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REVIEW

Simon O'Sullivan and Stephen Zepke (eds.), *Deleuze, Guattari, and the Production of the New* (London: Continuum, 2008), ISBN: 978-0826499530

We have seen, over the past decade or so, a normalization of sorts of the philosophical ideas of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. Not that their transdisciplinary thought has lost any of its boundary-breaking potency, only that a veritable cottage industry of secondary literature has thoroughly secured their inclusion in the emergent canon of anti-canonical social theory and criticism. To be sure, this story—of something fundamentally new becoming familiar over time—is quite common. As Deleuze and Guattari studies becomes a little institution unto itself, pressure mounts to preserve (an odd word perhaps) something of the radical strangeness and oft-beguiling militancy that initially accompanied their collective work.

Deleuze, Guattari and the Production of the New sets out to do just this, and to do so by thematizing this very concept of newness. The book's editors, Simon O'Sullivan and Stephen Zepke, posit the need to "resist [...] the academic scholasticism of Deleuze and Guattari studies" (2) and, though the well-versed reader will recognize many of the contributors as stalwarts of the new DeleuzoGuattarian tradition, O'Sullivan and Zepke go out of their way to set the collection apart, folding in many younger voices and many voices not necessarily yoked to this tradition. Along these lines, one of the volume's side aims is to put the "G" back in "D+G," so to speak. This is achieved in part by foregrounding aesthetics as "possibly the most important political mechanism today." (3) Notably, the book concludes with a piece of Guattari's own writing that will be new to Anglophone readers. An excerpt from his 1989 work *Cartographies schizoanalytiques*, "Consciousness and Subjectivity" recontextualizes the potent concept of deterritorialization in relation to Freud's pioneering research on the unconscious and libido. In true DeleuzoGuattarian fashion, this collection seeks to draw lines of flight, to escape the erudition that led to the evacuation of Guattari's influence, and to make productive connections with concrete artistic and political movements that span the twentieth century.

Also in the spirit of Deleuze and Guattari, the editors make clear that organization will not be their priority. The book's twenty one chapters remain more or less uninhibited by editorial arrangement, in the hope that the consistency of the whole might be grasped as a "patchwork," and through "a haptic and hallucinatory affect."

This review, to the contrary, aims to most efficiently convey the merits of such a sizable and disparate collection, and so will examine in turn the book's philosophical, aesthetic, and political themes. It should go without saying that this sort of categorization is superficial and reductive, and that each essay here inevitably traffics in politics, art, and philosophy all at once, even if not explicitly so.

The question of the production of the new is first and foremost a philosophical one, one that we can trace back to Deleuze's early writings on Bergson and his important elaboration of "indi-differenc/tiation" in *Difference and Repetition*. While *Deleuze, Guattari, and the Production of the New* abounds with references to Bergsonian duration, Deleuze's (and Deleuze and Guattari's) indebtedness to Bergson's concept of creative evolution goes surprisingly overlooked. This is perhaps a symptom of the book's general (and at times regrettable) lack of interest in the creative activity of science, as outlined in *What is Philosophy?* Instead, philosophy, but especially aesthetics, seems, for the editors and many of the contributors here, to maintain a hegemonic claim to the generation of newness. For Deleuze however, individuation and different/ciation—key processes for his thinking of the new—extend well beyond the scope of artistic action and aesthetic or conceptual thought. Difference, as he has it, unfolds at both virtual and actual levels, as the past comes bursting through the present towards an entirely uncertain future. *Differentiation* occurs as the determination of virtual ideas and problems, or in other words, of the constitutive conditions for material transformations of the world. *Differenciation*, on the other hand, designates actualization, the deployment of creative solutions to those virtual problems, the actions undertaken given that particular set of enabling conditions.

