DIGITAL AESTHETIC WAR MACHINES IN SOCIETIES OF CONTROL: PERRIN AND CLUZAUD'S *OCEANS* (2009)

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ABSTRACT

This article begins by reflecting on what Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari define as aesthetic nomadic war machines, how these war machines relate to the Bergsonian concept of duration, and how they operate to counter State apparatus thought. Examples provided, drawn from Deleuze and Guattari's work, include the minor literature of Franz Kafka, the intensity art of Francis Bacon, the becoming-animal music of Olivier Messiaen, and what Deleuze identified as modern political cinema – exemplified in the films of Jean Rouch among others. Also thematised is Deleuze's theorisation of film, particularly its transgressive potential, in *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* and *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*. Focus then shifts to discussion of the further development of scholarship on these ideas, particularly taking into account the rise of digital technologies alongside what Deleuze termed societies of control. Central to such scholarship is contention surrounding whether or not digital media are capable of communicating duration and countering State apparatus thought in a manner akin to their analogue predecessors, in a way that makes the creation of digital war machines possible. After touching on this debate and taking a standpoint in relation to it, the article then moves on to consider Jacques Perrin and Jacques Cluzaud's film *Oceans* (2009) as a digital aesthetic war machine.

Key words: War machine; control society; analogue; digital; duration; aesthetic; nomadism; *Oceans*

INTRODUCTION

In his work with Félix Guattari, Gilles Deleuze advances the idea of nomadic war machines as constructs that entail both the appropriation of aspects of the State apparatus, and their mutation and combination into novel forms of difference. In this regard, the minor literature of Franz Kafka, the intensity art of Francis Bacon, and the becoming-animal music of Olivier Messiaen, along with what Deleuze calls modern political cinema, receive particular emphasis. Perhaps the most important component of such war machines, regardless of their form, is the durationality they thematise. That is, the reflexive interplay between the virtual past and the actual present which these war machines evince, and which gives rise to new thought – through both the violence of the conceptual constraint which precipitates their birth, and the corresponding violence that such war machines in turn wield against the relative integrity of State apparatus thought.

That said, toward the end of his life Deleuze intimated concern over the efficacy of such aesthetic war machines to usher in new ways of thinking in the digital information age of control societies. This was not least because, for him, the digital era entailed the supplanting of durational reflection by informational thinking, and involved the correlative phenomenon of dividualisation, or the reduction of individual difference to the homogeneity of continuously monitored and coded economic matter. Admittedly, Deleuze did allude to the importance of producing counter-information, and to the possibility of certain new war machines effecting such production, but he failed to elaborate on this issue before his death in 1995.

However, 1995 was also the year in which several public search engines were launched among other cyber-innovations that facilitated unprecedented levels of divergent cyber-interactivity, which in many respects problematised Deleuze's conception of digitality as a medium of controlling uniformity. Indeed, recent Deleuzian scholarship has explored the existence of cyber war machines – most notably noise, viruses and piracy – as producing diverse forms of counter-information. In keeping with this research trajectory, the focus of the current article falls on: (a) the issue of whether or not such cyber war machines can ever replace aesthetic war machines such as those identified in the respective works of Kafka, Bacon, and Messiaen,[1] and reflected in modern political cinema; (b) what form the aesthetic war machines of the future will have to take to remain effective catalysts of difference, given what Deleuze calls societies of control; and (c) the extent to which Jacques Perrin and Jacques Cluzaud's film *Oceans* (2009) approximates such

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1   Among others of Kafka's works, Deleuze and Guattari (2003, 7-8) focus on *Amerika*, *The Trial*, *The Castle* and *In the Penal Colony* in their exploration of what they term "[a] Kafka-machine". Apart from Bacon's *Screaming Pope* portraits, other important examples of his work are his *Triptychs* of 1973 and 1976, and *Two Studies of George Dyer with a Dog* from 1968 (Porter 2009, 66). Examples of Messiaen's work are those from the 1940s to 1960s incorporating birdsong, and also his *From the Canyons to the Stars…* of the 1970s (Bogue 2007, 29–30).

a new aesthetic war machine, through its countering of the State apparatus thought of control society in a manner akin to the war machines of Kafka, Bacon, Messiaen and modern political cinema, but with far greater reach, impact and durability on account of its digital format.

To explore the above, firstly, what will be discussed are the Bergsonian durational dynamics of such older aesthetic nomadic war machines. Accordingly, focus will fall on the minor literature of Franz Kafka, the intensity art of Francis Bacon, the becoming-animal music of Olivier Messiaen, and on modern political cinema, along with their constitutive features. Secondly, discussion will move to Deleuze's theorisation of the advent of control societies within the digital information age, and then shift on to how recent Deleuzian scholars have thematised the emergence of new cyber war machines as sources of the counter-information Deleuze pointed to in his final years. Thirdly, the article will consider whether or not such cyber war machines can ever replace aesthetic war machines, and what form the aesthetic war machines of the future will have to take in order to remain effective catalysts of difference within the context of control society. In this respect, Perrin and Cluzaud's digital film, *Oceans*, will be advanced as an example of such a new aesthetic war machine.

DURATION AND NOMADIC WAR MACHINES

For Deleuze (and Guattari), drawing on the work of Henri Bergson, the virtual and actual are operative words that denote, respectively, a "past [which] co-exist[s] with the present" and a "present…which does not cease to pass" (Deleuze 1991, 59). Thus, while the actual present passes into the virtual past, constantly deepening and broadening its parameters, this expanding virtual past also always persists with the present, as the constantly contextualising lens through which we continually experience our existence, and ultimately arrive at durational intuition.[2] This applies as much to the individual as to the society they inhabit, because the related forms of societal organisation and accompanying cultural mores are similarly the actual explications in the passing present of certain genetic memories. Such memories are contained in a virtual past, coinciding with the present and comprising a key reference point when social patterns are challenged by new actual requirements, for which no precedent exists but to which response is obligatory. In relation to such dynamics, Bergson in *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion* distinguishes

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2   As Bergson explains, it is over the virtual past that "we tend to scatter ourselves…in the measure that we detach ourselves from our sensory and motor state", and it is in the actual present that "we tend to concentrate ourselves…in the measure that we attach ourselves more firmly to the present reality, responding by motor reactions to sensory stimulation" (Bergson 2005, 162–163). Accordingly, "time is…identical with the continuity of our inner life", of "memory within change itself…that prolongs the before into the after", and for Bergson all "that is naturally experienced" in this way "is duration" (Bergson 1965, 44).

between "closed and open societies" that are informed, respectively, more by instinct than intelligence, and more by intelligence than instinct (Bergson 1932, 137–141). And he contends that progressive adaptation to the unanticipated is the mark of the latter, as the innovation involved constitutes an actual seed that crystallises a virtual social environment in a new memorial configuration. Further, the openness to change, inseparable from such a new memorial configuration, can also constitute a virtual seed that, in turn, subsequently crystallises other actual environments, in progressively more open and innovative configurations.

That said, Deleuze and Guattari (2000, 217, 219) believe that over the centuries, the possible parameters of actual social change have for the most part consistently been circumscribed by the virtual seed of "the primordial *Urstaat*, the eternal model of everything the State wants to be and desires", which has explicated itself in various actual social formations including "the famous five stages [of Marxism]: primitive communism, ancient city-states, feudalism, capitalism, and socialism". It is in this sense "that, spiritual or temporal, tyrannical or democratic, capitalist or socialist, *there has never been but a single State*", the apparatuses of which have always sought to canalise desire, albeit in different ways at different historical junctures (Deleuze and Guattari 2000, 192). Consequently, while for Deleuze and Guattari "history is a molar majoritarian state apparatus", they regard "revolution [a]s a-historical because it is a molecular minoritarian becoming"; for them "minority and revolution are both becomings" on account of their incremental but persistent introduction of *new* assemblages (Watson 2010, 174).[3] In particular, Deleuze considers the events of May 1968 a case in point,[4] arguing that at that moment "the question [wa]s not to seek the truth like Sartre, but to produce new conditions for statements", and that "1968 produced new statements…that no one had used before" (Deleuze 2007, 284). Similarly, Michel Foucault advances that May 1968 was deeply transformative because it involved "ask[ing] politics a whole series of questions that were not traditionally a part of its statutory domain", ranging from issues of gender, racial and sexual inequality, to problems of hierarchical societal

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3   For Deleuze and Guattari (2003, 16–18, 81), "[a]n assemblage…has two sides: it is a collective assemblage of enunciation [and]…a machinic assemblage of desire" which arise in relation to an "impasse" – often presented by the State apparatus – to which assemblages respond by rendering "everything in them" thoroughly "political" so that a new contestatory "collective enunciation" is precipitated.

