I tell you that I am dead”); which he identifies as his proper name in the Name of all names; or that he simultaneously occupies all the places of his family tree—in each case there re-emerges the one irreducible I. Leaving open the question of *which* could be that “me” capable of multiplying, getting spread infinitely, of adopting or simulating innumerable identities, without ever ceasing to be *me*...

E. GROSSMAN : I was always struck by this sentence, apparently so casual, from *A Thousand Plateaus*: “For Heliogabalus, it is Spinoza, and Spinoza is Heliogabalus revived. And the Tarahumaras are the experimentation, the peyote. Spinoza, Heliogabalus, and experimentation have the same formula...”¹¹ (Massumi trans.). At first glance, one has the impression of being a little electrified, or, like you said, of flying over these references at a high speed. And still, in the comic violence of these equivalences (never forget the humor of Deleuze, or his taste for *nonsense*), in what seems to be a series of incongruous comparisons, something is expressed of the One and the many, of the question of the plane of immanence, of the speed in-between tiny particles... (it is the reading which Deleuze also made ten years earlier in his *Spinoza* work). François Zourabichvili was right to press on the importance of the violence in thinking for Deleuze. In *Proust and Signs* as in *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze keeps returning to the fact that there is no thought that is involuntary, born by breaking through, dependent on an accidental event with something that arises from the outside and forces us to think (including, for example, the apparent *nonsense*, the discordant idea). It is not certain,

writes Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition*, that thought “can be reported, as in the Cartesian *cogito*, to a substantial and complete subject, well-constituted: the thought is plural and its terrible movements cannot be supported under only the conditions of a larval subject” (p. 156). This, Deleuze reads of Proust but also of Artaud, in a way even more critical, it seems to me, and in particular in the first texts like the *Correspondence with Jacques Rivière*. What does he finally find among these writers he loves? Another modality of thought which no longer belongs to our systems of representation (a thought without image, that’s what Artaud would have met, he suggests), an enemy thought (not a thought “which does no harm to anyone,” and not a philosophy, he says drolly, but a “miso-*sophy*”), a thought which no longer refers to common sense, established values, to the recognition or the reunion of the meaning which brings out the new, which is a work of creation (that is why for him the thinker, the philosopher, is a creator, close to the artist): “Because the new thing, that is to say the difference, is to solicit in thinking forces which are not those of recognition, neither today nor tomorrow, but are powers of a completely different model, in a *terra incognita*, never recognized nor recognizable. And from what forces does it come into thought, from what bad nature and what bad central will, *from which central collapse* that strips thought of its ‘innateness,’ and which treats time as something that has not always existed, but that begins, constrained and forced?” (DR, 177-178; Grossman’s emphasis).

I was wondering earlier on about this curious formula from Deleuze in *Logic of Sense*, evoking Artaud, “a collapse central and creative” (an expression which implicitly refers to that complaint of Artaud in his letters to Rivière on a “central collapse of the soul”). But the formula we find here emphasizes this complex link between the loss of self-control, rational restraint, and creative thinking. Deleuze, moreover, remarks that he is absolutely faithful here to the analysis which Foucault gives in his *History of Madness*. You were alluding to it yourself at the beginning, when you quote what you call “the maxim” of Foucault: madness is the *absence of work*, the point of collapse where it becomes possible. But we cannot, I believe, stop at this categorical formula of a subtle analysis of Foucault (and therefore, of Deleuze), its undeniable grandeur in the final pages of *A History of Madness*, because we must read this text until the end. What does Foucault say in these final lines? That from now on, it is the world that must try to measure itself “to the disproportion of Nietzsche, of Van Gogh, of Artaud. And nothing in him, least of all what he can know of madness, assures him that these *works of madness* justify it” (author’s emphasis). Between *the absence of the work* and the *works of madness*, that pounding, that preserved chiasm, is the full complexity of Foucault’s thought which we must understand. The madness *is breaking* and it is this enigma that we are invited to confront. Then, Artaud as read by Deleuze and Guattari, is certainly unrecognizable, as I mentioned earlier... One doesn’t recognize him at times (he is no longer like himself, who we think we know, in which we

