
Guattari's Aesthetic Paradigm: From the Folding of the Finite/Infinite Relation to Schizoanalytic Metamodelisation

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Abstract

This article offers two commentaries on two of Félix Guattari's essays from *Chaosmosis*: 'The New Aesthetic Paradigm' and 'Schizoanalytic Metamodelisation'. The first commentary attends specifically to how Guattari figures the infinite/finite relation in relation to what he calls the three Assemblages (pre-, extant, and post-capitalism) and then even more specifically to the mechanics of this relation – or folding – within the third 'processual' Assemblage or new aesthetic paradigm of the essay's title. The second commentary looks at what Guattari has to say about this paradigm in relation to subjectivity, that is, the schizoanalytic programme or practice of metamodeling. Here the focus is on the turn to asignifying semiotics – but also the importance of signifying material and indeed the actual material scene of encounter – in any programme for the production of subjectivity (it is here also that the symptom makes its appearance).

Keywords: Guattari, finite/infinite, chaosmosis, schizoanalysis, metamodelisation, aesthetic paradigm, fold/folding, chaos/complexity

The only acceptable finality of human activity is the production of a subjectivity that is auto-enriching its relation to the world in a continuous fashion.

The machine, every species of machine, is always at the junction of the finite and infinite, at this point of negotiation between complexity and chaos.

Félix Guattari, *Chaosmosis*

Deleuze Studies 4.2 (2010): 256–286

DOI: 10.3366/E1750224110000978

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I. Introduction

I have argued in a recent article that, as regards the subject, a bar is in operation between the finite and the infinite within much post-Kantian philosophy (O'Sullivan 2009).¹ That article dealt explicitly with the philosophical system of Alain Badiou (as laid out in *Being and Event*) as an example of this kind of topology, comparing it with the system of Gilles Deleuze (in *Difference and Repetition*) where there is no such bar, but rather a continuum of sorts. The present article continues this investigation—of the finite/infinite relation—by looking to Deleuze's erstwhile collaborator, Félix Guattari, and to two essays, 'The New Aesthetic Paradigm' and 'Schizoanalytic Metamodelisation', from his major ontological statement: *Chaosmosis: An Ethico-Aesthetic Paradigm*.²

However, before beginning this somewhat technical commentary a brief word about the philosophical orientation of the latter complex work might be useful to set the scene: For Guattari there is always an *a priori* moment of creativity, or simply desire, that prefigures any given entity or any subject-object relation.³ Indeed, life, in whatever form it takes (organic or inorganic), emerges from a ground of sorts—one that is unfixed and ontologically unstable—that at all times accompanies the very forms that emerge from it. Guattari calls this groundless ground 'chaosmosis', whilst the entities formed from it, although they are given different names, can simply be called subjectivities. Elsewhere I have attended specifically to Guattari's writings on the production of subjectivity in what we might call a political sense (see O'Sullivan 2006a: 87–95). The present article attempts to get to grips with this ontological argument behind the politics, while attending more explicitly to the therapeutic or analytic implications of the ontology, and in particular to Guattari's modelling of a processual and ecological subjectivity *contra* Lacan. This is a modelling in which asignifying components become crucial (although not exclusively so) and in which aesthetic practices play a privileged role.

Two further points are worth noting in relation to the above (and in general on reading Guattari), each of which, at least to a certain extent, works to differentiate his thought from Deleuze's. First, as well as looking to certain philosophical resources, Guattari utilises the paradigm of the new sciences, and especially quantum theory, where he finds the conceptual tools adequate for his processual modelling. This can make *Chaosmosis* a difficult read, especially for those used to a more typical humanities, or even 'continental philosophical' discourse.

Second, even when his writings are most abstract, Guattari is always especially attentive to the vicissitudes of our particular lived late-capitalist situation. This is evidenced in two further preoccupations of *Chaosmosis*: the identification of capitalist or 'universal' time that flattens and reduces local and singular durations; and the emphasis on new technologies that produce an ever increasing alienation and atomisation, but that also have the potentiality to produce new forms of life—and subjectivity—that go beyond the latter. Indeed, Guattari, perhaps more so than any of the other post-'68 French thinkers, holds to this utopian view of technology's promise.

What follows then, are two commentaries of sorts on Guattari's two essays, where commentary is to be understood as involving not just synopsis (although I attempt also to provide this) but also the expansion—and acceleration—of certain aspects of the commented-upon text, as well as occasionally a diversion or digression. Throughout, and especially in the lengthy footnotes, material is drawn in from the other essays of *Chaosmosis* as appropriate and occasional reference is made to Guattari's collaborations with Deleuze. Reference is also made to other thinkers who are either more or less contemporary with Guattari—especially Badiou, Foucault and Deleuze himself—or are important philosophical pre-cursors, for example Spinoza and Bergson. Each of these thinkers, with the exception of Badiou, might be said to be working within a similar aesthetic paradigm to Guattari's in the sense of positing a mind-body parallelism and in attempting a mode of thought beyond the subject-object split. In what follows then, when these thinkers do make an appearance it is because they can add something—from their own diagrams as it were—to Guattari's own particular diagram of the infinite/finite relation.

II. The Three Assemblages

At the very beginning of 'The New Aesthetic Paradigm' Guattari makes the important point that art, considered as a separate autonomous activity, is a relatively recent development in our world and that before this it was part of what we might call the general practices of life and of living. This is, as Guattari points out, difficult to appreciate as the past is invariably understood from the perspective and also the logics and interests of the present. Although specific instances of contemporary art might then be part of the aesthetic paradigm, the notion of art in general can stymie access to the latter in that it reduces aesthetic practice to a specialism. In a first definition then, the aesthetic paradigm might be

thought of as an expanded field of creative life practices that are not necessarily restricted to what is typically considered art, and, as such, this paradigm certainly has something in common with previous or pre-modern paradigms.

We are not, however, fully within this expanded aesthetic paradigm, but rather experience and produce the latter through a number of distinct practices each of which operates as an interface between the finite and infinite. Such practices, which include 'science, technology, philosophy, art and human affairs', are involved in their own distinct explorations and experiments (100). They conduct their local enquiries following their own logics and using their own particular means. With art it is 'the finitude of the sensible material' that 'becomes a support for the production of affects and percepts which tend to become more eccentric with respect to performed structures and coordinates' (100–1). Art involves a finite assemblage that presents the infinite to us in a specifically different and singular manner in *contra* distinction to the more typical assemblages that surround us on a day-to-day basis. In fact, this 'metabolism of the infinite' might be figured as moving in two directions: from the finite to the infinite but also as a 'movement from infinity to the passage of time' (101). In passing it is worth noting that this movement is also transversal in another sense, in that a 'mutation' in one practice or particular area of life can have effects on another. As opposed to a thinker like Badiou, for whom an event's effect is solely vertical as it were, here the event – of the finite presenting the infinite/the infinite becoming embodied in the finite – is horizontal, working *across* milieus. This is to map out an immanent field of events (or infinite/finite interfaces) without a supplementary dimension above or behind them. I will return to this below.

As we shall see, the aesthetic paradigm, which is implied in art practice though not fully realised, has a particular privileged role to play in the production of subjectivity in our contemporary world. Aesthetics in general, however, or what Guattari calls 'a dimension of creativity in a nascent state', is also characteristic of pre-capitalist societies that are involved in the production of 'polysemic, animistic, transindividual subjectivity' (aspects of which can also be found in our time in the 'worlds of infancy, madness, amorous passion and artistic creation') (101). Guattari describes this first type of territorialised Assemblage as follows:

Polyphonic spatial strata, often concentric, appear to attract and colonise all the levels of alterity that in other respects they engender. In relation to them,

objects constitute themselves in transversal, vibratory position, conferring on them a soul, a becoming ancestral, animal, vegetal, cosmic. These objectities-subjectities are led to work for themselves, to incarnate themselves as an animist nucleus: they overlap each other, and invade each other to become collective entities half-thing, half-soul, half-man, half-beast, machine and flux, matter and sign. . . (102)

This then is a *proto*-aesthetic paradigm in which the distinctions of subject-object have yet to be fixed and reified, a world of strange mutually implicated beings cohering around objects and practices (in 'Machinic Heterogenesis' Guattari presents a case study, following Marc Auge, of just such a complex practice in the voodoo object/ritual/belief of 'Legba' [46]).⁴ It is also a world in which 'the spheres of exteriority are not radically separated from the interior', but rather implicated in a general folding that is also a reciprocal fold of the infinite and the finite (102). As Guattari remarks: '[h]ere there is no effort bearing on material forms that does not bring forth immaterial entities. Inversely, every drive towards a deterritorialised infinity is accompanied by a movement of folding onto territorialised limits. . .' (103).