4   The events of May 1968 in Paris were of unparalleled scale and effect. For three weeks millions of "workers, teachers and students held a general strike that…closed down French transport, industry and education", resulting in "the resignation of Charles De Gaulle's authoritarian right-wing government, improved wages and conditions, an end to the war in Vietnam, reform of the education system and an end to police brutality" (Varney 2011, 45). Marxism underpinned significant aspects of such opposition but it was ultimately "the turn to ethics" that constituted the "unmistakable legacy of the dialectics sparked by *les événements* of May 1968" (Bourg 2007). As will be discussed, the Deleuzoguattarian nomadic war machine comprised a key concept in this regard.

organisation and environmental degradation. Foucault (1984b, 115) also believed it was a significantly catalytic event, since it resulted in an attempt "to rewrite all these problems in the vocabulary of a theory…derived more or less directly from Marxism", and correlatively exposed "a more and more manifest powerlessness on the part of Marxism to confront these problems". To be sure, Louis Althusser's concept of the Ideological State Apparatuses – as a network of mutually reinforcing sites and conceptual constellations collectively weaving the dream of capitalist ideology from which it is so difficult to awake (Althusser 1970, 100–120) – continued to loom large in the popular imagination of the time, and channelled much of the protesters' activism. Yet the need for a coherent response to the ever more apparent deficits of Marxism also prompted Deleuze and Guattari, among others, to explore the limitations of precisely such channelling of political desire in relation to the virtual seed of the *Urstaat*, along with how the formation of new desires had evidently exceeded the containment capacities of both capitalism and Marxism.

In this sense, as Ian Buchanan (2008, 1, 7) explains, Deleuze and Guattari's "*Anti-Oedipus* is a May '68 book" that "*did* provide a coherent response to th[ose] events". In this text, they thematised how such channelling of energy entails a procedure "functionally equivalent to the Althusserian concept of 'interpellation', with the [fascist] body without organs standing in the place of ideology" (Buchanan 2008, 61), at least insofar as it denotes a limiting genetic idea or principle.[5] Briefly, it coexists virtually with the present as a powerful memorial inclination, and continually explicates itself in the formation of the actual limiting social configurations and corresponding desires of the State apparatus. Yet, Deleuze and Guattari understand the fascist body-without-organs (or ideology) as explicating itself in both capitalist *and* Marxist frameworks, among other stratifications of desire/discourse/etcetera. Thus, for them, what is "revolutionary" necessarily occurs "outside the framework of Marxist materialism and the usual sense of 'politics'" (Aldea 2011, 144), and in relation to time or the Bergsonian concept of duration.

Accordingly, what these theorists consider war machines are the revolutionary tools of nomadic minorities, whose nomadism derives from the impossibility of aligning themselves with, or of being accommodated within, the State apparatus. To understand this, the botanical concepts employed by Deleuze and Guattari are

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5   Deleuze and Guattari's term body-without-organs derives from Antonin Artaud's 1947 radio play entitled *To Have Done With the Judgment of God*, and denotes "what remains when the body is stripped of all its organs" to become a "pure naked surface, [or] surface of inscription"; in effect, "[d]ivested of that arrangement of organs which makes of it an organism the body remains as a pure surface of intensity" (Patton 2001b, 1092). But in contrast to the infinite creative possibility of such pure "[s]mooth space", which "is essentially fluid, heterogeneous, [and] without center or dimensional coordinates", a fascist/cancerous body-without-organs entails a genetic principle of organisation which limits such possibility through its explication – most notably in "striated space" which "is stable, homogeneous and crisscrossed with organizational grids" (Bogue 2007, 50).

helpful. By virtue of eschewal of the arborescent traditions of the State apparatus (which involve restrictive disciplinary roots, strong centralising tendencies and largely static branching rituals), the nomadic formation of new rhizomatic socio-cultural, politico-economic, and aesthetic-philosophical dynamics can comprise war machines.[6] At grassroots level, they connect things hitherto separated and breathe new life into ossified practices.[7] Importantly, although Deleuze and Guattari's concept of "the rhizome is more a model of becoming than of being", and although it "resist[s] the tendencies of arborescent thought" (Sprouse 1997, 83), to these thinkers "the root-tree and canal-rhizome are not two opposed models" (Deleuze and Guattari 2005, 20). Rather, it is better to think of them as opposite poles along a continuum, making possible the operations of war machines in the liminal space between them. Such operations entail "a tension between the State apparatus with its requirement for self-preservation and the war-machine in its undertaking to destroy the State" and "the subjects of the State" (Deleuze 1987, 142). The martial metaphors employed here are of course quite striking, as is Deleuze's association of war machines with, for instance, Genghis Khan's Mongol hordes. Yet, if one considers the contemporary examples of nomadic war machines put forward by Deleuze and Guattari, namely the minor literature of Franz Kafka, the intensity art of Francis Bacon, and the becoming-animal music of Olivier Messiaen, along with what Deleuze calls modern political cinema, then the overwhelmingly aesthetic and durational dimensions of the transformative violence in question become conspicuous.

Deleuze and Guattari (2003, 18) describe Kafka's minor literature as involving "the deterritorialization of language, the connection of the individual to a political immediacy, and the collective assemblage of enunciation". In his turn, Ronald Bogue in *Deleuze's Way* neatly explains why they argue this. Firstly, Kafka effected deterritorialisation through exploiting the linguistic estrangement of many Prague Jews. They were alienated from their rural roots, operated awkwardly in the Czech language, and remained at a remove from German, not only because it was primarily an administrative language, but also because it was "the language of an oppressive minority", who themselves were alienated "from [their] native cultural milieu" (Bogue 2007, 19). And this Prague German was also pervasively infiltrated by Czech inflections, which, as already mentioned, the Prague Jews were uncomfortable with. Kafka's deterritorialising response to this situation was to "impoverish Prague

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6   As Burrell further clarifies: "the arborescent tree…is visible, hierarchical and predictably straight", while "the rhizome assumes very diverse forms as it ceaselessly establishes subterranean and grounded connections"; similarly, while "the rhizome is made up of lines or lineaments…the arboreal world is made up of lineages" (Burrell 1998, 146).

7   As will be discussed later, though, an additional obstacle to such creative engagement with the past is posed by the suicidal/catatonic body-without-organs (Deleuze and Guattari 2005, 165). In terms of this, instead of aspects of the past being selectively and creatively remembered in the present in nomadic fashion, the virtual past floods the actual present in a way that forecloses possibility of any meaningful alternative memorial articulation.

German [even] further, to destabilize it and imbue it with affective intensity through an ascetic limitation of vocabulary…and a distribution of accents and rhythms" in a way that "render[ed] the language…unsettlingly irregular" (Bogue 2007, 19). But such deterritorialisation was also linked inextricably to politics. That is, because "common notions of grammatical rules…and so on, are not the essential constituents of language, but the secondary effects of power" (Bogue 2007, 22), Kafka's process of further impoverishing Prague German was also, in the second instance, a powerfully *political* act, constituting a minoritarian challenge to the linguistic organisational plane of the majority. And thirdly, through such means, Kafka's articulations gave birth to "collective assemblages of enunciation, fashioning not an individual voice but the voice of a people to come…a people in the process of becoming other" (Bogue 2007, 24). This is primarily because the desires of such a people are no longer strictly and successfully canalised along Oedipal lines by the State apparatus. Instead, within their experience "the Oedipal triangle shows signs of unhinging" (Bogue 2001, 111). Indeed, because "Oedipalization and the blockage of the line of flight are the typical outcomes" of Kafka's narratives (Bogue 2001, 112), rather than marking the triumph of the State apparatus, such blockage evinces its incremental dissolution under the persistent assault of a war machine. In other words, the integrity of the State apparatus is slowly besieged through the formation of nomadic desires that always ultimately exceed its capacity for containment. In sum, through this process, the words on the pages of Kafka's novels and short stories constitute an actual seed that crystallises a virtual literary environment in a new minoritarian configuration. In addition, the openness to change indissociable from the configuration of such minor literature, also constitutes a virtual seed that in turn has the power to subsequently crystallise other actual literary endeavours in analogously progressive and more open configurations.

Similarly, in relation to Francis Bacon's intensity art, Deleuze (2004, 8) argues that both the fall of religious metanarratives which previously demanded art to be representational, and the usurping of art by photographic documentary representation, confronted modern art with an impasse. Rendered redundant by technological developments on the one hand, and devoid of its erstwhile salvific mission on the other, modern art responded to such impossibilities through increasing abstraction, of which Bacon's focus on intensities is one example. On account of its evocative figural power, for Deleuze, Bacon's art constitutes a war machine that engages with, breaks down, and exceeds the figurative parameters of traditional representational art linked to the State apparatus. In fact, it is in relation to Bacon's art specifically that "Deleuze lays out in most detail his understanding of the figural in contrast to the figurative, and also examines the techniques and practices associated with the work of creating the figural" (Bell 2011, 16). Bacon's figural art can be understood as operating in the liminal space between chaos and ordered figurative representation, by means of free marks. Through these, Bacon guards against the canalising virtual

clichés produced through the arborescent art tradition tied to the State apparatus, which incline artists toward representation. Admittedly, Bacon does explain that these free marks "have to be made rather quickly on the image being painted so as to destroy the nascent figuration in it and to give the Figure a chance" to emerge, and thus they need to be "accidental…because they depend on the act of chance and express nothing regarding the visual image" (cited in Deleuze 2004, 93–94). However, the extent to which the artist accomplishes them through accident is amplified subsequently, as such fortuitous marks in turn are allowed to function as the virtual seed which crystallises the actual painting in a radically different way. In Bacon's works there occur "different syntheses of sensation…in different paintings: a painting…composed of a single Figure is composed of vibration, that which is composed of two Figures is composed of resonance and the triptychs are composed of forced movement" (Clay 2010, 144). Yet in all cases, Bacon's deterritorialising "art is about the search for intensity, the desire to get beyond depiction to a different order of understanding about the bestiality of humanity", and "the violence it has wrought on bodies, psyches and selves" (Moore 2013), through its aversion to virtual intensities that exceed – or even threaten to exceed – the containment strategies of the State apparatus. And insofar as Bacon responded by bringing "painting closer to movement and action in life, to the materiality of affect and sensation…in a way that…provokes thought" (Moore 2013), his art is a war machine. It is one both deeply political and part of a collective enunciation of an emergent people who are increasingly open to seeing things differently, in relation to new and unanticipated virtual seeds and their isomorphic explications.

