CHANTIER:

THE PROCESS OF BECOMING

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By
Keelan O’Sullivan
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Chantier: The Process of Becoming

This paper serves as a companion piece to my creative thesis, the film Chantier\(^1\). It will attempt to enunciate in detail a few of the theoretical concepts which formed the stories making up the film, and are illustrated within it. Most specifically, it deals with the work of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, Michel Foucault, and the French collectives Tiqqun and The Invisible Committee as said work is related to the second, third, and fourth sections of Chantier. Each section of the paper unpacks a specific concept within the writings of these authors, and is then followed by an application, in which the concept will be used to explicate these sections of the film. Each section contained within the film deals with specific problems and ideas which are sometimes unique to that section, and sometimes carry on as an undercurrent which runs through the complete work. I have chosen these concepts to enunciate here because the process of becoming, with all its reactionary and revolutionary twists and turns, is the most prominent of these currents, and is the most readily traceable within these three sections of the film.

Reduction

A major part of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari’s book Anti-Oedipus deals with outlining a new metaphysics of desire and subjectivity in opposition to the dominant conception supplied by psychoanalysis. For Deleuze and Guattari, the

\(^1\) The French word Chantier translates to English as “construction site”. It has also, recently, been used colloquially in English to distinguish a gathering of partisan forces, in a specific place and period of time, to carry out a variety of activities including manual labor on one or several projects, theoretical discussion and analysis, and the communication and adjustment of short and long-term future plans. This usage derives from recent chantiers held in France by communes across the nation, which came to include all of the above activities, but originally designated a physical construction project.
hardened, individual subject, shackled to psychoanalysis’ holy concepts of the Oedipus complex, castration, and lack, is a violent reduction of the actual, material complexity and richness of the world. They posit instead a seething mass of machines and flows which produce desire, independent of any lack. A central question of the book, therefore, is how exactly this reduction takes place – how are the infinite, constantly changing connections of the desiring-machines codified into the rigorous social and psychological processes of control, isolation, and stasis we see today?

To proceed, we should better understand the workings of the desiring-machines. From the first page of Anti-Oedipus, Deleuze and Guattari establish their basic opposition to the reductive, isolated approach of psychoanalysis and capitalism itself. They describe how it was a mistake to have ever conceived of the Id, when in fact the force of desire is not a contained, personified element, but an unimaginably vast multiplicity of “machines – real ones, not figurative ones: machines driving other machines, machines being driven by other machines, with all the necessary couplings and connections” (1). These chains of desiring-machines make up the basic system of the unconscious posited by Deleuze and Guattari. They are always binary and inherently connective, made up of one machine which produces a flow, and another that limits, interrupts, or draws off a part of that flow – but which in turn is then the producer of flow for another machine in the chain. These roles can also be thought of as producer and product, meaning the product is always the producer for a different product – a very basic example of the multiplicity central to Deleuze and Guattari’s metaphysics. Deleuze and Guattari also stress the importance of the “third term” in the
cycle of production, which is actually an element of anti-production. On a macro scale, dealing with social production, this is the *socius*, which at different “régimes” of social production has been the body of the earth, the tyrant, and currently exists as the body of capital. This body constitutes a surface from which all social production seems to emanate. On the micro level of the desiring-machines, this is the body without organs. The body without organs is the figure of the unconscious, when understood materially rather than psychologically, that constantly works against the chains of desiring-machines, resisting their organization, and causing them to break down and reconfigure their connections in new ways.