Essays by Daniel Smith and Steven Shaviro do excellent work in explicating these ideas and further developing Deleuze's philosophical explanation for how the new in fact comes into being. Bucking the dominant trend of this collection, Smith and Shaviro each give us more Deleuze and Guattari, an appropriate move given their interest in situating the question of newness within broader philosophical traditions. Smith offers us a tour through Deleuze's philosophy of time and genesis by way of his mathematical modelization. Differential calculus, according to Smith, "is the primary mathematical tool we have at our disposal to explore the nature of reality, the nature of the real—the *conditions of the real*." (155) This model allows Deleuze to counter Plato's geometrical model and "develop a *philosophical* concept of difference." (155) Shaviro approaches the question of the new through a reassessment of Whitehead's influence on Deleuze's ontology. The latter, Shaviro claims, adopts the former's "phenomenalization" of Kant and the consequent thought of a "double causality" by which "a futurity already haunts the present [as] [...] an ever-widening zone of indetermination." (215)

Like those by Smith and Shaviro, essays by Gregory Flaxman and Dorothea Olkowski offer brilliant insights into certain facets of and influences on Deleuze's philosophy that have gone more or less overlooked. Flaxman, whose piece opens

the collection, takes up Deleuze's offhand suggestion that philosophy be read as a sort of science fiction. For Flaxman, this means that, in order for philosophy to discover anything new, it must loose itself from representation and substantiality to become what Deleuze dubs a "transcendental empiricism" and Flaxman rewrites as "sci phi." The relationship between philosophy and the future is at the heart of Flaxman's inquiry; he argues that rather than hopelessly question the future of philosophy, as many are wont to do, we must think more provocatively about philosophies of the future. Olkowski, a standard bearer of academic Deleuzianism, examines Deleuze's concept of sense with reference to problems in early twentieth-century logic and mathematics. Finding a deep resonance with the work of Hannah Arendt, she explains that sense is, for Deleuze, the site of convergence between thought and appearance, on one hand, and between being and becoming, on another.

Alone amongst the contributors here, John Rajchman, in an exquisite "portrait of Deleuze-Foucault," (80) shows us what the production of the new in the field of philosophy actually looks like. This piece comes highly recommended for Foucault scholars especially, as Rajchman clearly articulates how Deleuze helps us to identify the transformative breaks and stages in Foucault's thought, from his founding of the Group for Information on Prisons and his various archival fascinations to his late turn to Greek and early Christian techniques of self-care, all of which come off as attempts by Foucault "to fabricate the new (and to invent the spaces for its fabrication) in our 'societies of control'." (88)

Rajchman also helps us to see aesthetics and the arts as central to Deleuze's Foucault. This volume, in turn, attempts to situate art and aesthetics at the center of Deleuze and Guattari's collective oeuvre. Many of its chapters are accordingly devoted to aesthetically-oriented articulations in and of their work, aiming not merely to explicate their complex and difficult thinking about art, but to elucidate the social, political, and critical applications of what Guattari called the "aesthetic paradigm." Maurizio Lazzarato's contribution is the most effective on this count. Best known for his work within the Autonomist Marxist tradition, Lazzarato focuses on a handful of lesser known texts by Guattari to explain the production of the new via "affective transversalization." He argues that Guattari's aesthetic paradigm (which is also taken up at length but with less precision by Matthew Fuller in these pages) allows us to rescue the creative function of art from institutional capture and to then put that creativity into contact with other fields.

In further explicating Guattari's reflections on art, a number of the essays here pin their claims about newness in art to the readymade, despite the fact that Deleuze and Guattari, in their collective writings, give relatively short shrift to the Duchampian legacy (they instead cite the Australian rainforest bird *scenopoetes dentirostris* as the exemplary readymade artist). Zepke effectively reconciles this by turning to Guattari's engagement with Duchamp in *Chaosmosis*. David Burrows does so by pitting Deleuze against Badiou in reading works of Duchamp and others. Felicity

Coleman offers a valorization of waste in rewiring Kantian aesthetics for the era of late capitalist production and consumption.

Most notable of the art-oriented pieces in this collection is Éric Alliez's re-evaluation of the paintings of Henri Matisse as phenomenally, philosophically, and politically postmodern. It is Matisse, before Duchamp, who first registers the "irruption of the contemporary into the field of modernity." (141) And if we are to understand "art as life's line of flight," then it is the vitalist force of Matisse's "hyper-fauvism" that can save us from the *informatization* of both art and life reinforced by the post-Duchampian conceptual art that Deleuze and Guattari encourage us to resist.