Analogously, in relation to Olivier Messiaen's becoming-birdsong music, Deleuze and Guattari hear the workings of a deeply deterritorialising war machine – one which counters the limiting, orderly parameters of classicism by opening up modern music to cosmic duration. Indeed, they hold that Messiaen's music deterritorialises because it entails a third order deterritorialisation of the refrain, since it deterritorialises birdsong that itself deterritorialised bird calls, which previously deterritorialised chaos through the creation of milieus (Deleuze and Guattari 2005, 311–312). To clarify, for Deleuze and Guattari, "bird calls are largely milieu components, fixed to specific functions" (Bogue 1999, 128), which carve out or deterritorialise an operational space from chaos. However, birdsongs that derive from them – through a further process of deterritorialisation – "are…sonic components of milieus that have been unfixed and reconfigured" (Bogue 1999, 128) into something expressive rather than purely functional. Consequently, as Bogue explains, when "Messiaen incorporates birdsong into his music" by "transfer[ring] to human instruments the micro-intervals and rapid tempos of birdsong, as well as those articulations and timbres peculiar to avian physiology" (Bogue 1999, 128), his gesture entails a third order of deterritorialisation. Deleuze and Guattari contend that through "[c]lassicism…matter is organized by a succession of forms that are

compartmentalized, centralized, and hierarchized in relation to one another" with a view to "organizing chaos" as much through melody and harmony as through meter (Deleuze and Guattari 2005, 338).[8] In stark contrast, Messiaen's modern music opens up to such seething chaos and finds in it cosmic duration. Accordingly, for Messiaen, while meter "denotes a regular, measured repetition of equal pulses…rhythm is a matter of incommensurable durations, irregular sequences of unequally spaced pulses" (Bogue 2007, 42) that are the very stuff of life, as it unfolds within the cosmos. And as his music explores the latter, it tends toward the time of "Aeon, the time of the virtual…a nonpulsed rhythmic time of irregular, incommensurable intervals", in opposition to the time of "Chronos" or "the time of the commonsense, actual world" characterised by "a pulsed, metrical time of regular repeated intervals" (Bogue 2007, 42). Messiaen's music thus constitutes a war machine as it deterritorialises the molar sounds of classicism. Its "cosmic" dimensions render it "molecular, with enormous force operating in an infinitesimal space" (Deleuze and Guattari 2005, 343), in what might even be said to amount to a fourth level of deterritorialisation. In addition, such musical deterritorialisation is also political because, through it, "the people and the earth" become "like the vectors of a cosmos that carries them off" (Deleuze and Guattari 2005, 346), into the virtual past of a universal duration that coexists with the present. This is an immense virtual past that, since it comprises the broad contextualising substrate of all the actual, myopic and limiting arrangements of the State apparatus, renders critically conspicuous the arbitrariness and constraining orientation of the latter. Moreover, such a political experience is made possible because Messiaen's becoming-birdsong music necessarily entails a collective enunciation. This is because it involves merging orchestral instruments and human compositional selectivity with the intervals, tempos, articulations, and timbres of birdsong. Accordingly, Messiaen's *becoming-birdsong* [also] posits a people [to come] whose aesthetic sense is capable of sensing hitherto imperceptible alien semiotics" (Jagodzinski and Wallin 2013, 110).

Deleuze and Guattari's distinction between classical and modern dynamics, described above, also has its counterpart in Deleuze's distinction in *Cinema 2* between classical and modern political cinema. Firstly, in classical cinema one encounters the explication of a fascist body-without-organs, in the sense that the people it represents and to which it addresses itself are understood as extant – even if, as Deleuze (2005b, 208) explains, they "are oppressed, tricked, subject…blind or unconscious" – such as in Sergei Eisenstein's early films. Secondly, in such classical cinema the "boundary which mark[s] the correlation of the political and the private" (Deleuze 2005b, 210) is maintained accordingly, so that a conversion of thinking

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8   Moreover, "the orchestral score territorializes spatial relations (*polis*) through the striating, hierarchical, and delimiting powers of the State", insofar as, "in classical orchestration for example, a spacio-political hierarchy is established between the composer and the orchestra" (Jagodzinski and Wallin 2013, 110).

in the latter domain – for example, the development of class consciousness – leads to activism in the former domain as part of a greater emancipatory project. Thirdly, there consequently exists in classical cinema an underpinning master narrative or voice – in Eisenstein's films it is the Marxist metanarrative – which advances the "possibility of evolution and revolution" (Deleuze 2005b, 211). In contrast, firstly, in modern political cinema "the people no longer exist, or…*are missing*" (Deleuze 2005b, 208), insofar as they have yet to be formed as a people. This is because – as in the case of the colonised, refugees, migrants, diaspora, etcetera – various circumstances have both alienated them from the people they once were, and denied them sufficient opportunity to constitute themselves in a new form. Secondly, modern political cinema points out "the absence of a boundary between the private and the political" through emphasising both "the myth of origins" and "the impossibility of living in these conditions", along with "the impossibility of escaping from the group and the impossibility of being satisfied with it" (Deleuze 2005b, 211). Thirdly, and owing to these various impasses, there is no room for any master voice; rather, as Deleuze (2005b, 214) explains, "the author takes a step towards his characters, [and]…the characters take a step toward the author" in an act of "double becoming". In this way, "story-telling is itself memory" but "[n]ot the myth of a past people"; rather, it entails the memorial "invention of a people" through "the story-telling of the people to come" (Deleuze 2005b, 214–215). This inclination toward newness, and the creative difference which ensues from it, entails the explication of a full (rather than a fascist) body-without-organs.

Thus, the full bodies-without-organs spoken of by Deleuze and Guattari, despite their enigmatic nomenclature, are not that uncommon and relate deeply to the above literary, visual and musical art of, respectively, Kafka, Bacon and Messiaen. In these artists' works, durational intuition allows exploratory playfulness with the virtual past in an actual present experiment, while this experiment in turn produces new thought that informs the time of the future and itself undergoes change as that time unfolds. Such dynamics have their parallel in the modern political cinema of Jean Rouch's ethnofictions. For instance, his film *Jaguar* (1967) entails the director's and the three characters' actual collective reflections on their respective virtual pasts, as the three young Songhay men travel from Mali to the Gold Coast of West Africa as migrant labourers. During their journey the three characters find themselves "shar[ing] out roles which they are made to confront like so many legendary powers" (Deleuze 2005b, 146), in a process of virtual experimental playfulness. Moreover, the audience becomes increasingly aware that, on account of such reflection, after their journey "they will return to their country, like ancestors, full of exploits and lies", knowing that because "the least incident becomes power" they have the capacity to contribute to their communities' memory by reshaping it in ways altering the quality of its duration (Deleuze 2005b, 146). In terms of this, they engage with their own traditional virtual past as they "seek to become 'jaguar,' that is, cool and

'with it'" (Ballinger 2012, 389), in ways that open up possibilities for themselves and others in the future. Also, they challenge expressions of colonial authority. For example, after the border guard denies them entry to the British Gold Coast since they lack identification documents, "they merely walk around the border station and surreptitiously cross into British territory" thus continuing their earlier traversal of "border zones…that loosely demarcate ethnic, cultural and linguistic boundaries" (Ballinger 2012, 389). Their nomadic movements are thus also "tactical rather than strategic" because they "move…at variable speed and direction through a [smooth] vectorial space", in a way that circumvents the State apparatus's "stable universal models in a striated space" (Holland 2013, 46–47).[9]

Yet, explications of a full body-without-organs are not limited to the emergent self-creation of socio-cultural groups, as such explications can also manifest in various other forms and domains. Likewise, at the other end of the continuum, fascist bodies-without-organs are not limited to the political ideology of oppressive majoritarian groups. Rather, they can also involve ontological positions or frames of reference that provide a sense of stability and are construed as so self-evident that they are rarely considered ideological. In particular, the concept of an isolated and rationally autonomous subjectivity, and the ensuing experience of atomistic identity formation that constitutes the actual explication of such a virtual seed, and which serves to endorse the veracity of such a concept as long as it is allowed to proceed, is a major aspect of the State apparatus targeted by Deleuze and Guattari. Indeed, in critiquing a subjectivity-orientated mindset, Guattari "concerns himself with desire in the group, a group Eros that does not belong to an individual ego", and also distinguishes between "[t]he subject group [that] actively assumes responsibility for its own project" and "the subjugated group [that] passively receives directions" (Genosko 2002, 90). Similarly, in their collaborative works, "Deleuze and Guattari's approach to ethics…is heir to the tradition of anti-humanism", which construes "subjectivity or selfhood…as a displaced and decentred effect of the assemblages of desire, language and social activity within which the individual functions" (Patton 2001a, 1159). This same stance underpins Deleuze's *Cinema 1* and *Cinema 2* where, respectively, the movement- and time-images follow a line of flight from the particular to the cosmic, or from the subjective to the universal.