In this landscape of flows, constantly in motion, constantly interrupted and reorganized according to the production of desire, Deleuze and Guattari point to the processes carried out by the field of psychoanalysis in their situating of the Oedipal structure over the unconscious, and the analogous process carried out by capitalism on a social scale, as those which carry out the rigidification of the desiring-machines on a micro and macro level. They describe how “when psychoanalysis makes of Oedipus its dogma, it is not unaware of the existence of relations said to be pre-oedipal in the child, exo-oedipal in the psychotic, para-oedipal in others” (51). Freud and other psychoanalysts were in fact well aware of the “domain of free syntheses where everything is possible… The desiring machines pound away and throb in the domain of the unconscious” (54). However, they chose to evade the discovery of this productive unconscious, and the implications it had for the relationships between the social production and desiring production (both the way in which desiring-production
leads to formulations of social production, and the way in which the social machines place specific forms of repression on the desiring-machines). Instead, the structural Oedipus was erected, destroying the possibilities of desiring-production. As Deleuze and Guattari describe on page 54:

All the chains of the unconscious are biunivocalized, linearized, suspended from a despotic signifier. The whole of desiring-production is crushed, subjected to the requirements of representation, and to the dreary games of what is representative and represented in representation. And there is the essential thing: the reproduction of desire gives way to simple representation, in the process as well as the cure. The productive unconscious that knows only how to express itself – express itself in myth, in tragedy, in dream.

The fundamental operation being carried out here is that of reduction – the reduction of the possibilities of the real unconscious made up of the complex systems of the desiring-machines into the field of the imaginary and the symbolic. Rather than carrying out the material process of producing, the unconscious is codified to only be able to express or represent, and as such is unable to access the real. This operation is in fact very similar to the operation carried out during the rise of capitalism. At first, capital has to be purposefully injected into the process of social production, before it can eventually appear as the source of all production, rather than the specific processes of material labor that carry out this production. Oedipus must be constructed just as purposefully overtop the actual process of desiring-production, before it can appropriate this production, creating a subject in which it appears that desire could only be created out of the Oedipal structure and the lack it carries with it.
Application:

This process of reduction is central to the struggles of the central character in my film Chantier. One of the clearest examples in the film occurs in the section titled “Manifest Destiny”, where we can see the way in which machinic processes of the desiring-machines permeating the spaces exhibited in the film are stifled by the architecture of the social machine the character exists in. The reduction takes place on numerous levels. During the introductory shots, I trace the way in which the architecture of Perrysburg, the suburb of Toledo where this section was shot, suspend Megan’s body and subjectivity in a rigid formulation. The blank spaces and manicured landscape of the generic mansions echo the matrix of graves in the film’s first shot, and in turn spirals in upon the space of Megan’s body, revealing the grid of space and graves which organizes the bodies within this space. However, we also see the way in which the body without organs resists this reduction, breaking down the stillness imposed upon this organization, as Megan is launched spontaneously into a swirling, unconstrained dance sequence, echoing Deleuze and Guattari’s description of the body without organs as “present[ing] its smooth, slippery, opaque, taut surface as a barrier” (9).

We further see the containment of the flows of desire within the home occupied by the characters in the film. Though she clearly in no way possesses the desire to go through the process of preparing the meal we see, her consciousness has been fully Oedipalized, making it difficult to even imagine alternatives to these

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2 As the character remains unnamed in all sections of the film, I will refer to her throughout this paper as “Megan”, the name of the actress who plays her.
standard actions of domestic labor. Her husband’s desires are likewise channeled into acceptable, private constructions based on objects, such as his collection of model cars, and his vague, unconvincing interest in the relationships and activities of his wife. Their desiring-machines have been organized into specific spheres that are endlessly applied to the grand symbolic images of capital and Oedipus.

Ruptures in the solidity of this organization can be seen twice in this section of the film. Once, as mentioned above, during the dance scene, and the other near the end of the section, when Megan creates the jar filled with nails, her wedding ring, her urine and menstrual blood. Why, though, are the results of these ruptures so different? After the dance, Megan is simply snapped back into her place within the structural framework of the world she tried to escape, her desires still powerfully overdetermined by the social machine around her, but when she creates the jar, this section of the film ends, as the arrangement of her desiring-machines has broken down drastically enough to create new flows of desire, necessitating actions which are no longer compatible with this social machine. While in both instances the ruptures are caused by the body without organ’s resistance to the organization imposed on it, the difference is exactly the difference described by Deleuze and Guattari in the terms of the “productive” or “expressive” unconscious.