sometimes think we recognize *each other*), since it is not reading by recognition or by self-reflection. To measure the excessiveness of these works, as Foucault said, try to hear their strangeness and their enigmatic character without falling back on what we think we know about ourselves and about bodies. Recall Deleuze's mockery of the acts of recognition that occupy us in our everyday lives. He wrote, "it's a table, it's an apple; it's the piece of wax, hello Theatetus" (DR, 176). Nothing to do, indeed, with "Heliogabal, it is Spinoza..."! We unfortunately don't have enough time here to continue the discussion that your theory of egocides deserves; I am referring to your book¹² and will list a few conflicting ideas (while recognizing that we still agree on many fundamental points). To begin by paying tribute to Deleuze-Guattari, *this strange subject without an ego* may have been insufficiently taken stock of here. You also suggest that Deleuze (like Levinas, Derrida, Lacan, Foucault, Blanchot...) searched for our greatest happiness in the joy of dissociation, in losing ourselves to writing and to thought: there is a stratified and deadly schizo, another who is cheerful and creative, he suggests. It seems to me that what Deleuze is trying to invent (with others), is a non-personal subject which clears away the anxiety of being—a sense of relief, appeasement, and infinite joy at times: I am a temporary particle inserted into an unstable ensemble, or I am this multitude of voices speaking in me, or I am that which does not return or refer to itself, this "myself" stabilizes on the affirmation of identity. So finally I write, I think—out of me. This is probably what gives the reading of many texts of the twentieth century: subjectivities in constant displacement, without a fixed point of enunciation, "an I without me" said Blanchot, "the splendor of One" adds Deleuze (a nonpersonal individuation), a Neutral, a non-person. No madness of the absence of identity or paralysis is a subject without images, but the game of a gap between I and me, a preserved openness, the movement, this "free play of articulations" which Artaud admires among Balinese dancers.

J. ROGOZINSKI : This "cheerful and creative schizo," this "joy of dissociation" where all anxiety would vanish, I do not find them in Artaud when he invokes his test of madness: he speaks of the agonies of death "where the I falls into a puddle." I do not find these in the final silence of Nietzsche, in the suicide of Nerval or that of Sarah Kane, in the automutilations of David Nebreda, not to mention all those countless, anonymous people who have not managed to tear themselves away from the silence of the absence of work. If Artaud had lived long enough for *Anti-Oedipus*, he would have no doubt ranked it among the writings "of surface," those which do not come pre-packaged, but "that the author was careful to maintain in the womb of suffering where all the great poets have suffered."¹³ You are right, there is a difference between us—and the question of the ego is at stake. I am surprised that a philosopher of the caliber of Deleuze could commit such a misinterpretation of Descartes. The Cartesian *cogito* is not this "completed

subject, well-constituted" which he rejects. It is an intermittent and precarious self, which cannot find itself, failing to persist from one instant to another: a *me without subjectivity*, without fixed identity, that which is not the same thing as an "I without me" (with all due respect to Blanchot, this expression has about as much sense as a square circle!). Our experience confirms this intuition of Descartes: it is this incessant failure which exposes us to the risk of dispersion, dissolution into the anonymity of the We, the Neuter, and alienates us to the different figures of the Other. This is what we must resist, in all forces of "conspiracy" (to talk like Artaud) which tend to alienate the ego, to dissociate itself from itself, to crush its singularity. The authors which you invoke have not grasped the stakes involved in this resistance, in this fight for the truth of the ego. Levinas, Lacan, Foucault, but also Heidegger or Bataille... These thinkers which I admire, whom I often feel so close to, everyone has restated in one manner or another the same gesture of egocide, except for Derrida. At home, egocide is accompanied by an inverse gesture, by an insisted re-mark and signature, as I tried to show elsewhere.¹⁴