For example, as Bogue (2003, 70) explains in relation to movement-images, in classical cinema "a visual image [i]s a perception when it is treated as a representation of a subjective point of view", codified in terms of the subject's stature, position in space, and/or state of mind. However, in modern cinema there occurs a move away from such subject-centred perception-images, through increasingly critical

9   Stoller (1992, 143) points out that while anthropologists and cultural theorists of the 1980s "deconstructed many of the dualistic distinctions…fundamental to…logocentrism", Rouch, via "the methods, composition, and realization of *Jaguar*…had already made many of the same arguments – filmically – in the 1950s".

and detached signs of composition (dicisign; reume), to the genetic sign (gramme). Dicisigns reveal "the latent structure of every perception-image as perception of a perception" by rendering an image "noticeably perceptual *as taken* by a perceiving camera" (Bogue 2003, 73). In turn, the reume entails a "perception-image that tends toward a perception 'in things'" or, "a liquid perception no longer constrained by bodies" (Bogue 2003, 74). Finally, the gramme opens us to a cosmic or universal perspective, since it involves a completely disembodied juxtaposition of multiple views – both subjective and objective – at different speeds and via "split screens or in superimpressions, linked in varying montage rhythms that at times slow and at others accelerate toward a stroboscopic blur" (Bogue 2003, 75). For Deleuze, the gramme entails a "non-human eye, the cine-eye…the eye of matter, the eye in matter, not subject to time, which has 'conquered' time…and which knows no other whole than the material universe and its extension" (Deleuze 2005a, 83–84). Thus the gramme reflects universal duration: "[e]very image is 'merely a road by which pass, in every direction, the modifications propagated throughout the immensity of the universe'" as "*[e]very image acts on others and reacts to others, on 'all their facets at once' and 'by all their elements'*" (Deleuze 2005a, 60). The taxonomy of the remaining movement-images (affection-, impulse-, action-, reflection-, and relation-images) traces analogous progression from the particular to the universal, via the signs of composition and genetic signs of each.

A similar progression informs the taxonomy of time-images, articulated by Deleuze (2005b, 2) in *Cinema 2*. Although Deleuze calls time-images "a cinema of the seer and no longer of the agent",[10] they should not be misunderstood as reflecting subjective mnemonic dynamics. Drawing on Bergson, Deleuze emphasises precisely that "[s]ubjectivity is never ours" because "it is time, that is, the soul or the spirit, the virtual" (Deleuze 2005b, 80). In other words, "[t]ime is not the interior in us, but just the opposite, the interiority in which we are, in which we move, live and change" (Deleuze 2005b, 80). Admittedly, Deleuze does thematise seemingly subjective time-images, in Alain Resnais's *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (1959) for example, where "[t]here are two characters, but each has his or her own memory which is foreign to the other" (Deleuze 2005b, 113–114) – one of the atomic attack on Hiroshima and the other of the Nazi occupation of France. Consequently, while they do share an actual passing present, each experiences it differently because their respective virtual pasts persist powerfully, coalescing with and mediating their respective experiences

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10   Already in *Cinema 1*, Deleuze maintained that the opsigns and sonsigns of post-war cinema, specifically the overwhelming and incomprehensible sights and sounds confronting the characters in Italian neorealism to which they could not respond, ruptured stabilising sensory-motor schemas. For him, this precipitated a crisis of the action-image, which depended on the possibility of effective agency in relation to stable sensory-motor schemas. Deleuze adds that this crisis of the action-image was coterminous with the birth of time-images, in which the movement-image taxonomy was supplemented by increasing emphasis on the dimension of the virtual past and its coalescence with the actual present (Deleuze 2005a, 209–219).

of each other and of post-war Japan. But, like the taxonomy of movement-images ranges from the particular to the cosmic, the taxonomy of time-images extends from the more subjective to the universal – with the latter comprising the genetic signs of the former. Particularly important here are what Deleuze identifies as lectosigns. These, as Bogue explains, are "modern visual…and sonic images [that] must be 'read,' in the sense that these images, disengaged and disconnected from their standard contexts, must be reconnected…in ways that cannot be anticipated ahead of the appearance of the given images" (Bogue 2003, 188). Images of such "'archeological, stratigraphic, and tectonic' nature…Deleuze finds most evident in the films of Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet" (Bogue 2003, 189). In these works a virtual past remains present over actual sites of suffering: "sites of massacres, battles, sacrifices, and executions…alluded to by voices and by shots of written texts or monuments" (Bogue 2003, 189). Also, Straub and Huillet "in their approach to landscapes, attempt…to render visible the forces that play through matter,…not to arouse sensations in the viewer, but to materialize sensation in the landscape" (Bogue 2003, 189). Bogue (2003, 189) claims that this, for Deleuze, comprises "the fundamental aesthetic of the modern visual image". It exceeds the genetic signs of movement-images, moving beyond a visually explicit actual toward an implicated virtual. In this, the virtual past is not of a particular subject position but rather of universal duration itself, including the histories of peoples within geological, and indeed cosmic, time.

CONTROL SOCIETIES AND COUNTER-INFORMATION

The above literary, graphic, sonic and audio-visual nomadic war machines, within the age of analogue technology, were able to challenge the canalisation of desire and thought along lines determined by the State apparatus. That is, through their adversarial co-option of elements within the related arborescent traditions of the State apparatus, and their rhizomatic reformulation of them into new and provocative configurations, such nomadic war machines were capable of precipitating the birth of new thought – or radical difference – which inspires even greater experimentation. Yet for Deleuze, the advent of digitality in the information age posed a major obstacle to the movement and operation of such nomadic thought, coinciding with what he refers to as societies of control.

The dynamics of the transition to control society, and resultant effects on subjectivity, can most easily be understood when compared with the disciplinary power that preceded it. According to Foucault, up until the eighteenth century sovereign power prevailed, characterised by emphasis on the identity of monarchs and the relative anonymity of the masses except in cases of public torture, where the guilty party received an identity at the cost of their life. However, from the late eighteenth century onward, the scaffold was abandoned and replaced with incarceration to the

point of near ubiquity. Foucault (1991, 3–7, 141–156, 184–193, 200–202) links this transformation of punishment to the supplanting of sovereign power by disciplinary power, in terms of which the governing bureaucracy grew anonymous while identity was accorded each person – an identity created and elaborated upon through meticulous processes of examination. As Foucault explains, the disciplining of the population involved "a field of surveillance" and "a network of writing" that made "*each individual a 'case'*" such that their individuality functioned as "an object for a branch of knowledge and a hold for a branch of power" (Foucault 1991, 189, 191). Furthermore, examination was tied closely to intensifying spatio-temporal regimentation, involving establishment of enclosures dedicated to certain tasks, and ever greater partitioning of space in such enclosures such that "[e]ach individual ha[d] his own place; and each place its individual" (Foucault 1991, 143). The individual's productive presence at their station was now also increasingly measured "in minutes [and] in seconds" (Foucault 1991, 150) and subject to mounting variants of panoptical surveillance.

Deleuze, in "Postscript on Control Societies", concurs both with Foucault's descriptions of such regime change and with his argument that the spatio-temporal regimentation and surveillance within disciplinary prisons comprised the organisational blueprint for the remainder of modern society, from schools and hospitals to factories and barracks. However, he emphasises that Foucault himself acknowledged "how short-lived this model was" – that it had already begun "to break down…after the Second World War" and that, consequently, already from the second half of the twentieth century "we were no longer in disciplinary societies" (Deleuze 1990b, 177–178). Instead we were in a society informed by "new forces [which] moved slowly into place, then made rapid advances" in the post-war years, namely those of a global capitalist economy delinked from the gold standard, and an information technology "system…whose language is *digital*" (Deleuze 1990b, 178). The rise of global free market capitalism involved implementation of the *laissez-faire* tenets of Friedrich Hayek's and Milton Friedman's neoliberal approach, which displaced Keynes's embedded liberalism that had emphasised managing capitalism through interventionism to ensure high rates of employment (Ebenstein and Ebenstein 1991, 850–854, 898–905; Schmidt and Thatcher 2013, 18); and this helped usher in the current era of rapacious capitalist exploitation and financial instability, the extent of which is without historical precedent (Robinson 2013, 660). Further, the advent and rapid advancement of information technology enabled steady closing of the gaps between what Foucault had identified as segmented disciplinary technologies of surveillance, until continuous digital surveillance was achieved.