The second kind of deterritorialised Assemblage – the capitalist regime proper – involves an ordering and reduction of the first. It 'erects a transcendent autonomised pole of reference' over and above what we might call the multiplicity of worlds evident in the previous regime (103). This is the instalment of dualisms or binary oppositions each of which necessarily involves the setting up of a privileged term. This might involve fixing a transcendent 'Truth', or notion of the 'Good', the 'Beautiful' and so forth, but crucially it is also the implementation of Capital as ordering principle of lived life and the concomitant reduction of heterogenetic multiplicity to the principle of exchange. This then is a flattening (exchange principle) and also a hierarchisation (with Capital at the apex). We might say that such a regime is one that subjects its people (albeit a subjection often masked by slogans invoking individual freedom and the possibilities of participation: Nike's 'just do it!' and the like). In technical terms, it involves a 'segmentation of the infinite movement of deterritorialisation' (the latter, as argued in *Anti-Oedipus*, being the determining factor of capitalism in so far as capitalism is desire) that 'is accompanied by a reterritorialisation' (again, following *Anti-Oedipus*, this capture might be thought as the second moment of capitalism – the capture, or siphoning off of surplus value from the flows of desire) (103).⁵ In this Assemblage then, '[t]he valorisation which, in the preceding illustration, was polyphonic and rhizomatic, becomes bipolarised' (103). Here subjectivity is under the rule of the 'transcendent

enunciator', held in a constant state of lack, debt, procrastination and so forth (104). Immanence is captured by a transcendent apparatus and, as such, subjectivity is standardised through the neutralisation of difference.⁶

The above two Assemblages cannot be reduced to specific epochs for they can, and invariably do, co-exist within the same period (for example, animist beliefs and practices co-exist with advanced capitalism in the hyper-modern culture of Japan). Likewise, the third Assemblage is present within our own—although only in an embryonic state. It bears some relation to the first, but crucially does not involve a simple return (if this were ever a real possibility), but, we might say, a return that is itself coloured by its passage through the second Assemblage. Certainly, the third Assemblage, the aesthetic paradigm proper, has in common with the first that the interiority of atomised individuated subjects is exploded and that a multiplicity of different regimes and practices are implicated.⁷ However the difference—between first and third—is important. As Guattari remarks:

One does not fall back from the regime of reductionist transcendence onto the reterritorialisation of the movement of infinity in finite modes. The general (and relative) aestheticisation of the diverse Universes of value leads to a different type of re-enchantment of the expressive modalities of subjectivity. Magic, mystery and the demonic will no longer emanate, as before, from the same totemic aura. Existential Territories become diversified, heterogenised. (105)

This affirmation of difference is then not animist in the sense of the first paradigm. It is not, we might say, a return to a pre-individual subjectivity composed of a-personal strata. For, as Guattari goes on to say: 'The decisive threshold constituting this new aesthetic paradigm lies in the aptitude of these processes of creation to auto-affirm themselves as existential nuclei, autopoietic machines' (106). Difference, or alterity, is then cohered together rather than dispersed as in the first Assemblage. I will be returning below to the crucial question of how this existential 'stickiness' takes place, but we can note here that it involves the invention of 'mutant coordinates' (106). Indeed, ultimately, it is art's capacity to engender 'unprecedented, unforeseen and unthinkable qualities of being' through the invention of such different coordinates that gives it a privileged place within the third Assemblage (106). As Duchamp once remarked (and as quoted by Guattari): 'art is a road that leads towards regions which are not governed by time and space' (101).⁸

It is also important to remember that, as noted above, this third Assemblage will be marked by its passage through the second. In fact, I would argue it involves an implementation of sorts of the strategies of the second albeit with a significantly different orientation and for different ends: whereas there is a general *over*-coding in the second, here there is the instalment of *local* coding or singular points of organisation. We might usefully turn to the late writings of Foucault at this point and insert the diagram of 'the care of the self' into Guattari's aesthetic paradigm. Here, subjectivation, or the active production of subjectivity by the subject itself, involves a particular relationship to any outside transcendent organiser. In fact, it involves what we might call a 'folding-in' of transcendence within the subject (or, in Foucault's terms, the application of 'optional rules' to oneself).⁹ For both Foucault and Guattari it is this 'folding-in' of the outside—by the subject on his or her own terms—that constitutes a freedom of sorts from subjection. It is, as it were, a certain intention and orientation that will also involve a programme (Foucault's technologies of the self/Guattari's metamodelisation) in which the subject, ultimately, assumes its own causality (or in Lacan's paradoxical claim 'becomes a cause of itself').

It is here that we can also see the logic of Guattari's interest in the new sciences inasmuch as they involve a similar reorientation from a transcendent Truth to what Guattari calls 'operational modelisations that stick as close as possible to immanent empiricism' (106). This is the privileging of points of view over any objective and universal Archimedean point. It is also the operating logic of schizoanalysis that itself involves a turn away from the standard and normalising models of psychoanalysis, tied as they are to the second Assemblage (106). It is only a short step from this to Guattari's theory of metamodelisation, understood as a theory of the auto-composition of different models of subjectivity that involves the incorporating, repositioning—and implicating—of the models of the first and second Assemblages (106).

Guattari gives us a succinct description of how this new kind of Assemblage implies a different mode of organisation—or 'crystallisation'—that draws on the two previous Assemblages: 'No longer aggregated and territorialised (as in the first illustration of Assemblage) or autonomised and transcendentalised (as in the second), they are now crystallised in singular and dynamic constellations which envelop and make constant use of these two modes of subjective and machinic production' (108). The third Assemblage is then a composition of sorts that involves components of both the previous:

a 'folding-in' of the transcendence of the second Assemblage that in itself produces autopoietic nuclei around which the fields of alterity of the first Assemblage might crystallise. This is also to fold the outside—or infinite—within; to produce a relation to one's self that is akin to self-mastery (when the latter is understood also as self-organisation).¹⁰ In this aesthetic paradigm we become the authors of our own subjectivities. This is not however solely the production of separate and isolated monads, for such an autopoietic folding is always accompanied by an allopoietic function in which a given subject maintains lines of connection—or 'multidirectional relays'—to an outside, including other subjects (114). In fact, each monad is always already ontologically related inasmuch as they are constituted on the same plane of immanence or 'ground' of the first Assemblage. In passing it is worth remarking that the actual political work of locating non-transcendent commonalities within the third Assemblage—or, we might say, of developing a politics of singularity—must invariably be one of continuous experimentation and testing; it cannot be given in advance as a general, or transcendent rule. To conclude this first section we might then diagram the three Assemblages and their attendant subjectivities thus:¹¹

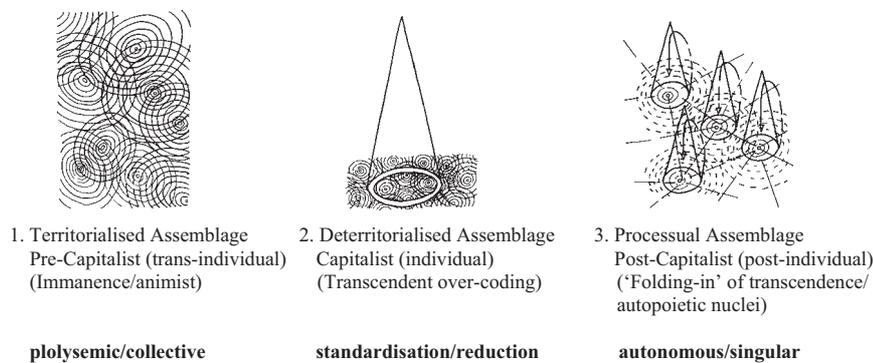


Figure 1. The Three Assemblages

III. Folding the Infinite

We come now to the more technical part of Guattari's essay with the laying out of precisely how this interface between the finite and the infinite—or between the subject and the object—operates. Guattari's claim for his 'transversalist' theorisation of enunciation (that applies as much to specific practices as it does to the very cosmos itself)

is that it establishes a bridge of sorts between the finite and the infinite, and, crucially, 'postulate(s) the existence of a certain type of entity inhabiting both domains, such that the incorporeals of value and virtuality become endowed with an ontological depth equal to that of objects set in energetico-spatio-temporal coordinates' (108). In Guattari's words 'these transversal entities appear like a machinic hyper-text', and further, imply that 'Being', far from being pre-established, or operating as some kind of container for life (or for 'all the possible modalities of being'), is, in fact, 'auto-consistency, auto-affirmation, existence for-itself deploying particular relations of alterity' (109). This self-crystallisation, or form constituting itself from the formless, applies as much to non-human and indeed inorganic life as it does to the human (after all, even molecules, as assemblages, have a virtual aspect). Guattari calls this active, generative and transversal process 'machinic being' (109).¹² Such machines, or self-organising entities, have then two specific aspects – or face in two directions: towards the finite and towards the infinite:

The machinic entities which traverse these different registers of the actualised world and incorporeal Universes are two-faced like Janus. They exist concurrently in a discursive state within molar fluxes, in a presuppositional relationship with a corpus of possible semiotic propositions, and in a non-discursive state within enunciative nuclei embodied in singular existential Territories, and in Universes of ontological reference which are non-dimensioned and non-coordinated in any extrinsic way. (110)

The precise nature of these entities which face the virtual (the 'non-discursive, infinite character of the texture of these incorporeals') and the actual (the 'discursive finitude of energetico-spatio-temporal Fluxes and their propositional correlates') is unclear, but the manner of this strange co-existence involves speed (110).¹³ For Deleuze, reading Spinoza, this would be the absolute speed of the Third Kind of Knowledge that surveys all things at the same time in eternity.¹⁴ Here, for Guattari, it is Pascal who defines the operation of these entities as 'a point which moves everywhere at infinite speed because it is at all places and whole in each place' (110, Guattari quoting Pascal). Only such 'an entity animated by an infinite speed... can hope to include both a limited referent and incorporeal fields of possibles' (110).