As I write above, the expressive unconscious is cut off from the real, complex field of desiring-machines by being forced into the Oedipal model and its reliance on desire based on lack. While Megan’s body without organs resists the stillness and proper behavior imposed upon her body in the form of the dance, her resistance does
not truly break down the structure erected around her, as the resistance is unable to transcend an expression or representation of her desires. It is not quite so simple as saying that the dance sequence takes place within Megan’s mind as merely a fantasy or dream. Once the unconscious has been Oedipalized, the real process of production is always reduced to merely the production of fantasy, therefore it makes little difference whether Megan’s body actually carried out that movement, or if it was simply an expression of her unconscious.

The second rupture, the creation of the jar, differs in its effects because it transcends expression and begins to actively produce new connections between desiring-machines. Rather than an expressive form of resistance such as the dance, in this instance Megan’s unconscious forms a new chain of desiring-machines in an eminently schizophrenic manner, by reorienting the flows of her urine and blood, and the flows of desire controlled within objects such as her wedding ring, and materially producing a new organization of flows. To understand how this material reconstruction of desiring-machines leads to the breakdown of the rigid, Oedipalized unconscious Megan exhibits in this film, and forms it into the subject we see in the next section, “Teeth In My Hands”, we will need to examine Deleuze and Guattari’s conception of the subject.

**Subjectivization**

The mechanical process of desiring-production, prior to its capture in the apparatuses of psychoanalysis and capitalism, leads to a distinct de-personalization of the unconscious. Given that the world inside, around, and extended away from our
bodies is made not of distinct, isolated organisms, but instead only of flows and the machines that direct them, on every scale, how do we conceive of our subject, our identity? Deleuze and Guattari define their version of the subject as a residuum of the process of the desiring machines: “The subject itself is not at the center, which is occupied by the machine, but on the periphery, with no fixed identity, forever decentered, defined by the states through which it passes” (20). The flux of the world of flows and desiring-machines, interacting with the destructive, anti-productive force of bodies without organs, means that these machines are constantly reorganizing themselves, forming and destroying connections with various other machines. This destabilizes the subject to the point of incoherence – with a world so tumultuous, speaking of a or the subject makes no sense (except as a method of the reductive operation described above). Instead we must imagine our selves as processes of subjectivization. As the machines which make up our bodies connect to and move through larger social organizations like an academic-machine, riot-machine, or even a subway-machine, our subjectivity can be, for a moment, defined in this specific state we are passing through: student, customer, professor, administrator; insurrectionist, looter, cop; passenger, driver, stowaway. And then, our machines are reorganized once more, and again we are reborn into new states, and new momentary definitions.

This process of subjectivization is further illuminated by the concept of drift. Deleuze and Guattari describe the disjunctions experienced by the Oedipal subject as
restrictive and exclusive\(^3\). Rather than the free passage of the subject through states of intensity, the oedipalized subject is constructed as a singular subject, and prevented from the mobility and becomings that are the byproduct of the free movements of desiring machines. The un-oedipalized (or schizophrenic, in Deleuze and Guattari’s parlance) subject, on the other hand, is never constructed as a singular identity at all. This is not to say that it does not experience the disjunctive process at all. Earlier, Deleuze and Guattari describe the basic process of the desiring machines as inherently connective, productive synthesis: “and…” “and then…” (5). However, the process of disjunction is a result of the body-without-organs, which we have already noted is continually breaking down and reorganizing the machinic connections. Whereas the oedipalized subject’s disjunctures are described as restrictive and exclusive, experiencing disjunction as a process of “either/or”, the schizophrenic’s disjunctures are real but non-exclusive and non-restrictive, experienced as “either… or … or”\(^4\). The de-oedipalized body is no longer positioned exclusively as, for example either man or woman, but it is also not both man and woman at the same time. Rather, the figures of “man” and “woman” are experienced as opposite poles which can be fluidly and constantly passed between without contradiction. This is the process of drift. At any specific moment, the de-oedipalized subject experiences itself and is experienced at as one specific thing, but as the never-ceasing process of desiring-production continues, the subject also continues to be newly defined as the byproduct of new machinic

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\(^3\) Deleuze and Guattari (75)  
\(^4\) Deleuze and Guattari (76)
arrangements, swinging freely between and around a multitude of poles: man, woman, dead, alive, old, young, natural, artificial, etc.