For Deleuze, this transformation marked the end of disciplinary society, and he argues that out of its crumbling vestiges a new form of control society emerged. That is, Foucault had described disciplinary power as orientated around "a linear…

'evolutive' time" involving "a social time of a serial…cumulative type" (Deleuze 1991, 160). Within this temporal framework two things were of key importance: "the progress of societies and the geneses of individuals" (Deleuze 1991, 160). Such progress depended on rendering individuals ever more docile, but effecting complete docility was very rare structurally, due to the segmentary nature of disciplinary power. After all, although confinement and surveillance informed all social institutions, these latter nevertheless remained different domains between which the disciplinary individual moved. As Deleuze (1990b, 179) puts it, "[i]n disciplinary societies you were always starting all over again (as you went from school to barracks, from barracks to factory)". Due to the interstices between such enclosed domains, the very disciplinary individual – that "fictitious atom of an 'ideological' representation of society" (Foucault 1991, 194) – became indissociable from a dark doppelganger. This figure could always run counter to disciplinary tenets, through durational contemplation rather than single-minded pursuit of elusive societal progress. The doppelganger could do so by exploring things tangential to, or inconsistent with, the ostensibly integral individuality otherwise "described, judged, measured… classified, [and] normalized" through the disciplinary dossier (Foucault 1991, 191). In addition to Kafka, Bacon, Messiaen and Rouch, discussed earlier, another such transgressive figure would be Marcel Proust. His *In Search of Lost Time* comprises a gargantuan act of durational contemplative resistance – undertaken in the midst of a disciplinary context – the features and dynamics of which Deleuze explores meticulously in *Proust and Signs*.

However, Deleuze (1990b, 178) believes that in the societies of control superseding disciplinary society, the intermittent disciplinary "molding" of the individual as they passed through the various institutions, has been replaced by a continuous and thoroughly pervasive system of "*modulation*" entailing both dynamic and formal dimensions. The dynamic of control society sees the former disciplinary individual now "moving among a continuous range of different orbits" that are produced and incessantly monitored through "information technology" (Deleuze 1990b, 180). Most notably, digital mechanisms now allow "control" to be "exercised virtually everywhere; marketing information, for example, is collected wherever and whenever people shop, travel, pay taxes, register to vote" etcetera (Holland 1998, 71). Further, this information is employed to interpellate people to a greater degree than ever before, through for instance, "*[l]ocation-based marketing* and *geofencing*" which "take geobrowsing one step further by enabling developers to deliver ads, offers, and other marketing resources to users based on their current physical location" (Morley 2015, 113). Such developments have occurred alongside "phenomena like the rise of out-patient therapy, work-at-home labour, continuous education, and house arrest", all "examples of…social spread" defined by "instantaneous [digital] communications across space, and decentralized diffusion into everyday life" (Dover and Hill 2007,

12). In fact, the extent to which such diffusion has become normalised is reflected in new cultural practices, whereby people not only willingly but indeed obsessively replicate continuous panoptical dynamics in their relationship with themselves and others. A case in point being "camera phones" which "are part of the technologies that Deleuze's conception of control society accommodates easily" since they function as "panopticons in the palms of individuals engaged in the surveillance of their objects of desire" (Ravindran 2009, 104). New smartphone applications compound this. For example, Snapchat, which has over two hundred million users, encourages obsessive self-surveillance and narcissism as the "application…promotes taking of 'selfies' and encourages its users to advertise their entire life to their friends" (Vellante 2016), by making such material ubiquitously accessible through uploading it to the internet. Similar to Snapchat, Twitter and Facebook encourage compulsive "information sharing and self-disclosure", and despite the potentially more anonymous aspect of Twitter, when used "to talk about daily routines" it arguably reflects the same "neuroticism" that underpins the growing obsession with "Facebook status updates" (Lin and Qiu 2013, 433). Sherry Turkle (2011, 405) in particular hints at the self-censoring young people engage in when in public, knowing well that their friends may take pictures of them or comment on their behaviour, posting such materials on Facebook and the like. The economic aspect of these applications must not be forgotten either; Facebook, for instance, is a multi-billion-dollar enterprise (Boone and Kurtz 2015, 314), the success of which rests on co-opting more people every day. Moreover, reduction of people to their online data is clearly evinced by how some "organizations use personal information gleaned online to turn people down for jobs, insurance coverage, or loans and credit" based on statistical profiling processes (Boone and Kurtz 2015, 314). In many respects, such developments corroborate Deleuze's idea that in control societies, one can no longer speak of "a duality of mass and individual", because individuals have effectively "become 'dividuals,' and masses [have] become samples, data, markets, or 'banks'" (Deleuze 1990b, 180) of coded economic matter.

This dynamic of flattening out individual duration into information that can interface with the single axiomatic time of late/advanced capitalism,[11] is also mirrored at a formal level in the move from analogue to digital technology. In this regard, David Rodowick (2007) in *The Virtual Life of Film*, outlines how each medium is informed by a different ontology. With analogue photography and film there is fidelity to the configuration of light that comprised the event recorded, as it involves burning an isomorphic mirror image of the event into light-sensitive material. Through the production of this photograph or the projection of this image on-screen, one thereby encounters the past persisting in the present in a manner

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11   Indeed, one of the key features of neoliberalism is "the establishment of a regularizing relationship between time and money" (Ren 2010, 110).

akin to Bergson's theorisation of memory. With such technology one also remains beholden to and hence subordinate to the flow time. This is primarily because one cannot reverse time, as it were, since once any given moment has passed, one is left only with what one has recorded of it – and this visual memorial does not readily lend itself to subsequent manipulation through, for example, lighting or *mise en scène*. By contrast, in digital photography the light configuration of an event is translated into binary code for storage – breaking the direct isomorphic connection with the past which characterises analogue technology. Furthermore, when such digital images are reconstituted there is no longer a subordination to time. Instead, Rodowick (2007, 174) argues, there is a "will to power in relation to…past worlds", as "the digital will wants to change the world, to make it yield to other forms, or to create different worlds" through the limitless possibilities of manipulation synonymous with this technology. These informational images – "what Deleuze calls the 'silicon-image'" (Rodowick 2007, 186) – are thus seemingly inimical both to the resistant durational contemplation of Kafka, Bacon, Messiaen and Rouch, and to their respective literary, graphic, sonic and audio-visual nomadic war machines.

Yet, while Deleuze evidently expressed concern over the emergence of control societies with their totalising digital frameworks, he did not suggest that resistance was either impossible or futile – only that it was difficult. Deleuze (1998, 18) qualifies that "[a] control is not a discipline", and by way of explanation he points out that "[i]n making highways…you don't enclose people"; rather, they "can drive infinitely and 'freely' without being at all confined yet while still being perfectly controlled". Pessimistically, or at the very least ambiguously, Deleuze (1998, 18) adds: "This is our future" – a future of informational control of great subtlety. Ultimately, what this suggests is that instead of being "a space without rules, free from the heavy hand of government control and social tradition, free even from the physical limitations of the body", cyberspace is an "information superhighway" offering "a…horizonless route into the future", but one strictly "governed by traffic laws" (Morris-Suzuki and Rimmer 2003, 157). For Deleuze, countering such information does not involve simply providing further information, in a manner akin to when resistance movements publish politico-historical details concealed by oppressive regimes. Rather, "counterinformation only effectively becomes useful when it is…an act of resistance" (Deleuze 1998, 18). As Jonathan Dronsfield (2009, 222) explains, "the work of art resists not by providing counter-information in the form of a certain content"; rather it "move[s] in a direction counter" to that of the information in question, "such that the two [flows] encounter each other in a space set up by the disjunction between them" involving "a relation which is a non-relation". At this point of disjuncture or conflict, the discursive momentum of the information flow characterising control societies is broken, albeit only temporarily, and the space for indeterminate difference is once again opened up. Mark Poster (2006, 60) is, of course, correct that Deleuze's discussion of counter-information was only ever