For Guattari, however, this Pascalian modelisation is not enough, producing as it does 'an ontologically homogeneous infinity' (110). The aesthetic paradigm is more generative and productive than this, involving 'more active and activating folds of this infinity' (110). In order

to develop this line of argument, Guattari introduces here a further two terms, somewhat synonymous with the infinite and the finite, namely chaos and complexity. Each of the latter interpenetrates the other in a chaotic folding – with the entities traversing the two fields. Here is the crucial passage from Guattari on this finite-infinite weave:

It is by a continuous coming-and-going at an infinite speed that the multiplicities of entities differentiate into ontologically heterogeneous complexions and become chaoticised in abolishing their figural diversity and by homogenising themselves within the same being-non-being. In a way they never stop diving into an umbilical chaotic zone where they lose their extrinsic references and coordinates, but from where they can re-emerge invested with new charges of complexity. It is during this chaotic folding that an interface is installed – an interface between the sensible finitude of existential territories and the trans-sensible infinitude of the Universes of reference bound to them. (110–11)

This oscillation gives the entities their character of consistency *and* dissolution, of complexity *and* chaos. Furthermore, the difference between the two milieus does not amount to a dualism as such given that both ‘constitute themselves from the same plane of entitative immanence and envelop each other’ (111). We might at this point insert Bergson’s cone of memory from *Matter and Memory* into the Guattari diagram and point out that although there may indeed be no binary opposition between the two realms – of the actual and the virtual – there is nevertheless a difference in kind.¹⁵ Without this difference the infinite, or virtual, would not be a force of creation and difference but would remain tied to the plane of matter and to the logic of the possible (the entities would always be just ‘more of the same’ as it were). As Deleuze remarks – and the same might be said by Guattari – this virtuality does not lack reality, only actualisation (cf. Deleuze 1988b: 96–7). The virtual is then not a transcendent realm above the actual but is its very ground, the stuff from which the actual is actualised as it were. It is in this sense that we can understand chaosmosis as itself virtual. This is immanence without a supplementary dimension and implies a non-hylomorphic (or self-organising) thinking of matter.

Indeed, Guattari points out that the ‘primordial slowing down manifested in finite speeds’ is already present *in* chaos (112), or simply that ‘infinite speeds are loaded with finite speeds’ (113). We might say that chaos already contains complexity and that complexity is always already composed out of a chaos from which it emerges and towards which it returns.¹⁶ Furthermore, this chaotic texture is lumpy, as it

were. It is in fact less a case of an oscillation between two distinct and absolutely separate fields than of multiple encounters between different entities that are composed out of these two fields.¹⁷ These entities, as well as being spatially heterogeneous, will also be so temporally. They will keep time in different ways, each individual entity vibrating at a different frequency, or, in Bergsonian terms, implicating a different duration. This is to posit a kind of patchwork of different rhythms or refrains. The present is never temporally homogeneous in this sense, but is always a multiplicity of these space-time machines.¹⁸

Here is the second crucial statement from Guattari on the finite/infinite relation:

So chaosmosis does not oscillate mechanically between zero and infinity, being and nothingness, order and disorder: it rebounds and irrupts on states of things, bodies and the autopoietic nuclei it uses as a support for deterritorialisation; it is relative chaotisation in the confrontation with heterogeneous states of complexity. Here we are dealing with an infinity of virtual entities infinitely rich in possibles, infinitely enrichable through creative processes. (112)

The relationship between virtual and actual, between infinite and finite is then incarnated in different entities in an entirely reciprocal manner. As Guattari remarks: 'the same entitative multiplicities constitute virtual Universes and possible worlds' (113), or, as he also says, '[t]he movement of infinite virtuality of incorporeal complexions carries in itself the possible manifestation of all the components and all the enunciative assemblages actualisable in finitude' (112). The entity – and here perhaps we should also say the subjectivity – is at once a part of the world and apart from the world. More accurately, it has a part of itself in the world as actualised but also a part in that groundless ground – the virtual – from which it has been actualised. But crucially this is not a split subject as such (there is no bar between the two), and as such neither is it a melancholy subject (a being barred from the infinite in its very finitude). Rather it is a subject that is always already eternal, composed of different speeds all the way up to the infinite. A properly Spinozist subject.

Guattari suggests that the production of this entity necessarily involves a 'grasping' of the infinite that in itself involves an ontological slowing down. This – a gestural semiotics that has precursors in ancient Greek epistemology, but that is equally a product of Guattari's knowledge of phenomenological psychiatry – implies a meeting of sorts with something that provides some kind of friction: '[a]n incorporeal complexion,

snatched up by grasping, will only receive its character of finitude if the advent-event of its encounter with a trans-monadic line occurs, which will trigger the exit, the expulsion of its infinite speed, its primordial deceleration' (114). The entity or 'complex entitative multiplicity' has to be cohered, or 'indexed' to use Guattari's term, by 'an autopoietic nucleus' (114). This moment of grasping and of slowing occurs then when the complex-chaotic field of the infinite encounters what Guattari calls a 'trans-monadism' (114). The latter introduces within chaos an 'ordered linearity' that allows 'the ordination of incorporeal complexions to crystallise' (114). Guattari likens this process to 'the pickup head of a Turing machine' arguing that 'linearity, the matrix of all ordination, is already a slowing down, an existential stickiness' (115).¹⁹ Like a tape-head that spools tape, or perhaps a turntable stylus that picks up dust and static, '[t]he chaotic nothing spins and unwinds complexity' carrying out 'an aggregative selection onto which limits, constants and states of things can graft themselves' (114). This is then the second, more active folding of chaosmosis that produces a teeming ecology of entities, a virtual-actual life world. In Guattari's arresting phrase, it is 'the 'choice' of finitude' (116): 'Transmonadism through the effect of retro-activity crystallises within the primitive chaotic soup spatial coordinates, temporal causalities, energy levels, possibilities for the meeting of complexions, a whole ontological "sexuality" composed by axiological bifurcations and mutations' (115).

It is this transmonadic line, an 'infinite twisting line of flight', that slows chaos down, in the process organising it and giving it a consistency (116).²⁰ Ultimately then, what is at stake in this new paradigm is the tracking of this creative and experimental line of flight, which we might call, following the analysis of the three Assemblages above, a 'folded-in' transcendence. This line, which is also an autopoietic nucleus or, in the language of the new sciences, a 'strange attractor', involves the production of unforeseen new infinite/finite diagrams, which is to say, precisely the production of new subjectivities, different, more flexible and processual than those typically produced within and by the second Assemblage discussed above.²¹ This, finally, is the aesthetic paradigm proper, or the production of 'new infinities from a submersion in sensible finitude, infinities not only charged with virtuality but with potentialities actualisable in given situations...' (117). Such a paradigm also enables us to redefine politics and ethics around these processes of singularisation as specifically productive and generative pursuits. This will involve breaking with consensus, reduction, standardisation, and what Guattari calls 'the infantile "reassurance" distilled by dominant

subjectivity', as well as the affirmation of a 'heterogenesis of systems of valorisation and the spawning of new social, artistic and analytic practices' (117).²² Ultimately it is a call to participate in the auto-production of our own subjectivities, that in itself implies an auto-relationship to ourselves (the folding-in). This will mean drawing our own diagrams of the infinite/finite relation and mapping out our own terrain of their operation. It is to the pragmatics of this specific cartographic operation that we will now turn.