To return to Deleuze, there is a motif which we have not talked about yet and which plays a decisive role in his reading (or rather his non-reading) of Artaud: the "body without organs." Deleuze renders the "body without organs" as a weapon of war against the ego: "let's go even further, we have not yet found our body without organs, not enough to undo ourselves."¹⁵ We are very far from the furious reaffirmation of the "Me Antonin Artaud" which scans all of the final writings... But what poses the biggest problem to me is the negative, or privative, nature of this concept, which inevitably evokes a compact mass, without any differentiation. I believe that this stems from his initial misunderstanding of the so-called "schizo language" of Artaud. Since Deleuze mistakenly interprets it as a continuous flux, an inarticulate "block of breath," he constructs the body without organs by analogy as a continuum without cuts, an "undifferentiated amorphous fluid," that is to say a *full body*, closed on itself, sterile and dead.¹⁶ Here, too, we are far from Artaud: the Mōmo is looking for a "true body" which would escape the rigid divisions of the organism; but this new body, re-engendered through the poem, supposes a "furtive anatomy," a movable articulation between differentiated elements. The "body without organs" is not appropriate to name this, unless distorted to the extreme as in *A Thousand Plateaus*, where it now seems to have a teeming multitude of organs (but in what sense is it still a *body without organs*?...). That is why I prefer to talk about flesh, a self always incarnated, of a flesh that always is, as Husserl said, an *Ichleib*, an "ego-flesh." This is also a term we find in Artaud, for example at the beginning of *Van Gogh*, where he raises the question of the relationship between the flesh and the body, as well as the flesh and the ego. But Deleuze was interested in egocide (and also hostile to phenomenology), in admitting of an immanent self who is his own flesh. It is not a question of words, but fundamentally an alternative: it is necessary to choose between ego-flesh and a body without organs without "me." Flesh has

nothing to do with the compact mass described in *Anti-Oedipus*—it is, says Merleau-Ponty, an “inwardly worked mass,” traversed by a “hiatus,” a “dehiscence.” This is the “free play of articulations” which Artaud spoke about. Because it is a matter of stepping over this gap, of intertwining the disjointed poles of the ego-flesh, the matrix of this chiasm is tactile (where my hand touches my other hand touching). In their last book, Deleuze and Guattari jest about the chiasm: about paintings, they write “the difficult thing is to attach, not the hands, but the planes.”¹⁷ My response to them is that without this carnal interlacing, it is impossible to join the planes, aesthetically, ontologically—impossible to articulate immanence and transcendence, to understand the passage from flesh to body, from me to the subject, from life to the world and to being. Deleuze claimed a philosophy of absolute immanence: he envisaged the appearance of transcendence in immanence only as a “poisoned gift”, a deadly threat to the field of immanence.¹⁸ I wonder if this is not his most serious mistake, the major limit of his thought...

E. GROSSMAN : To speak so peremptorily of *misinterpretation*, of *initial misunderstanding*, of a *serious mistake* by Deleuze, to brandish against him what is believed to be the ultimate truth of Artaud, Nietzsche, or the Ego, bothers me a little. It is obvious that there is a point where madness touches death. The question remains constant in Deleuze: how can we ensure that the delirium, the line of flight, is not confused with a pure and simple movement of self-destruction (the alcoholism of Fitzgerald, the discouragement of Lawrence, the suicide of Woolf, the sad end of Kerouac...). Artaud knew better than anyone else, and nobody denies it: do not go back. Is this a reason to confuse life and writing? If it were only a matter of an absence of work, of suffering, of psychotic collapse, then Artaud, Nerval, and Nietzsche would only be of interest to medicine; what matters to us, once again, is what Foucault rightly named the work of madness. Their self-pity toward their undeniable suffering teaches us nothing about the dazzlement that arises for us in their writing. The real question for me is this: why these torments, these fears, these collapses, this violent depersonalization which they experienced and wrote about, and which can also dazzle us and take us outside of ourselves, and give us an idea of the infinity of meaning that they sought to achieve?