"brief and vague" and that his "understanding of networked digital information and human assemblages remains [quite] rudimentary". Yet several scholars have developed aspects of Deleuze's ideas in view of their greater understanding of our networked society. For example, at a macro level, Alexander Galloway (2004, 8-9) has considered the Domain Name System (DNS), the "large decentralized database that maps network addresses to network names" to facilitate "nearly every network transaction". In relation to the DNS, Galloway (2004, 10) cites Tim Berners-Lee, the father of the Web, who argued that the DNS constitutes "the 'one centralized Achilles' heel by which [the Web] can all be brought down or controlled'". Thus, "[i]f hypothetically some controlling authority wished to ban China from the internet (e.g. during an outbreak of hostilities)" this merely would require "a simple modification of the information contained in the root servers at the top of the inverted tree" (Galloway 2004, 10). Michael Dieter (2011, 191), in his turn, emphasises not the overarching control of information via "these seemingly ubiquitous regulatory structures" but rather possibilities for resistance within such structures. He advances the "need for a framework of power distinguished from computer engineering" making it possible "to account for the controversies that permeate" the "socio-technical realities" of control societies (Dieter 2011, 191). He supports in particular Deleuze's identification (1990b, 180) of "*[n]oise*, *viral contamination* and *piracy*" as some "key points of discontinuity…divisions or errors" that comprise "counter-information" insofar as they "force change by promoting indeterminacies in a system that would otherwise appear infinitely calculable, programmable, and predictable" (Dieter 2011, 191). Other theorists agree: firstly, Mark Nunes argues that "[n]oise, in effect, is… spurious information" that "creat[es] uncertainty in selection" (Nunes 2011, 12-13). And he thereby echoes Deleuze and Guattari's "philosophical pedagogy" – or rather "counter-pedagogy" – involving "an ethics of philosophy…that rejects the currently dominant picture according to which we should aspire to an information transfer with the least possible noise" (Toscano 2005, xvi). Secondly, for Jussi Parikka (2010, 124), the three definitive features of a computer virus mirror those of "Deleuze and Guattari's famous example of the tick" in their capacity to interrupt the normalised efficiently repetitive functioning of digital information exchange. In short, after "[i]nfection" or distribution of the virus "through other software and protocols" a "routine…triggers the virus" to deliver its "[p]ayload" or the disruptive function of the virus, ranging "from erasing the hard drive to playing a harmless tune" (Parikka 2010, 124). Thirdly, as Ravi Sundaram (2010, 112) contends, piracy functions to "destabilize…contemporary media property…disrupting and enabling creativity, and evading issues of the classic commons, while simultaneously radicalizing media access for subaltern groups". Accordingly, he suggests that "[s]trategies of media piracy [thus] approximate Deleuze and Guattari's description of a…[rhizomatic] assemblage in…*A Thousand Plateaus*" (Sundaram 2010, 112).

PERRIN AND CLUZAUD'S *OCEANS* (2009) AS COUNTER-INFORMATION

The above theorists' elaborations on counter-information are valuable, yet a tension concerning subjectivity emerges, with potentially negative implications for the efficacy of the three cyber war machines which these theorists identify. In short, all three are underpinned by what amounts to a quasi-Marxist concept of subjectivity, which is construed as something given. Simply put, a central idea upon which these cyber war machines are predicated is that control society is a normalising informational regime increasingly inhibiting the difference lying, supposedly naturally, at the heart of subjectivity. Correlatively, the assumption is that to liberate such difference one only requires disruption of digital informational conduits through such means as noise, viruses and/or piracy. However, Foucault (1984a, 282) cautions that such a "notion of liberation" is problematic, since "if it is not treated with precautions and within certain limits" it leads back to "the idea that there exists a human nature or base that, as a consequence of certain historical…processes, has been…imprisoned" but which can be emancipated through the breaking of "these repressive deadlocks" – something that will ultimately see "man…reconciled with himself". Such a perspective fails to do justice to the immense creative and reflective effort required to usher in difference – effort that, insofar as it can entail a path of immense resistance, is distinctly unnatural.[12] Thus rather than emphasising this simplistic notion of "liberation", Foucault (1984a, 282–284) promotes ethical "practices of freedom" and maintains that while "[f]reedom is the ontological condition of ethics…ethics is the considered form that freedom takes when it is informed by reflection".[13] In many respects such ethical practices of freedom identified by Foucault are synonymous with Deleuze's ethics of difference, the dynamics of which, Deleuze argued, manifest in the works of Proust, Kafka, Bacon, Messiaen and Rouch, among others. All these works entail significant creative/reflective effort in relation to durational contemplation, inviting creation of alternative subjectivities. David Savat (2010, 425) confirms that for Deleuze and Guattari, "what we refer to as 'subjectivity'" is never something naturally given, but rather "an ongoing production and maintenance of a relative sense of unicity" – in other words, "how a person maintains a specific form of existence in a given assemblage". Considered in this light, "subjectivity"

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12   Bergson (1932, 137–148) provides support for such a claim, by distinguishing between the natural instinct evinced among hymenoptera and conservative human societies, the activities of which are repetitive and focused on the maintenance of order for the sake of survival, and the unnatural intelligence of those rare individuals who, through durational intuition, are able to see beyond habit and prejudice to embrace the Whole through the formulation of different perspectives.

13   Admittedly, Foucault (1984a, 283-284) does indicate that under a totalitarian regime, for example, "liberation" can be "the political or historical condition for a practice of freedom" insofar as it "paves the way for new power relationships"; still, he qualifies this carefully by stating that such "new power relationships…must be controlled by practices of freedom".

comprises "a function of the different components of subjectivation that exist at any point in time" and thus always entails "a political and ethical question" (Savat 2010, 425).

Within the context of control society, then, it does not follow that simply breaking the informational conduits of the system, through noise, viruses and/or piracy, will suddenly precipitate the flowering of an innate but previously suppressed capacity for difference. On the contrary, the supplanting of individuality by dividuality in societies of control, has resulted in displacement of the duration upon which the generation of difference relies. Thus, dividuality involves a type of subjectivity largely incapable of responding imaginatively to the rending of the informational fabric through the above three cyber war machines. Indeed, noise, viruses and/or piracy are for the most part not experienced by dividuals as important wake-up calls that, via the contrasts they create, render conspicuous the canalising dynamics of control society. Rather, they comprise sources of deep frustration for dividuals precisely when and because they obstruct their complete alignment with the axiomatic of capitalism and their complete assimilation into the realm of digital information. It is thus unlikely that such cyber war machines would be able to replace aesthetic war machines. The latter remain the catalysts for ethical activity – understood in terms of the creative/reflective pursuit of freedom and difference. And while such pursuits may potentially occur within spaces created by disruptions deriving from noise, viruses and/or piracy, this is not always necessarily so, which points toward the pre-eminence of aesthetic war machines. Having said that, potentially such pre-eminence would only apply to aesthetic war machines positioning themselves within the two major facets of control society, namely neoliberalism and digitality; as counter-intuitive as that may appear at face value.

That is, unlike the work of Kafka who "explore[d] a limited range of experience for the benefit of a small audience of similarly placed readers" (Gray 1975, 1), new aesthetic war machines – in order to be effective as counter-information in a globalised world – need to deal with broader issues and address a global audience in ways that generate durational awareness. This is because, while durational awareness is required for the imagination of difference, it is precisely that which is by definition lacking in control societies currently. Yet to achieve this, one should not like filmmaker Jean-Luc Godard, either be "led astray by Utopian ideas of working 'parallel' to the system" (Comolli and Narboni 1969, 44), or be inclined to reject "entertainment", since "in the advanced capitalist countries [of] today…it is from the pleasure-principle that change must stem" (Wollen 1972, 505). Quite possibly, in terms of aesthetic products, such change is only possible in sufficient measure through availing oneself of the opportunities presented by the capitalist entertainment system. In short, only within the ambit of the existing economic system can one find sufficient financial backing and correlative technological support, to produce something of sufficient scale and spectacle to attract sufficient attention to make a

meaningful difference. By the same token, anything that is not digital in orientation or at least capable of being digitised runs the risk of disappearing into obscurity. This threat also demands constant recourse to the latest digital technology in order to create state-of-the-art visuals able to penetrate the consciousness of a highly desensitised, visually bombarded, global audience.

In many respects, the above can be understood as underpinning Perrin and Cluzaud's *Oceans*. This film took six years to complete – two years of planning and four years of filming (Cluzaud 2010a, 8; Cluzaud 2010b, 14) – and involved over 70 expeditions to over 50 locations (GEF 2010, 4). Though the directors may have regarded this aesthetic product as a labour of love and something that simply had to be done to wake audiences up to how humankind is destroying the environment, still the film had to be made within the context of neoliberalism and digitality – the very forces evidently precipitating environmental destruction. While their effort thus may seem counter-intuitive, it would appear that if the creators of *Oceans* had refused to work within the system, then their film – which has a most important message to convey – would have neither reached a global audience nor have been so visually impactful. For example, the cinematography was ultimately only accomplished through the assistance of engineers who collaborated with the filmmakers to provide suitable housings for the digital cameras for underwater filming, and the help of the French Navy working with these engineers to develop underwater camera drones (Fauer 2010, 66). In fact, this film required myriad technological innovations. These were needed for cameras to move with the same speed and agility as dolphins and whales, both underwater and above the waves during moments of breaching – and vice versa in the case of seabirds (Fauer 2010, 64). Partly on account of such involvement with the military-technological complex for purposes of technological innovation, the film cost around $75 million (GEF 2010, 4). This is extremely expensive for a nature documentary when benchmarked against, for example, the most expensive BBC nature documentary series, *Planet Earth*, which had a production budget of around $25 million (BBC 2016). Indeed, this latter series proved so successful that a feature film adaptation thereof was made for about $15 million (Mjos 2010, 92), which in turn had by 2009 grossed over $90 million (Horn 2009). Another nature documentary which proved extremely lucrative, was Luc Jacquet's *March of the Penguins*, which only cost $8 million to make but earned well over $77 million (Molloy 2013, 173). By contrast, *Oceans* did not make profits of such proportions – to date, it has grossed only around $82 million (Box Office Mojo 2016) against its $75 million production cost. But perhaps this is exactly the point; the film was motivated not by the profit imperative but rather by a desire to make a contribution to developing critical durational awareness, a contribution requiring immense innovation and thus capital expenditure. Indeed, the financial underperformance of *Oceans* is certainly counterbalanced by its success as a critical-aesthetic film. In this regard, it constitutes an aesthetic nomadic war machine that operates within

the capitalist entertainment industry, but that resisted compromising on its thematic and formal features for the sake of greater profit, despite the economic risk that this entailed. Still, *Oceans* succeeded in reaching a significant number of people, in France even out-performing Jason Reitman's *Up in the Air* by drawing over 100 000 viewers in the first 48 hours of its release (Crumley 2010).