IV. Metamodelisation

What precisely are the mechanisms or technologies that would allow us to produce ourselves differently, or, in the terms of the above commentary, to rearticulate our own relationship with the infinite and thus constitute ourselves as different finite/infinite composites? Put bluntly, what are the practical and pragmatic implications for the production of subjectivity of the new aesthetic paradigm as Guattari outlines it? These questions can be approached by way of the essay on 'Schizoanalytic Metamodelisation', wherein we find Guattari's distinct and complex *analytic* take on the production of subjectivity. In fact, Guattari pitches his theory of metamodelisation against what he sees as a bankrupt psychoanalysis that, as a form of structuralism, insists on reducing all aspects of semiotic modelling to 'syntagmatic articulations' in which any 'points of ontological crystallisation', for example 'phonological gestural, spatial, musical, discursivities', become 'annexed to the same signifying economy' (59–60). Psychoanalysis, for Guattari, is then a paradigmatic example of the second Assemblage as explored above. In its place Guattari lays out his own system and anti-structure of sorts that attends specifically to a more expanded semiotics (asignifying and signifying) *and* to the processual nature of the production of subjectivity that in itself foregrounds the singular and local nature of each crystallisation of Being. We can see immediately that this schizoanalytic project is implicit in the aesthetic paradigm, and, as such, involves the production of subjectivities leading from the third Assemblage discussed above.

In order to theorise this schizoanalytic programme—or theory of metamodeling (the two terms are used more or less synonymously)—Guattari provides his own distinct articulation of the four ontological functions that determine any given 'discursive system' or 'refrain of ontological affirmation' (60).²³ They are as follows:

	Expression actual (discursive)	Content virtual enunciative nuclei (non-discursive)
possible	Φ = machinic discursivity	U = incorporeal complexity
real	F = energetico-spatio-temporal discursivity	T = chaosmic incarnation

Figure 2. 'The Assemblage of the Four Ontological Functions', Diagram from Guattari's 'Schizoanalytic Metamodelisation', *Chaosmosis* (60)

Guattari's organisational schema owes much to Hjelmslev, from whom the expression/content framework is taken (and which is Guattari's response to the Saussurean signifier/signified framework determinant in Lacanian modelisations). Any given being – or enunciative assemblage – might be seen to be constituted across these four realms. As far as the real goes, F denotes the actual constitution of any given entity within space and time, whilst T denotes the chaosmosis out of which that entity has emerged (and towards which it tends in a movement of its own dissolution). On the possible side, Φ denotes the actual machinic nature of the entity – its autopoietic and allopoietic character as it were, whilst U denotes the virtual 'universes of reference' or 'incorporeal complexity' that are available to, or opened up by, this machinic discursivity.²⁴

The key intention here is to complexify rather than reduce the components that make up any given instance of subjectivity (especially those that instigate the reign of a master signifier or any rule of transcendence [again, as in the second Assemblage]). The above box – or matrix – thus allows for a multiplicity of different pathways and arrangements to be diagrammed. This is schizoanalytic metamodelisation. As Guattari remarks:

Schizoanalysis does not... choose one modelisation to the exclusion of another. Within the diverse cartographies in action in a given situation, it tries to make nuclei of virtual autopoiesis discernible, in order to actualise them, by transversalising them, in conferring on them a diagrammatism (for example, by a change in the material of Expression), in making them themselves operative within modified assemblages, more open, more deterritorialised. Schizoanalysis, rather than moving in the direction of reductionist modelisations which simplify the complex, will work towards

its complexification, its processual enrichment, towards the consistency of its virtual line of bifurcation and differentiation, in short towards its ontological heterogeneity. (60–1)

Guattari's metamodelisation is thus an attempt to proliferate models and also to combine models, or parts thereof, which might otherwise be seen as non-compatible.²⁵ Crucially, the 'nuclei of partial life', which hold the assemblage or entity together (and which are, as we have seen, determinant in the third Assemblage above) involves a kind of 'self-knowledge' of 'being-in-the-world' that 'implies a pathic apprehension which escapes energetico-spatio-temporal coordinates' (61). At stake then is a kind of auto-cohesiveness—or rhythm—that operates *prior* to signification. Nevertheless, this self-constitution might well involve narration as a secondary cohering mechanism of sorts:

Knowledge here is first of all existential transference, non-discursive transitivity. The enunciation of this transference always occurs through the diversion of a narration whose primary function is not to engender a rational explanation but to promote complex refrains, supports of an intensive, memorial persistence and an event-centred consistency. It is only through mythical narratives (religious, fantasmatic, etc.) that the existential function accedes to discourse. (61)

Guattari's argument here is that such 'narration' operates as a refrain, which is to say it is stripped of its signifying and discursive function in favour of the 'existential transference' of the non-discursive. Guattari gives us two examples of just such narrative refrains, or what we might call myth-systems: Christianity, which ultimately produces a 'new subjectivity of guilt, contrition, body markings and sexuality. Of redemptive mediation...'; and Freudianism, which produces an 'Unconscious presented as universe of non-contradiction' and a pragmatics of 'transference and interpretation' (62). For Guattari, Freud himself was in fact a veritable inventor of concepts and narratives, opening up vast new possibilities for the modelisation of subjectivity, but Freudianism 'quickly encountered limits with its familial and universalising conceptions, with its stereotyped practice of interpretation, but above all with its inability to go beyond linguistic semiology' (63). Freudianism, we might say, involved a petrification of the generative models of Freud, and a reduction of the latter to a wholesale signifier enthusiasm.

Crucially, whereas for psychoanalysis it is neurosis that operates as model, for schizoanalysis, following this notion of metamodelisation, it is psychosis: '[b]ecause nowhere more than here is the ordinary

modelisation of everyday existence so denuded; the “axioms of daily life” stand in the way of the a-signifying function, the degree zero of all possible modelisation’ (63). It is this confrontation with chaos (over which the above narrations are cast, as it were) that positions psychosis in such a privileged position as regards metamodelisation (and indeed the aesthetic paradigm more generally). As Guattari remarks: ‘The schizo fracture is the royal road of access to the emergent fractality of the Unconscious’ (64). As such, psychosis is not just an illness or aberration, but also an indication of, and insight into, our own ontological condition as chaosmotic entities:

Psychosis is not a structural object but a concept; it is not an irremovable essence but a machination which always starts up again during any encounter with the one who will become, after the event, the psychotic. Thus here the concept is not an entity closed in on itself, but the abstract, machinic incarnation of alterity at the point of extreme precariousness; it is the indelible mark that everything in this world can break down at any time. (64)

As well as involving a-signifying rupture, psychosis also has its own narration—or produces its own myths (idiosyncratic, local, often strategic). Indeed the psychotic is a prodigious inventor of stories and concepts, and, like anyone else, has his own refrains that cohere a self or multiple selves, however fragile and transitory these might be (I will return to this below). Metamodelisation is, then, an anti-structure of sorts in which different elements (signifying and a-signifying, discursive and non-discursive) become loosened, moving between terrains, migrating across the four quadrants of Guattari’s model. Guattari introduces Daniel Stern’s child ethology as paradigmatic of this new and more fluid modelling of relations, involving as it does a mapping of the infantile world or ‘primary assemblage of subjectivation’ that involves existential territories and incorporeal universes that have yet to be fixed on the father, mother, and so forth (65). Crucially this emergent self (‘atmospheric, pathic, fusional, transivist’) is not itself a phase ‘since it will persist in parallel with other self formations and will haunt the adult’s poetic, amorous and oneiric experiences’ (66).²⁶ In the collaboration with Deleuze, this emergent self is redefined as a ‘becoming-child’; not a nostalgic return to childhood but the mobilisation of ‘blocs of childhood’ within a so-called ‘adult’ life. Becoming-child is just one moment in an ongoing series or processual programme that ultimately involves less human becomings, even inorganic ones (and, as such, we can understand one of the key

preoccupations of *A Thousand Plateaus* in terms of an exploration of the resonances between the first and third Assemblages discussed above).²⁷

A further important developmental aspect of this emergent self is the discovery of 'sharable affects', or the 'recognition of the fact that the other can experience something that the subject experiences for itself' (67). The emergent self (that continues throughout life, but is habitually 'masked' or erased by typical subjectivity) is one that knows no subject-object duality. 'It is at the heart of this proto-social and still pre-verbal Universe that familial, ethnic, urban, etc., traits are transmitted' (67). Further phases follow, including the entry into language, but again, these phases—which we might also call, following Guattari's terminology, 'Universes of reference'—are not sequential but are rather 'superimposed in a kind of incorporeal existential agglomeration' (67). This is a crystallisation rather than a topology, a complex assemblage in which any given universe might foreground—or actualise—itsself at any given time. Just as each of the three Assemblages are superimposed on one another within our own epoch, so the different aspects of a 'self' or a given subjectivity are likewise layered in a kind of palimpsest. Indeed, one might say that schizoanalysis, like the aesthetic paradigm more generally, involves the locating of an access point—or line of flight—from a given petrified individuality or transcendent mode of organisation. It is in this context that we must understand Guattari's paradigmatic redefinition of the symptom, in this case the lapsus, which becomes 'not the conflictual expression of a repressed Content but the positive, indexical manifestation of a Universe trying to find itself, which comes to knock at the window like a magic bird' (68). Here the semiotic (the index), the ethological (the bird against the glass) and the discursive (the scenario as metaphor) are combined in a modelling in which the symptom is no longer proxy from an unconscious that is always already there, but rather a precursor of an unconscious that is yet to come. The only way to 'shift petrified systems of modelisation' (and to open up to more expanded versions of the latter) is to follow these symptoms, to cross the barriers of non-sense and access 'asignifying nuclei of subjectivation' (68). We might say that, in Guattari's system, the symptom offers an escape route from the impasses of the present, or, simply, belies the very presence of the infinite within the finite.