You know as well as I do that we have too often simplified and rigidified the statements of Artaud, seeking to make him the spokesperson for this or that epochal thesis. We must be wary, therefore, of our tendency to stabilize his writings. Support the dissociation, his place as a “creative schizo,” as I talked about. This implies being able to follow the vertiginous panic of his utterances as well as their shifting and unstable logics, and the apparent paradoxes which undo fixed identities—in short, all that Deleuze was able to understand and integrate with a subtle finesse. For example, I could, without much looking, find dozens of sentences that contradict those you quote on his

so-called me. There is no thesis in Artaud, no affirmation that doesn't immediately reverse itself. Artaud's challenge is to reinvent a syntax in motion that prevents the sense of taking, to get into a form; he disarticulates the sentence through internal discordance, destroying the logical functioning of the discursive connections it leaves in suspense. An example? "...my extreme consciousness not of me but of I, no, ... I do not have me and it is not me, and it is no... because it is not me but I am here in his body."¹⁹

I do not know what the "body without organs" is. A body without a sex perhaps, a non-sexed and therefore fully sexual body, a body eternally alive (not the body doomed to the death of human reproduction), in perpetual, eruptive overflow, and which writes, which draws, which dances. Deleuze and Guattari's "body without organs" is a great discovery which belongs to them: a connection of desires, of flux, of intensities. The one and the other are mysterious to me, totally inexplicable. I also love Deleuze's praise of the enigmatic; he says it, for example, about the great Russian or American novels: at home, contrary to the psychological and rational tradition of French or English literature, things remain enigmatic and yet not arbitrary. It is as if things did not fear to respect what Melville called the "immense and terrifying void of the soul." I love that in the philosophy of Deleuze we find this same respect for maintaining the enigmatic in writing, in thought, in science, in art... This is perhaps he invites us to continue thinking with him, with modesty and wonder.

Translated by Adam Blair

¹ Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* (London: Continuum, 2004), 146.

² Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

³ Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 84.

⁴ Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 93.

⁵ See Evelyne Grossman, *Artaud/Joyce—Le corps et le texte* (Paris: Nathan, 1996), 184-189.

⁶ Antonin Artaud, *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1956-1982), tome VII, 375. See also Artaud, *Œuvres*, 1089: "[...] je peux dire qu'aucun aliéné ne m'a paru délirer, et que j'ai toujours au fond de tout réputé délire retrouvé le fil de la vérité [...] que

le fou réputé cherchait.” [“...I can say that nobody insane appeared to be delirious, and that I have always, at the bottom of it all, known delirium to be the thread of the truth...that the madman was seeking.”]

⁷ See also Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), and *The Logic of Sense*.

⁸ Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 114.

⁹ Artaud, “*Suppôts et supplications*,” in *Œuvres*, 1415 et 1420.

¹⁰ “Qu’est la folie? Une transplantation hors essence mais dans les gouffres de l’intérieur extérieur,” (*Œuvres*, 1058). [“What is madness? A transplant beyond essence but in the chasms of the interior outside.”]

¹¹ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 158.

¹² Jacob Rogozinski, *The Ego and the Flesh* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010).

¹³ Artaud, *Œuvres*, 1014.

¹⁴ See Jacob Rogozinski, *Faire part: cryptes de Derrida* (Paris: Lignes-Léo Scheer, 2005).

¹⁵ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 151.

¹⁶ “The solid body without organs is the unproductive, the sterile, the unengendered, the unconsumable. Antonin Artaud discovered [...]. The death instinct, that is its name...” (Deleuze, *Anti-Oedipus*, 9). See also: “The body without organs is a model of death” (363).

¹⁷ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 179.

¹⁸ For example, Deleuze, *Essays Critical and Clinical*, 137.

¹⁹ Artaud, *Œuvres complètes*, t. XVI, 169-170.