**Application**

Exploring this process of subjectivization, and the way it conflicts with the reduction process responsible for creating the modern subject, was, in a way, the central project of *Chantier*. The actions and situations of the Megan’s character, or characters, throughout each of the individual sections of the film, are an exploration of the way connections between desiring machines are created, plugged into various social machines, and then destroyed and reformed when they become unbearable, exactly as Deleuze and Guattari describe. In the vastly different situations, which can be thought of as different organizations of machines, we can see how vastly different subjects are manifested at specific moments in time as byproducts of these connections. Within *Chantier* as a whole, and within each individual section, we can watch the body of Megan’s character as she is continually transformed by the process of her subjectivization.

This is the reason that the rupture at the end of “Manifest Destiny”, through its achievement of a *productive* force of desire, then construes a radically new subject in the following section, “Teeth In My Hands”. Since the body without organs was able to break down the reductive Oedipal arrangement that held the desiring-machines of Megan’s body in check, restoring the productive unconscious to the space where the expressive unconscious was erected, new connections and formations of desiring-machines were created, with new flows of energy. As a result of this, the subject that
we see Megan’s character to be in this film no longer exists. A new subject has instead been created in her place. Obviously, it is not as if this new subject spontaneously takes the place of the old. In the space between these two sections of the film, the subject of Megan’s character drifts away from the pole of the suburban housewife nearer to the pole of the witch or wild women (the hexe\(^5\) is the specific pole in this example as described in detail in the film’s voiceover) In fact, the two subjects are not separate entities at all, but two points along a process of subjectivization, just as the woman dancing and the woman cutting the steak within Manifest Destiny are different subjects, but drift into one another, between the poles of a psychotic suburban housewife and a properly behaved suburban housewife.

When we see how the process of subjectivization, undertaken by an unrestricted unconscious allowing for free, non-exclusive disjunctions (Megan is a suburban housewife, \textit{and then} a hexe, \textit{and then} will be something else...) allows the subject to drift freely between such vastly separated poles (the hexe, as described in the film, is almost the polar opposite of the figure of the American suburban housewife), we begin to understand even more fully the painful nature of the restrictive, expressive unconscious which attempts to contains the subject into a static, \textit{either/or} disjunction. Before the massive rearrangement of the desiring machines that marks the transitions between the two sections, Megan does undergo the process of subjectivization, but only as a slow movement between poles that are in fact quite close together. Her movement carries her between different types of suburban

\(^5\) “An Exchange Between J.ZarA & Bianca Cassidy”, \textit{Girls Without God} (19)
housewives – the psychotic exhibitionist, the dutiful caretaker, and the depressive neurotic – but renders her completely unable to produce anything outside the narrow boundaries contained within her own overarching figure. The difference between expressive and productive unconscious, then, is not exactly between the movement of the productive and the stillness of the expressive, but instead the relative movement and relative stillness of each, or in other words, the speed at which the unconscious can drift, and the distance it can cover between poles. How does one achieve this speed? How exactly can one escape from the structure of the expressive unconscious and begin to again produce new machinic connections?

The Body, Masks, and Opacity

In his lecture “Utopian Body”, Michel Foucault begins to articulate how this conception of subjectivity can be used pragmatically by discussing the metaphysics of types of disguise. We can see many echoes of Deleuze and Guattari’s desiring-machines in the language used by Foucault, though it is important to note how Foucault uses “body” to refer specifically to the human body as a complete entity, rather than the way Deleuze and Guattari often use “body” to refer to any specific arrangement of machines. When Foucault states that the body is “the product of its own phantasms” (9), this is referring exactly to Deleuze and Guattari’s conception of desire being synonymous with the real, and a restatement of the process they describe of the desiring-machines as both producer and product in the process of production.