However, as we have seen, the rupturing of given signifying regimes is only one of the gestures of schizoanalysis. The other is more constructive and might well involve the reintroduction of signifying material—alongside other material—in a local and singular modelisation. In fact, I would argue that this utilisation of signifying material might

be figured in three temporal sequences. First, it might come *after* the accessing of any asignifying nuclei. This would be a retroactive recognition, as it were, an 'Ah, so that's what it was!', or even an 'Ah, so that's me!'²⁸ It might also, however, operate *prior* to the asignifying nuclei as a kind of platform or catalyst. Here signifying material is predictive, even prophetic. In both these cases what is at stake, as mentioned above, is the production of alternative narratives and myth-systems. I would argue that this is a kind of performative 'fictioning' in the sense that it will take existing signifying materials—with their order words and master-signifiers—but reorder or reframe them in a local and singular constellation (and for different ends). We might say here that fiction can operate as the friction—the cohering mechanism—discussed above. A third moment might be the use of signifying material in *parallel* with any asignifying moment. Here writing, for example (as Foucault notes in his comments on the ancient Greek practice of self-writing, or *hupomnemata*), itself operates as a pragmatic technology in the actual processual production of subjectivity.²⁹ This is not to re-privilege the signifying over the asignifying but to note that the signifying element cannot be ignored (and in fact Guattari is always at pains to point out that signifying semiotics play their part in schizoanalysis).³⁰

A confrontation with chaos then, but also the concomitant construction of an assemblage to give the latter consistency, to make it *workable*. This programme need not be abstract (although having an abstract diagram will foster a more general or generic applicability). Indeed, it might simply involve the encounter and use of different elements of the world/the body—signifying *and* asignifying—in a specifically different manner. In relation to this, Guattari gives us the example of the treatment of a psychotic. The description amounts to a succinct statement of the method of schizoanalysis:

The treatment of a psychotic, in the context of institutional psychotherapy, works with a renewed approach to transference, focused henceforth on parts of the body, on a constellation of individuals, on a group, on an institutional ensemble, a machinic system, a semiotic economy, etc. (grafts of transference), and conceived as desiring becoming, that is to say, pathic existential intensity, impossible to circumscribe as a distinct entity. The objective of such a therapeutic approach would be to increase as much as possible the range of means offered in the recomposition of a patient's corporeal, biological, psychical and social Territories. (68)³¹

We are given the example of the kitchen at *La Borde* as just such a complex arena of heterogenetic encounter, a machinic assemblage

and veritable 'opera scene' of resingularisation (69). In such an assemblage, '[s]chizoanalytic cartography consists in the ability to discern those components lacking in consistency or existence' (71), and consequently in reintroducing them (or others) so as to allow individuals to resingularise themselves (or simply to creatively break debilitating patterns and petrified modellings – and produce new ones). In this respect it is especially the collective nature of institutional analysis that is important, when this collectivity is understood as operating at both the molecular and molar register, as sub- and supra-individual. To quote Guattari:

Note that collective is not here synonymous with the group; it is a description which subsumes on the one hand elements of human intersubjectivity, and on the other pre-personal, sensitive and cognitive modules, micro-social processes and elements of the social imaginary. It operates in the same way on non-human subjective formations (machinic, technical and economic). It is therefore a term which is equivalent to heterogeneous multiplicity. (70)

This emphasis on collectivity, especially in terms of the pre-personal, involves a 'repudiation of the universalist and transcendent concepts of psychoanalysis which constrain and sterilise the apprehension of incorporeal Universes and singularising and heterogenetic becomings' (72).³² Indeed, Guattari's metamodelisation is here, once more, pitched specifically against the 'fundamental linearity' of the Lacanian signifier that 'homogenises the various semiotics' and thus 'loses the multidimensional character of many of them' (22). As an illustration of this colonising function of the signifier Guattari gives us the example of Lacan's interpretation of Freud's Fort-Da game. For Freud it is a game of absence and presence (of the mother) and ultimately of a repetition compulsion that moves towards death. Lacan, instead, 'ties it down to the signifying discursivity of "existing language"': '[t]hus the reel, the string, the curtain, the observer's gaze, all the singular characteristics of the assemblage of enunciation fall into the trap of the Signifier' (74).

Schizoanalysis, on the other hand, will attend to the asignifying semiotics of the game that have been 'overlooked' in this interpretation, 'recognising that with this refrain the child encounters unforeseen Universes of the possible, with incalculable, virtual repercussions...'.³³ Here the Fort-Da assemblage is less a theatre of language (or the playing out of an oedipal drama) than a 'desiring machine', 'working toward the assemblage of the verbal self – in symbiosis with the other assemblages of the emergent self – and thereby inaugurating a new mastery of the object, of touch, of a spatiality...'. (74–5). Guattari does not dismiss the

Lacanian theorisation *tout court* (as we have seen, signifying economies of narrative might well be crucial in cohering a subject), but places it along side other modelisations in a more expanded analytic framework.

Worth noting here is also Guattari's own take on Freud's insight regarding repetition and the death drive. For Guattari it is less the 'encounter or relation of intimate intrication between two distinct drives, Eros and Thanatos, [than] a coming and going at infinite speed between chaos and complexity' (75). A reciprocal relation between consistency and its loss, between 'differentiated complexion' and 'chaosmic submersion' (75). In the terms of the present essay, it is a relation—reciprocal, always in process, fragile and dynamic—between the finite and the infinite. We are then at the heart of schizoanalytic metamodelisation returned to Guattari's ontology, which informs his analytic framework and is informed by it. It is a post-human ontology and practice (inasmuch as the human is invariably a transcendent apparatus—or projection on to immanence), one in which Freud's decentering of the subject (in relation to the drives) is further deterritorialised on to an even more general field of 'chaosmic immanence' (75). The important point here is that individuation from this field, when it does occur, need not necessarily lie along typical lines or involve those habitual patterns that invariably produce atomised and alienated 'individuals'.³⁴ Indeed, the goal of schizoanalysis is precisely to reconnect the petrified models of subjectivity to the field of desire from which they have been extracted, a technique that involves a confrontation with chaosmosis but then also that one models it differently, utilises other models alongside the more familiar ones, and holds all models lightly and strategically.³⁵

For Guattari this metamodelisation, which involves the production of new kinds of relation to our own finitude as well as to the infinite of which we are part, has, of course, a pressing urgency given our present ecological crises.³⁶ Indeed, the dominant paradigm of subjectivity today involves, as we saw in the first part of this essay, an homogenisation of life and its capture by transcendent points, especially the exchange principle. This is the organisation of subjectivity around money and material production solely for its own sake (a subject that sees the world as separate object and purely as a resource to be exploited). Such a subjectivity cannot but involve a certain kind of blindness, or wilful ignorance, both to its own finitude (and that of the world), *and* to those virtual ecologies—the infinite—of which it is an actualised part. Indeed, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the removal of these blinkers and the concomitant refiguring of the finite/infinite relation in alternative

modellings is a matter of our own survival as well as that of the world in which we find ourselves.

V. Concluding Remarks

Chaosmosis contains the most condensed and worked out statement of Guattari's very particular and complex schizoanalytic cartography. It also operates as itself a machine of sorts: a grasping and gathering of different materials that might be mobilised in the general project of forming an ontology 'beyond' the subject-object split and, leading on from this, of constructing a form of institutional analysis beyond Lacan (hence the many references to other thinkers, the new sciences, and so forth). In particular this philosophical and analytical programme involves the theorisation of chaosmotic entities, an emphasis on asignifying semiotics, and the concomitant mapping out of an aesthetic paradigm for subjectivity in which process, or processuality, is foregrounded. One of the most important aspects of this project is its negotiation of the capitalist regime of transcendent capture. Indeed, it seems to me that Guattari's insights here concerning 'auto-poetic nuclei of subjectivation', or what I call the 'folding-in' of transcendence, suggest a potentially very useful 'up-dating' of Foucault's thesis on the 'care of the self'.