The status of the film as an aesthetic nomadic war machine becomes clear when its thematic and formal features are considered in relation to those of the war machines of Kafka, Bacon, Messiaen and Rouch, elaborated upon earlier against the backdrop of Bergson's theorisation of duration and difference. To begin with, the film is deeply informed by Bergsonian notions of time and memory. In the film Bergson's conception of an actual present which passes and a virtual past which co-exists with the present, is extrapolated out to the whole earth and all life upon it. Accordingly, the ocean depths are the gigantic virtual repository of impersonal memory, while the surface of the water constitutes the point of interface between this vast virtual domain and our actual human and nonhuman animal present above it. This interface is beautifully illustrated in the scene where an iguana – with its prehistoric features – dries itself on a rock in the sea while staring at a rocket taking off, with a close-up of its face revealing the rocket's blaze reflected in its eyes. Admittedly, in one sense the directors took a few poetic liberties in this presentation, eliding the fact that the sea, like the land, is presently undergoing significant change, caught up as it is within the same duration. But in another important sense, what they advance here is also quite acceptable as from an evolutionary perspective, all of life did emerge from the sea, starting "from simple unicellular organisms like bacteria to more complex multicellular ones from which we are all descended" (Loke 2013). Therefore, the ocean and all its life forms do indeed comprise the virtual past of the actual human and nonhuman animal terrestrial present. This is alluded to strongly throughout the film via several poignant comparisons, from a dugong grazing on the ocean floor like a cow, and a fish whose fins are like the wings of a bird, to a walrus holding its calf close to its chest like a human mother would hold her baby when in water. Moreover, instead of gazing optimistically into the future on the basis of the achievements of technoscience, the cinematic narrative instead delves into this virtual oceanic past in search of lost time in a manner akin to Proust. Indeed, in the narration itself the film is alluded to as something exploring the other side of the mirror – an obvious intertextual reference to Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, which Deleuze emphasises in *The Logic of Sense*. For that matter, this allusion can also be associated with Deleuze's (1983, 52; 1986, 101) own repeated emphasis on the mirror-image for understanding the interface between the virtual and the actual.

As already discussed, it is on the basis of such dynamic actual-virtual interfacing that Deleuze and Guattari advance the first constitutive feature of aesthetic nomadic war machines to be their capacity for deterritorialisation. And in relation to deterritorialisation, they paid particular attention to how Kafka's use

of language destabilised Prague German. Similarly, in *Oceans*, one encounters a two-fold destabilisation of the dominant discourses of control society, discourses underpinned by valorisation of continuous surveillance and related promotion of a hubristic management approach to life on earth. Briefly, the extent of surveillance reached new heights in the post-war period, quite likely catalysed by the first photographic images of earth taken from space in 1968 and 1972, with the Apollo mission of the latter year yielding the renowned blue marble image (Heise 2008, 22). For environmental theorist Wolfgang Sachs, these images entailed a profoundly seductive experience of empowerment for human beings, ostensibly signalling a new era in which people would no longer be held in the all-encompassing grip of the earth, but rather would grasp it visually and conceptually, and treat it as something that could be manipulated and/or managed (Sachs 1999, 110–128). To date, the most widely used application informed by such an approach is Google Earth, which:

> …presents us with a non-auratic image in which the whole "radiant jewel" of the Apollo images is fragmented – both spatially and temporally – into a panoply of geospatial data sets produced by orbiting satellites and lower-level image-capture devices, which are then digitally sutured together to form the global image…The visual rhetoric of the globe no longer enunciates the "wholeness of the object" but rather the "wholeness of its searchability," for everything that retards vision tends to be drained away. Not only do clouds…disperse, but the world ceases to have a dark side, and instead we have an entirely illuminated globe. (Dorrian 2011, 167)

Despite this expansive surveillance capacity, Sachs actually argues that the management approach to the earth lends itself more to a "probed" than a "sensed" reality (Sachs 1999, 116). Sachs's contention is certainly valid when considering the Terra and Aqua satellites employed in NASA's Earth Observing System (EOS) which are equipped with a MODIS (Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer). The satellites cover the earth's surface about every two days, "acquiring data in 36 spectral bands, or groups of wavelengths" (NASA no date a). Such data then are used to calculate vapour levels, temperatures, biogeochemistry and the like (NASA no date b), in the interest of contributing to "understanding and managing the earth system" (Hanan and Hill 2011, vi). This feeds a growing discourse on how to manage life on earth, and albeit inadvertently, this discourse has in turn thoroughly informed dominant modes of nature documentary production. That is, although most people remain quite distant from the inner circles of this growing discourse, few are unfamiliar with its more popular, innocuous, manifestations, such as David Attenborough-narrated documentaries. In these, the viewer is effectively lectured to for the duration of the film, in a way that is both broadly accessible and scientifically very edifying, having been honed by Attenborough over the course of some 30 years into a polished composite of technicist and performative comparisons

between animals and machines, and infective academic enthusiasm.[14] Yet from a Deleuzian perspective, Attenborough and others who have imitated his style, have in many respects persistently explicated fascist bodies-without-organs, insofar as the technicist, informational approach adopted mirrors the tenets of control society, so that, albeit unwittingly, what is thereby propagated is paternalistic prejudice and relatedly, managerial forms of thought when conceptualising the earth and its life forms.

It appears that against this dominant documentary approach, Perrin and Cluzaud, under the impetus of addressing more deeply the environmental crisis, respond with a two-fold act of deterritorialisation. They do so, firstly, by thematising in the film the genesis of the panoptical approach to the ocean, such that *Oceans* effectively concerns both the ocean and the way it has been represented over the centuries. This is achieved by the audience intermittently being taken from the early voyages of discovery in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, through the later cataloguing of species in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to the late-twentieth-century satellite surveillance of the planet, with such ventures characterised as imperialistic, hubristic, constraining, and reductive from an ecocentric perspective. Another scene alludes powerfully to the alienating synthetic aspects of such an approach. Here, what at first appears to be an encompassing image of the earth suspended in space – which may invite the idea of mastering the earth – turns out to be merely a point of view shot of what a boy and his father see from a steel walkway: a large plastic model of the earth. Immediately the illusion of mastery is replaced by a sense of humans' smallness relative to the planet, and hence their actual vulnerability. Through this scene the directors also touch critically on other aspects of the control society approach to the earth, such as how surveillance of the earth has codified it in the popular imagination as a theme park spectacle of sorts, suggesting controllability, while correlatively preventing realisation that we are completely dependent on and connected with the earth we ostensibly dominate. By immediately following up this scene with satellite imagery of pollution streaming down rivers and into oceans, the viewer, having been reminded of the smallness and vulnerability of human beings, now is confronted with the sheer scale of the destruction wreaked by our species; destruction that we as mere organisms on this planet – not masters of the universe – are going to feel, one way or another. Secondly, having drawn attention to the limitations of digital panopticism in the era of control society – particularly the problem of it encouraging a master or managerial mentality in relation to the earth by ostensibly getting to grips with the planet via copious measurements – *Oceans* abandons the scientific explanatory framework characteristic of more mainstream nature documentary narrations. That is, instead of expert explanations, the narrative centres on a father's admission to himself and to the audience that, when asked about

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14   Attenborough's *Life* series was made in eight parts between 1979 and 2005, while the ninth part – *Life in Cold Blood* – was completed in 2008.

the nature or essence of the sea by his son, he found himself incapable of answering. The not knowing, the not being able to control, and hence the vulnerability of the father, is rendered even more intense and personal in that the father is played by one of the directors, Jacques Perrin, and his own son, Lancelot, plays the role of the child in the narrative. The father cannot give his son an answer, not because he does not know the dominant framing scientific discourses that proffer an answer, but because he is aware that such answers tend to marginalise rather than engender the profound durational and personal engagement necessary for him to actually answer his son's question. This admission, in turn, precipitates the journey of the film, which is not a journey of exploration for the purposes of definition, but rather one of wonder, as the father and his son – together with the audience – experience the sights and sounds of the ocean relatively unmediated by descriptions. Indeed, there are only about 12 sentences spoken during the entire film, and these for the most part remain evocative and affective, rather than scientifically descriptive and informational.