Several of the essays here also offer more traditional applications of Deleuze and Guattari's concepts and ideas to concrete aesthetic phenomena. Eugene Holland, for example, reads improvisational jazz as a genre bent on "deterritorializing refrains"; Darren Ambrose praises the cinematic works of Anthony McCall as constructing planes of immanence out of "aberrant energetics of intense light;" (194) and Michael Goddard interprets the pioneering industrial music of *Throbbing Gristle* as attempts at desubjectification and sociocultural interference—less aesthetics, he says, than war.

As the editors rightly point out in their lucid introduction, the challenge in thinking the new, today, is to do so in a way that circumvents or counteracts the increasingly "smart" apparatuses of capture deployed in post-industrial societies of control. Indeed, for Deleuze and Guattari, capitalism perpetually reinvents itself as a simultaneously destructive and creative force; its first act is one of radical deterritorialization. In its most recent phase (whether we call it communicative, post-modern, semiotic, late, etc.), capitalism has co-opted many of the tools of creativity that once belonged squarely to art (and philosophy (and science)). Marketing has moved definitively into the realm of affectivity; advertisers have taken up the philosopher's task of concept creation. Likewise, such things as rhizomes, smooth spaces, and deterritorializations have become part and parcel of the byzantine architecture of our contemporary distributed networks of power.

A philosophy that once seemed prescriptive and therapeutic appears retrospectively as a description of emergent social, political, and economic norms.

This is all to say that the aesthetics-oriented explication of Deleuze and Guattari's work will only get us so far, and that much of it runs the risk of simply reifying the techniques already at work in contemporary capitalism. To supplement these readings, essays by Bifo and Alberto Toscano give this volume a critical edge that might otherwise be lacking. The former thematizes alterity in Deleuze and Guattari in order to reconsider their books as tools to get us out of the widespread social depression induced by late-capitalist media techniques and interpersonal relations.

Toscano's essay, perhaps the most effective piece in the book, serves as a sort of antidote to the unchecked praise for creation that proliferates throughout DeleuzoGuattarian circles, many of the contributions to this volume notwithstanding. "There is," he argues, "nothing comfortably empowering about [their] image of creativity." (57) Writing instead in praise of a "negativism beyond all negation," (62) Toscano aims to rescue Deleuze and Guattari from the creative class and its "jargon of novelty." To do so, he draws on Paolo Virno's analysis of the famous Foucault-Chomsky debate in showing that, in post-industrial capitalism, it is precisely creativity and language that are put to work. What we need more urgently, Toscano suggests, is a more powerful concept of passivity, which Deleuze in fact prescribes amidst all the talk of creation and the new.

Deleuze and Guattari enigmatically conclude their introduction to *A Thousand Plateaus* with the formula: "rhizomatics=pop analysis." (26) Though they never elaborate on this equation, my sense is that O'Sullivan and Zepke may have had this in mind when they were soliciting pieces for this collection. More than the volume's freewheeling (dis)organization, it is the style of the individual essays that strikes this reviewer as peculiarly, sometimes tryingly, DeleuzoGuattarian. None of the pieces in *Deleuze, Guattari, and the Production of the New* span more than twelve pages, and most are refreshingly spare in their use of footnotes and references. There is not a single standout essay, and this seemingly by design; rather, the singular components connect with, butt up against, and fold into each other to form new, disjunctive assemblages perhaps unforeseen by their respective authors.

To call these pieces "pop" is by no means to say that they lack intellectual rigor, density, or serious philosophical insight; only that the compact, punchy, presentation of the arguments appears in each case as something we can replay, perhaps even remix, or else breeze through and cast aside like another one-hit wonder. Ultimately, it is this "pop" style that lends a sense of coherence to the collection as a whole. There are of course moments when we want more, when the formal conceit inhibits more careful, generative analyses, but the book generally works as intended. We might flatteringly liken O'Sullivan and Zepke to the constructivist artists whose methods deeply inspire Deleuze and Guattari's thought. The contributions to this collection, taken alone, remain more or less non-essential, but, for commentators on a pair of philosophers whose primary task is to make essences vanish, this is precisely the point.

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