To a certain extent the essays in *Chaosmosis* repeat the same arguments from different perspectives and with different emphases – all of them characterised by a certain polemical urgency and an animating desire for a form of life that is not solely determined by capitalism with its principles of standardisation and homogenisation. Capitalism's reduction of subjectivity and of life in general is countered by a call for a complexification and resingularisation that, rather than closing down on mutation, opens itself up ever further to creativity and invention. This proliferation of models is the second important aspect of Guattari's writings, and in this sense *Chaosmosis* reads like Science Fiction, producing worlds beyond this one and inventing new terms with which to articulate and describe them.

Indeed, *Chaosmosis* offers us a theory of metamodelling, but also a modelling itself, one premised on Guattari's very particular ontology. Adjacent to this Science Fiction narrative and conceptual toolbox we are also given – though case studies such as *Le Borde* – ample evidence that any theoretical work must itself be put to work in larger and more diverse realms of heterogenetic encounter. This is the third and arguably most important aspect of Guattari's thesis. Indeed, the paradoxical

nature of Guattari's writings is that while they are often dense and complex, they call for something deceptively simple, namely, that each of us interact with each other and the world in a specifically *different* manner. It is a call to become an active participant in changing our lives as they are at this moment, not to wait for an event that might force us to change. In fact, the nature of the event itself changes: it no longer 'arrives' from an infinite that is barred from the finite, but names the reciprocal inter-penetration of the finite and infinite. This is to figure the world as a complex weave of micro-events – or simply becomings.

In conclusion then, Guattari suggests a continuum of sorts between the finite and the infinite. This fundamentally anti-theological view positions him against a certain post-Kantian tradition of philosophy (and psychoanalysis) that would erect a bar between phenomena and noumena, the real and the symbolic, and so forth. It also, however, places him in a rich alternative tradition, running from the pre-Socratics to Spinoza and from Nietzsche to Bergson, in which subjectivity – or the finite – becomes the means of accessing the infinite as well as its very substance. It is, of course, this very same line of anti-state philosophers that Deleuze claims as his own. No wonder then that when this anti-psychoanalyst and activist, this drawer of diagrams and inventor of concepts, met the contemporary philosopher of immanence, the thinker of absolute difference, they each found in the other not only a fellow traveller but also a stranger, someone who might take them on further adventures of thought. Would it be an overstatement to say that Deleuze and Guattari's collaboration itself diagrammed a new relation of the finite and the infinite? Certainly in works like *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus* many strange entities appear, traversing multiple fields, moving at different speeds and often evidencing what Deleuze saw in Spinoza, and what lies at the heart of Guattari's *Chaosmosis*: a certain absolute velocity or infinite speed of thought.

Notes

1. This bar, that effectively stymies access to the infinite, might also be figured as what Quentin Meillassoux has called the 'correlation', or that form of thought – and consequent form of subjectivity – that figures the object as always-already determined by the subject (Meillassoux 2008). Meillassoux's notion of the 'arche fossil' points to a way out of the correlation in that it is an element of the universe that pre-exists man and thus the correlation itself (see Meillassoux 2008: 10). A confrontation between Guattari's theory of the production of subjectivity as a diagram between the finite and the infinite *and* the so-called 'Speculative Realist' philosophers who effectively jettison the subject from ontology is one that I leave for another time, though it is worth noting here

that Guattari's theory of subjectivity is certainly not restricted to the human, and indeed, following the arguments in *Chaosmosis*, might be said to involve any interface between the finite and infinite whether this be human or animal, organic or inorganic.

2. All page number references below are to *Chaosmosis* unless stated otherwise.
3. As Guattari remarks in an earlier interview: 'For Gilles Deleuze and me desire is everything that exists *before* the opposition between subject and object, *before* representation and production. It's everything whereby the world and affects constitute us outside of ourselves, in spite of ourselves. It's everything that overflows from us. That's why we define it as flow [*flux*]' (Guattari 1996a: 205). Guattari is talking here specifically about *Anti-Oedipus* and the refiguring of desire as plenitude (rather than lack) that takes place in that book, but replace desire with chaosmosis and we have a statement about his own solo writings (indeed, perhaps the most notable change in the ten or so years between this interview and *Chaosmosis* is Guattari's reframing of the question of desire and desiring-machines in terms of chaos and complexity). In the interview from which the above is extracted Guattari is interested especially in the repression of this desire—or what he calls micro-fascisms. In the terms of *Chaosmosis* micro-fascisms might be understood as those models of subjectivity that are hierarchised, organised around transcendence—and, crucially, have become petrified.
4. And in 'Machinic Orality and Virtual Ecology', an essay concerned with mapping the resonances between psychosis and creativity, we are given another 'definition' of such practices that might in fact also be part of the aesthetic paradigm:

Strange contraptions ... these machines of virtuality, these blocks of mutant percepts and affects, half-object half-subject, already here in sensation and outside themselves in fields of the possible. They are not usually found at the usual marketplace for subjectivity and maybe even less at that for art; yet they haunt everything concerned with creation, the desire for becoming-other, as well as mental disorder or the passion for power. (92)

5. See especially Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 34–5.
6. This 'effacement of polysemy' might be seen in the standardising individuating mechanisms of web 2.0 that masquerade as interactive and participatory (for example Facebook). Indeed, Guattari is prescient here, as elsewhere, as regards the dangers (as well as hopes) of new media, referring to a language 'rigorously subjected to scriptural machines and their mass media avatars. In its extreme contemporary forms it amounts to an exchange of information tokens calculable as bits and reducible on computers' (104).
7. I attend further to this point in relation to *A Thousand Plateaus* in my article 'Pragmatics for Future Subjectivities (*Probe-heads!* Or how to Live in the Face of Fear)' (O'Sullivan 2006b).
8. Duchamp is the privileged exemplar of the aesthetic paradigm, as evidenced also in Guattari's definition of the readymade (in this case the *Bottlerack*) in the essay 'Ritornellos and Existential Refrains' as a 'trigger for a constellation of referential universes...' (Guattari 1996b: 164). Although Guattari is increasingly seen as providing the theoretical model for expanded practices beyond the object—as in relational aesthetics (see Bourriaud 1998)—we can see in the three Assemblages, or at least in the third, the importance of an object of sorts as an intentional point around which a subjectivity might cohere. This point of self-assertion or autonomy will necessarily involve a break with

typical transcendent schema and signifying regimes, and, as such, art once more points the way: as Guattari remarks in 'On the Production of Subjectivity': '[a] singularity, a rupture of sense, a cut, a fragmentation, the detachment of a semiotic content—in a Dadaist or surrealist manner—can originate nuclei of subjectivation' (18).

9. For Foucault this 'care of the self' involves certain technologies (meditation, friendship, etc.), but especially personal and ethical codes of conduct that determine a freedom of sorts from any transcendent schema that subjects. Foucault writes of this in a number of places, see as indicative example the essay 'Technologies of the Self', and also the interview 'On the Genealogy of Ethics' (Foucault 1994: 223–52 and 253–80, especially page 266). For further thoughts on the connection between Guattari and Foucault, especially in relation to different practices, see my essay 'The Care of the Self and the Production of the New' (O'Sullivan 2008).
10. Deleuze also attends to this folding of the outside, in relation to Foucault's late writings, in the final chapter, 'Foldings, or the Inside of Thought', of his book on *Foucault* (Deleuze 1988a: 94–123). As Deleuze remarks there, in relation to subjectivation: 'It is as if the relations of the outside folded back to create a doubling, allow a relation to oneself to emerge, and constitute an inside which is hollowed out and develops its own unique dimension' (100). This, for Deleuze's Foucault, is specifically to bend external power relations within. Deleuze remarks that this folding—or doubling—might also be understood as memory: '[m]emory is the real name of the relation to oneself. Or the affect on self by self' (107). Indeed, it would seem to me that the folding of the outside in—or the infinite into the finite—precisely constitutes the 'pure past' of Bergson's schema (see the diagram in endnote 15).
11. Is it a coincidence that the third Assemblage (as I have drawn it) resembles the klein bottle used by Lacan as a model of the psyche?:

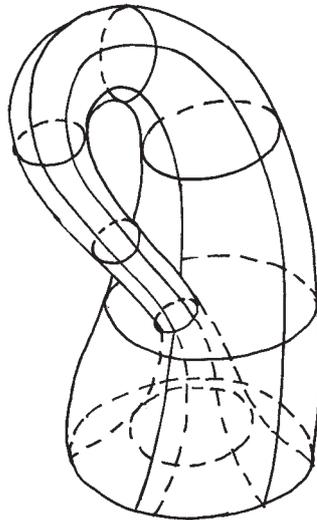


Figure 3. Klein Bottle

This is a model in which transcendence has been 'folded-in' and the subject has thus become a cause of himself or herself (the goal of analysis). Although

there is not the space to develop this here, one might argue that the same 'manoeuvre'—the folding-in of transcendence—is at stake in both Spinoza's Third Kind of Knowledge (no longer being subject *to* a world) and Nietzsche's Eternal Return (the affirmation of which enables a mastery of one's own destiny).