While the above deterritorialising approach to nature documentary narratives is also, of course, a political act at a thematic level, *Oceans* in addition entails other formal and thematic political acts corresponding with the aesthetic nomadic war machine of Bacon's intensity art, discussed earlier. Just as Bacon's figural art sought to exceed the figurative parameters of traditional representational art, so too, in *Oceans* the visual parameters of mainstream documentary representation are constantly exceeded. In this regard, firstly, on a horizontal plane, from the outset of the film the objects of focus – be they the waves of the sea or swarms of jellyfish – on account of their magnitude and perpetual movement exceed the frame even while the camera tries to encapsulate or capture them, as it were. This technique constantly reminds one of the ocean's sublime parameters, problematising the sense of control otherwise conjured up by more traditional figurative nature documentary shots. Secondly, on a vertical plane, how the intensities of water pressure, coldness, and darkness have formed bodies differently, by shaping them into bizarre configurations and obliging them to operate in enigmatic ways, receives significant emphasis. What lends power to encounters with such other bodies is the relative silence of the scenes. This approach gives the audience the best possible chance to try to experience first-hand the motions of the creatures – hiding, attacking, eating, migrating – something impossible to achieve when the viewer is bombarded with technical descriptions at every turn. In this way, the images of *Oceans*, like Bacon's art, exist primarily within a liminal space between chaos on the one hand, and ordered figurative representation on the other. Thirdly, on a temporal plane, by means of free marks Bacon guarded against the virtual clichés of the arborescent art tradition, by allowing an accidental mark to function as the virtual seed which crystallised an actual painting in different ways. Similarly, in *Oceans* alternative genetic crystallisations of bodies into monstrous forms that defy our sense of figuration are sought out, in relation to thematisation of the immense amount of time that such virtual explication into actual difference has

taken. Fourthly, on an ethical plane, Bacon's art explored "the violence" humanity "has wrought on bodies, psyches and selves" which on account of their intensities run into conflict with the containment strategies of the State apparatus (Moore 2013). Analogously, in *Oceans*, one encounters macabre and grotesque images of the explications of fascist bodies-without-organs seeking to encompass the movements of sea creatures, and for various purposes, to destroy them. These take the form of, for example, shark nets that inadvertently kill a diverse array of other fish in an attempt to stratify the flow of sea life; large-scale indiscriminate trawling which disrupts the immense migratory patterns of sea creatures for the sake of profit; and the annual slaughter by certain coastal communities of dolphins when they visit specific coves, all in the name of culture or tradition.

Through the above minoritarian pushing and twisting and experimental reconfiguration of major techniques of narration and visual representation, which resonate strongly with the war machines of Kafka and Bacon, *Oceans* allows the sea and its inhabitants to be seen differently. And through this, the film helps to precipitate the future collective enunciation by a people yet to come – a new people currently in the process of formation who will speak differently about the relationship between themselves and the natural world. A people perhaps comprising a human-animal assemblage, insofar as the deep symbiotic dynamics which connect human and nonhuman life forms are progressively intuited. Arguably, the features of such a durationally-aware collective enunciation are adumbrated in the scenes where divers encounter and swim alongside great white sharks and whales, or where a boy and a fish stare at each other with haunting recognition through the glass wall of an aquarium. But in addition, such collective enunciation manifests in the music of the film by Bruno Coulais, which to the extent that it is informed by the movement and activities of the sea creatures encountered on screen, echoes the durational approach of the musical war machine of Messiaen. That is, despite the limited narration in *Oceans*, the film is by no means characterised by weighty silence; rather the images are consistently accompanied by Coulais's beautiful musical scores. However, this music has very little in common with the frequently ill-fitting human-centred scoring of BBC documentaries in which, as composer Pascal Wyse explains, one witnesses scenes where discussion of a wildebeest's hearing is overlaid with "the BBC Concert Orchestra at gale force Hollywood", or where "wildebeest gambol to marimbas" (Wyse 2009). For Wyse (2009), such "emotional guidance by music is too strong" and "lays human feelings, rooted in a history of cinematic scoring for human situations, over animal behaviour"; accordingly what is lost through this are "the habitats, atmospheres, silences and voices that speak naturally in the wild". In contrast to this, Coulais's scores resonate in terms of their rhythms and tenor with the music of Messiaen, which Deleuze himself likened to an auditory form of becoming-animal. Indeed, just as Messiaen allowed the thought from the outside, in the form of birdsong, to both interrupt and inform his music, so too Coulais, according to

Perrin and Stephane Lerouge (In the Tracks of // Bruno Coulais – Trailer, Prelight Films 2013; Portrait Bruno Coulais, Boujut 2011), created music coalescing with and echoing the sounds and movements of the creatures featured within *Oceans*. As much is corroborated in popular reviews of the film (One Movie, Our Views 2010; Eternality Tan 2010). Furthermore, well-published film music journalist Tim Greiving, while he did not really care for the visuals of the film, praised Coulais's score for how it spoke of and for the ocean and its creatures. He described Coulais as offering a "reverent homage to swelling waves and the ancient creatures that patrol the deep"; likened the orchestral movements to those of "a beautiful whale marked with scars from a vicious attack many years before"; and ultimately, advanced that "[t]his is a score you need not see the film in order to appreciate [as] Coulais paints a striking picture of the deep with his music…that sits in your subconscious long after the final note" (Greiving 2010). Clearly Coulais offers through the score a form of becoming-animal, a skill he has been honing in collaboration with Perrin since the 1990s, having scored the earlier nature documentary films *Microcosmos* (1996) and *Winged Migration* (2001) as well.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

Considered in the above light, *Oceans* falls rather neatly into the category of what Deleuze calls modern political cinema. Like the films of Rouch, rather than addressing an extant people, *Oceans* represents the different contemplations and growing concerns of a people in the process of formation. These are a people yet to come, who distinguish themselves from the people of the past whose discourses and attitudes are reflected upon, but who have yet to define themselves except in terms of new openness to both the sea and its creatures, and to their ontological relationship with these. The boundary between the private and political is also dissolved, through the personalisation of the environmental crisis as a private concern facing a father and his son that yet retains its global scale. What accordingly receives emphasis is the impasse between, on the one hand, the struggle of sea creatures to survive and the importance of them doing so to human survival, and on the other hand, the explications of the fascist bodies-without-organs triumphing against such creatures, harvesting them or killing them inadvertently, to the extent of precipitating wholesale ecosystem destruction (Beaugrand 2015, 293). The triumph of such destructive technologies thus also entails the explication of a suicidal/catatonic body-without-organs,[15] or the reduction of the ocean to a smooth space in which nothing lives and grows anymore. Perhaps the most tragic scene in the film demonstrating this nightmare, is that of the great museum halls dedicated to extinct animals. These constitute a smooth but catatonic space in which nothing new can ever emerge, because it marks the end of millennia of evolutionary self-differentiation. As Deleuze

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15   See note 7.

and Guattari put it, "the stakes here are indeed the negative…in the absolute: the earth girded, encompassed, overcoded, conjugated as the object of a mortuary and suicidal organization surrounding it on all sides" (Deleuze and Guattari 2005, 510).

Faced with this impasse, there can be little recourse to the discourses of the past, because the present crisis is a product of the myopia inherent in them. Accordingly, there can be no master voice speaking with confidence and advancing a particular managerial plan for the future, since the efficacy of any such (hubristic) stance is precisely what has fallen into question. Instead, the directors of *Oceans* – much like Rouch – take a step toward the creatures of the sea, and allow these creatures to move toward them in an act of mutual becoming, entailing the first murmurings of a minoritarian voice, namely that of a human-animal assemblage. To be sure, this involves no mean feat, because the silence of these creatures is the gap or elision which halts our thought, and violently challenges us to interpret it, before such thought from the outside can inform and thereby expand our understanding and indeed experience of ourselves as interconnected with and indissociable from the natural world. But the effects of this process, when carried out successfully, are alluded to in *Oceans*, when fears are replaced with wonder, and new relational interactions not only beckon, but also become imminently realisable.

Among all this possibility it must be remembered that digitality plays a crucial role in the power and evocativeness of the aesthetic war machine that is *Oceans*, notwithstanding both Deleuze's association of digitality with control society, and Rodowick's concerns over how the will to power that digitality engenders is inimical to durational intuition. Indeed, *Oceans* is a digital film which has revealed more about the sea and its inhabitants than would ever have been possible via older analogue technologies. Among other things, the enhanced technologies allowed much greater camera mobility than previously thought possible, and much greater visual clarity, particularly in low light conditions. Consequently, digitality has facilitated a progressive move away from subject-centred perception-images, toward ever greater approximations of their genetic sign, the gramme. In this regard, digitality has in many respects allowed for greater realisation than before of the proposed journeys of discovery suggested by Jakob von Uexküll, one of the theorists thematised by Deleuze in relation to becoming-animal. Von Uexküll, as he wandered through his garden, became increasingly fascinated by the *Umwelt* or life-world (life-bubble) in which the myriad insects and animals around him existed, and he explored these imaginatively in his now famous book *A Foray into the Worlds of Animals and Humans*. Just thinking about – reaching out toward – such other life-worlds, entails an embryonic form of becoming-animal, insofar as it breaks free from the gravitational force of anthropocentric thinking in the interest of becoming different. And Von Uexküll, as Geoffrey Winthrop-Young (2010, 220) explains, believed that while "[t]he species-specific boundaries of the animal Umwelt…are insurpassable limits…those of the human Umwelt are more like an American frontier that invites

transgression". Yet, Von Uexküll only had recourse to the imagination for such transgressive ventures into the nonhuman animal realm. But today, as evinced by *Oceans*, we have recourse in addition to the digital image, and its capacity to be utilised within deeply transformative aesthetic nomadic war machines is only now beginning to emerge.

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