In this essay, however, Foucault is less interested than Deleuze and Guattari in outlining a metaphysical system, instead situating his writing within the world as it
exists, and is more concerned with the practical movements that can be taken within that world given that we within it have already been subjected to the reduction and containment of our subjectivities. Even if we accept as real Deleuze and Guattari’s mode of subjectivization as described above, the fact remains that the forces of capitalism, on both a molar and molecular scale, are organized in such a way as to limit the ability to undergo the process of becoming they explain. Whether we are able to articulate it or not, we are nonetheless trapped in the expressive unconscious – both by the material forces of the social machines of our world, and by the psychic forces which govern our unconscious. How can we begin to purposefully organize the desiring-machines that make up our bodies, and the bodies of objects and beings around us, to allow ourselves to escape this hardened subject and enter a more fluid process of subjectivization?

Foucault describes one path this movement can take as utilizing masks, makeup, and costumes, in order to “place the body into another space” (9). Rather than the mask simply being used to acquire another body, he says, the mask places the body “in communication with secret powers and invisible forces”. Notably, he lists “the liveliness of desire” as one of these forces. By donning a mask or costume, literally or some more abstract sense, we can begin to take agency over the processes of our subjectivization. They can help us to organize desiring-machines in a way which swings our orbiting subject into a specific trajectory of becoming, allowing us to test for ourselves a specific line of flight, and the reorganizations of the chains of machines that it brings with it.
**Application**

Foucault’s essay states that “the mask, the tattoo, the make-up, are operations by which the body is torn away from its proper space and projected into an other space” (9). This perfectly describes the operation carried out when Megan creates the witch’s jar in “Manifest Destiny”. Her body (subjectivity) escapes from its proper (controlled, limited) space, and is launched into another space, one that is no longer subject to the same rigid laws and expressions. The jar may not be an obvious example of a mask, a tattoo, a piece of clothing, or any of the other objects Foucault references, but it is charged with potentialities in the same way these objects are. Foucault describes how “clothing… allows the individual to enter into the enclosed space of the monk, or into the invisible network of society” (9), and in the same way, the witch’s jar allows Megan to enter into the space of the haexen. This space, which can also be thought of as a certain arrangement of desiring-machines, is normally cut-off from the space occupied by the suburban housewife, but through the act of producing the jar, the desiring-machines are rearranged in a formation that makes it possible for Megan’s subjectivity to glide over the massive distance between the two spaces.

The most explicit example in Chantier of Foucault’s ideas is the fourth section of the film, “More Red Than the Devil Is”. This section is divided into three parts. In the first, we watch Megan literally adopt a “mask” or disguise, in order to thrust herself into the festival-machine in the second part. She applies makeup and changes her hair, reaching out to contact the “secret powers and invisible forces” Foucault refers to, creating for herself again a path into an “other space”. The scene is shot to
appear as if she is casting a spell, and perhaps she is, as the last time we’ve seen the character is when she was occupying the space of the Haexen. Now, we watch as the desiring-machines producing her subjectivity rearrange once again, allowing her to drift closer to the pole of the college partygoer.