12. The notion of machinic being is developed in the essay 'Machinic Heterogenesis' where the 'entities' are defined as 'abstract machines' that traverse chaos and complexity, giving the different levels of being 'an efficiency, a power of ontological auto-affirmation' (35). In that essay Guattari extends his machinic ontology out to the universe, positing the existence 'of other autopoietic machines at the heart of other bio-mecanospheres scattered throughout the cosmos' (51), whilst at the same time, following the new aesthetic paradigm, foregrounding the importance of 'machines of desire and aesthetic creation' in today's 'assemblages of subjectivation' (54).
13. In 'Machinic Orality and Virtual Ecology' these pre-objectal 'entities' are defined in psycho-, or schizoanalytic terms: 'In the wake of Freud, Kleinian and Lacanian psychoanalysts apprehended, each in their own way, this type of entity in their fields of investigation. They christened it the "part object", the "transitional object", situating it at the junction of a subjectivity and alterity which are themselves partial and transitional' (94). This notion of part objects is itself part of the genesis of Deleuze and Guattari's 'desiring-machines' that further 'rupture with Freudian determinism', situating the latter in more expanded and incorporeal 'fields of virtuality' (95).
14. For a discussion of this form of knowledge, that constitutes a kind of becoming-world, see the section on 'Beatitude' in *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza* (Deleuze 1992: 303–20). In 'Machinic Orality and Virtual Ecology' Guattari would seem to have Spinoza in mind when he describes new practices of orality—such as performance art—as involving 'a search for enunciative nuclei which would institute new cleavages between other insides and other outsides and which would offer a different metabolism of past-future where *eternity will coexist with the present moment* [my italics]' (90).
15. See 'Of the Survival of Images: Memory and Mind' (Bergson 1991: 133–78). Here is the diagram in question:

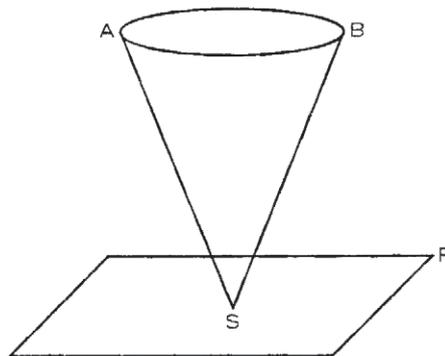


Figure 4. Diagram from Bergson's 'On the Survival of Images', *Matter and Memory*

AB represents the virtual or 'pure past', P the realm of matter ('my actual representation of the universe'), and point S the present being of any

given subjectivity that 'moves forwards unceasingly' (Bergson 1991: 152). By superimposing the above on the diagram of the third Assemblage we get a composite diagram that points towards a double movement of the production of subjectivity: the folding-in of transcendence (movement down from apex) and then the actualisation of the virtual (movement up from inverted apex).

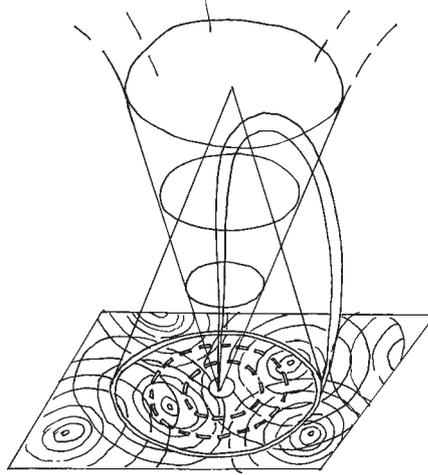


Figure 5. The Double Cone (Bergson-Guattari Composite)

16. See also *What is Philosophy?* where the three great forms of thought—art, philosophy, science—are characterised as *chaoids*: 'compositions' or 'daughters' of chaos (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 204). In many ways *Chaosmosis* is a supplement to *What is Philosophy?* inasmuch as the latter concerns itself with this relation between chaos and complexity. Franco Berardi develops this connection—between *Chaosmosis* and *What is Philosophy?*—in his recent book *The Soul at Work* where the business of productively and affirmatively negotiating this chaos is defined precisely as the work of the book's title. In fact, Berardi offers a more sobering account of the relation to chaos than explicitly put forward in *Chaosmosis*, thinking the former through also in connection to the increasing old age of our world and the concomitant loss of consistency in its subjectivities. See especially 'The Poisoned Soul' in the latter book (Berardi 2010: 106–83), and, in direct relation to Guattari, the chapter on 'The Happy Depression' in the book on Guattari (Berardi 2008: 9–15). It is worth noting that for Berardi, chaosmosis is not only the ontological ground of our being but also the name for the 'info-sphere' understood as the increasing omnipresence and acceleration of media within our lives (put bluntly, information overload). Berardi's thesis on old age (and depression) is then tied to the concomitant asymmetrical relation between transmitters (machinic technologies) and receivers (biological organisms), a temporal asymmetry that leaves us either too open to the world (schizophrenia), or, in reaction, too closed (depression).
17. Or as Guattari has it in 'Schizo Chaosmosis': '[a]nd chaos is not pure indifferenciation; it possesses a specific ontological texture. It is inhabited by virtual entities and modalities of alterity' (81).
18. In 'On the Production of Subjectivity' these entities are defined as 'existential refrains' to draw attention to this temporal aspect. Here is the paragraph in full

where Guattari articulates the refrain's local temporalisation, or what we might call singular crystallisation of time:

What we are aiming at with this concept of the refrain aren't just massive affects, but hyper-complex refrains, catalysing the emergence of incorporeal Universes such as those of music or mathematics, and crystallising the most deterritorialised existential Territories. This type of transversalist refrain evades strict spatio-temporal delimitation. With it, time ceases to be exterior in order to become an intensive nucleus [*foyer*] of temporalisation. From this perspective, universal time appears to be no more than a hypothetical projection, a time of generalised equivalence, a 'flattened' capitalistic time; what is important are these partial modules of temporalisation, operating in diverse domains (biological, theological, socio-cultural, machinic, cosmic...) and out of which complex refrains constitute highly relative existential synchronies. (16)

19. As Guattari remarks in 'On the Production of Subjectivity': 'An incorporeal universe is not supported by coordinates embedded in the world, but by ordinates, by an intensive ordination coupled for better or worse to these existential territories' (28). These 'incorporeal universes' or virtual ecologies might be productively thought as the content of Bergson's cone (see endnote 15). The 'grasping' here then is the work of an active and creative memory.
20. In the essay 'Schizo Chaosmosis' this 'giving consistency' is figured as 'worlding':

worlding a complexion of sense always involves taking hold of a massive and immediate ensemble of contextual diversity, a fusion in an undifferentiated, or rather de-differentiated whole. A world is only constituted on the condition of being inhabited by an umbilical point... from which a subjective positionality embodies itself. (80)

Again, this 'worlding' takes place 'before space and time, before spatialisation and temporalisation' (81).

21. Deleuze attends similarly to a transmonadic line that produces a new kind of subjectivity in his own solo book post *What is Philosophy?: The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* (Deleuze 1993). See especially the last few pages where Leibniz's monad, that 'submit[s] to two conditions, one of closure and the other of selection' is prised open 'to the degree that the world is now made up of divergent series (the chaosmos)' (Deleuze 1993: 137). This is the replacement of monadology with 'nomadology', defined as involving 'new ways of folding' (137). Indeed, in general, it seems to me that Deleuze's book parallels Guattari's investigations albeit utilising Leibniz rather than the new sciences in mapping out the possibility of a more processual subjectivity.
22. Guattari ends 'The New Aesthetic Paradigm' with a consideration, and redefinition, of the body as in fact always already a multiplicity of different bodies, different inter-faces, that intersect and that are 'open to the most diverse fields of alterity' (118). Indeed, the body—as it is for Bergson and Spinoza—is the very name of the relation, but also the means of passage, between the actual and virtual (or the finite and infinite). This might be compared with Badiou where the body is the name for that which stymies access to the infinite.
23. In the final essay of *Chaosmosis* this refrain is named the 'ecosopic object' and the four quadrants become its four dimensions—or strata—of existence. As Guattari remarks: '[w]ithin each of these strata, each of these Becomings and Universes what is put into question is a certain metabolism of the infinite, a threat of transcendence, a politics of immanence' (125).

24. We might usefully compare this particular diagram of the real/possible and actual/virtual with Deleuze's own on the same from *The Fold*:

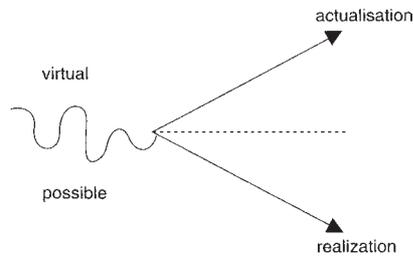


Figure 6. Diagram from Deleuze's 'The Two Floors', *The Fold*

Deleuze's accompanying comments are as follows:

The world is a virtuality that is actualised in monads or souls, but also a possibility that must be realised in matter or bodies ... The process of actualization operates through distribution, while the process of realization operates by resemblance. This raises the especially delicate point. For if the world is taken as a double process—of actualization in monads and of realization in monads—then in what does itself consist? How can we define it as *what* is actualized and realized? We find ourselves before events. (Deleuze 1993: 105)

Although there is not space here to work out the specific resonances (and differences) between Deleuze's and Guattari's two paradigms of subjectivity, it does seem to me that it is also the idea of 'subjectivity as event' (an actualisation and a realisation) that is at stake in Guattari's aesthetic paradigm.

25. This latter intention is even more direct in other earlier diagrams, for example this one, taken from Guattari's essay 'The Pace of the Signifier in the Institution':

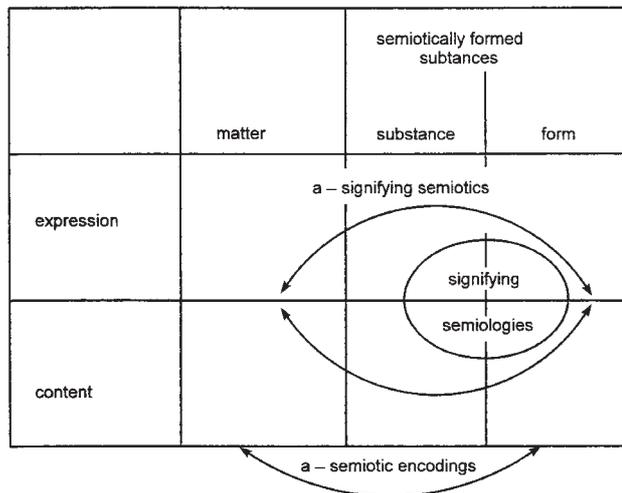


Figure 7. Diagram from Guattari's 'The Place of the Signifier in the Institution', *The Guattari Reader*

As Janell Watson points out, this diagram—or metamodel—‘swallow[s] up Lacan’s models of the linguistically-dominated psyche’ (Watson n.d.: n.p.). One can see this clearly in the diagram where signifying semiologies are placed in a larger context of asignifying semiotics and the Hjelmselvian categories of form, content, substance and matter are used to expand and complexify the dualisms of signification. Watson draws attention to the importance of ‘asignifying semiotics’ in this framework precisely because they bypass substance and involve form working directly on matter. This then is to avoid signifying regimes altogether (and thus, theoretically, the various capitalist subjectivities produced by them). This asignifying semiotics might also be called the aesthetic paradigm, involved as it is in the production of blocs or entities composed of sensations and intensities.

26. The notion of the ‘atmospheric’ is important to schizoanalysis. See David Reggio’s interview with Jean Oury where the latter links this interest back to Tosquelles’ earlier experiments in institutional psychotherapy: ‘I’ve always said, and will continue to say in drawing upon Tosquelles and others, that atmosphere, ambience, is important because today we have the grave ideologies of the pseudo neurosciences which say that atmosphere is not important’ (Reggio n.d.: n.p.).
27. See especially the section ‘Memories of a Molecule’ in Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 272–86.
28. This is in fact to somewhat follow Deleuze and Guattari in *Anti-Oedipus*, where the subject is always in process—a residuum of the consummation between the productivity of the desiring-machines (attraction), and the anti-production of the body without organs (repulsion)—*but also* the product of a retroactive recognition (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 16–22). As Deleuze and Guattari say, a ‘“So it’s *me!*”’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 20).
29. *Hupommemata* were notebooks and other diaries, account books, and so forth that constituted ‘a material and a framework for exercises to be carried out frequently: reading, rereading, meditating, conversing with oneself and others’ (Foucault 2000: 210). Their purpose, as Foucault remarks, ‘is nothing less than the shaping of the self’ (Foucault 2000: 211).
30. In passing it is worth noting that we can clearly see this co-existence of signifying and asignifying semiotics within contemporary art practice, in so far as it involves each of the three moments above. For a discussion along these lines see my essay ‘From Aesthetics to the Abstract Machine: Deleuze, Guattari, and Contemporary Art Practice’ (O’Sullivan 2010).
31. This is mirrored in Jean Oury’s own take on the work at *La Borde*: ‘[w]e work at the level of the poetic, a level infinitely more complex than the logic of computers and neuroscience . . . We work at the level of gestures here at *La Borde*. This is within the domain of what is called the “deictic”’ (Reggio n.d.: n.p.).
32. Or, in more simple terms:

For psychoanalysis the unconscious is always *already there*, genetically programmed, structured, and finalized on objects of conformity to social norms. For schizoanalysis it’s a question of constructing an unconscious not only with phrases but with all possible semiotic means, and not only with individuals or relations between individuals, but also with groups, with physiological and perceptual systems, with machines, struggles, and arrangements of every nature. (Guattari 1996a: 206)

33. In the earlier interview quoted above Guattari refers to this asignifying semiotics as a semiotics of the body: ‘what I call the semiotics of the body, is something specifically repressed by the capitalist-socialist-bureaucratic system. So I would

- say that each time the body is emphasised in a situation—by dances, by homosexuals, etc.—something breaks with the dominant semiotics that crush the semiotics of the body’ (Guattari 1996a: 205). Such a semiotics will involve what Deleuze and Guattari call a ‘becoming-woman’ when this involves forms of sexuality and subjectivity that are specifically non-phallogenic and thus closer to the ‘situation of desire’ (Guattari 1996a: 205; Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 275–7). In passing, it is important to note that asignification does not only work in the direction of the ‘liberation of desire’, but can also be part of its repression. Gary Genosko alerts us to this important point when he writes, for example, of the ‘triggering action’ of ‘part signs’—‘PINS/passwords’, ‘the magstripe-reader encoding-decoding relation’ that ‘do without mental representation’ and that allow or block access to information and the like (Genosko 2009: 96–9).
34. As Guattari has it: ‘To speak of machines rather than drives, Fluxes rather than libido, existential Territories rather than instances of the self and of transference, incorporeal Universes rather than unconscious complexions and sublimation, chaotic entities rather than signifiers . . .’ (126).
 35. Although Guattari does not address this directly it would seem to me that meta-modelisation will require the development of introspective strategies to break certain modelisations (or simply habits). I have addressed this elsewhere in relation to meditation (O’Sullivan 2008: 99–100). Guattari’s attitude is that such breaks happen through group interaction, but, one might ask, how can one really work with collectivity on the molecular and sub-individual without some kind of practice of introspection?
 36. Guattari links his thesis of metamodelisation to the practice of ‘ecosophy’ in the final essay of *Chaosmosis*:

The ecological crises can be traced to a more general crises of the social, political and existential. The problem involves a revolution of mentalities whereby they cease investing in a certain kind of development, based on productivism that has lost all human finality. Thus the issue returns with insistence: how do we change mentalities, how do we reinvent social practices that would give back to humanity—if it ever had it—a sense of responsibility, and not only for its own survival, but equally for the future of all life on the planet, for animal and vegetable species, likewise for incorporeal species such as music, the arts, cinema, the relation with time, love and compassion for others, the feeling of fusion at the heart of the cosmos. (119–20)

This final essay draws out the political implications of the ontology and ethics, as I have called them above, of Guattari’s system—a politics that would be post-human in that it attends to *other* forms of organic and inorganic life. This ‘science’ of ecosophy might be said to be the extension of schizoanalysis from the institution to the world (see also *The Three Ecologies*). Importantly, once more, the arts and the aesthetic paradigm more generally have a privileged place inasmuch as art can produce the new subjectivities Guattari’s ecosophy calls for and gestures towards:

The artist—and more generally aesthetic perception—detach and deterritorialise a segment of the real in such a way as to make it play the role of partial enunciator. Art confers a function of sense and alterity to a subset of the perceived world. The consequence of this quasi-animistic speech effect of a work of art is that the subjectivity of the artist and the ‘consumer’ is reshaped . . . The work of art, for those who use it, is an activity of unframing, of rupturing sense, of baroque proliferation or extreme impoverishment, which leads to a recreation and reinvention of the subject itself. (131)

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