In this section of the film, though, we went slightly further than just depicting the character donning a type of mask. I was interested in trying to utilize this instance of masking to do more than just gain access to the space of the festivals, since as events, they are hardly a closed environment to anyone, regardless of their subjectivity (no one needs a costume to party with a group of belligerent college students). I hoped instead to use the reality of the massive energy in the social machine of the festivals to capture the purposeful formation of a new path in the process of Megan’s subjectivization in a way that would transcend any possible representation (or expression) of this process. Throughout Chantier, we attempted to tap into the reality of the situation we were filming by using extensive character building exercises, shooting in real locations with minimal gear to prevent others in the space from noticing that we were filming, relying on the locations we traveled to to provide us with items used by any of the characters, and eschewing traditional blocking and lighting setups in favor of naturalistic, improvised performances and cinematography. I feel that the sequence of “More Red Than the Devil Is” shot at the fests is the most intense fulfillment of this technique, due to the unavoidable enormity of the situation, which caused the reality of the situation to transcend the filmmaking process.
While neither Megan nor I feel that the social space of these festivals is one in which we feel comfortable existing within, or even desire to experience, we both adopted types of masks to try to test Foucault’s ideas, to see if Megan could consciously, with the aid of the powerful objects and disguises he describes, actually place her subjectivity in a completely other space. My experience was much simpler, but also intriguing. I disguised myself only with different clothing, making no attempt to transform myself on any deeper level of being. Nonetheless, to anyone but myself, I seemed to suddenly exist fully in the festival-machine, which still now feels as foreign to me as another planet. It was shocking how easy it was to enter this space, to fling my body (though for me, not my subjectivity) into this arrangement of machines that was so far from anything close to my “proper space”. My minimal disguise was so effective that at numerous moments throughout the time I was filming, other festivalgoers would mistake me for the “official” videographer of the fest, despite the fact that I was using technology outdated by over fifteen years, and one must only watch the sequence to see the unbridled joy at forming a connection with me through the filming process displayed by most of my unsuspecting actors.

Megan’s disguise went much further. She was trying to render this foreign, other space into the “proper space”, in order to truly experience the subjectivity that would be created by that arrangement of desiring-machines. When I asked Megan to describe her thoughts about the experience, she wrote:

For me, styling myself in a way that felt to be the perfect mix of wealth, trash, and glamour was certainly a way to “place the body in communication with secret powers and invisible forces.” I was trying to simultaneously be it all and nothing. A fest is not truly the last place I imagine ever being otherwise. It’s
such a no-where that I could potentially always be there. It is like making love, but with someone you don’t care about. It is like fucking someone that is absolutely clueless of who you are. More exposed than I am when I am in plain clothes being harassed walking on a Tuesday night, but made so much more invisible by being present in the way of the others. I just wanted to be aware of my body against bodies that I often avoid, where another more powerful body emerges. There is an excitement there, while I conceal my identity by becoming more similar looking to everyone else, only to find that because of this, no one is asking my name.

Foucault also references making love, ending his essay with “…it should also be stated that to make love is to feel one’s body close in on oneself” (11), and that “…under the other’s fingers running over you, all the invisible parts of your body start to exist” (11). These statements are more personified than the language used by Deleuze and Guattari, but they provide a more practical conceptual framework for understanding the processes through which the desiring-machines create a process of subjectivization. We can think of love, which in both Foucault’s lecture and Megan’s experience, is figured as a process or action, not an abstract feeling which one passively experiences, as exactly the force of desire which for Deleuze and Guattari links together chains of partial objects, creating new, unexpected, unimaginable subjects. The process of “making love” becomes the forceable courting of interactions with new machines, with new bodies, both human and otherwise, in order to create new subjectivities, to further and direct our process of subjectivization.

Foucault also deals with the process of reduction in a way that echoes Deleuze and Guattari. As an opposition to the radical openness and motion of desire’s effects upon our bodies, he presents the stillness of the corpse and the mirror as other ways in which subjects are created: “It is the mirror and it is the corpse that silence, and
appease, and shut into a closure (for us now sealed) this great utopian rage that dilapidates and volatilizes our bodies at ever instant” (10). Through these figures, the process of subjectivization is halted, and the human body is cut off from its machinic connections to the world, hardened and reduced into a specific entity.

Investments of Desire

Another notable affect that Megan’s recounting of her experience brings up is the appearance of “another more powerful body” when she was brought into contact with the bodies of the other festivalgoers, and the social-machine of the festival itself. This experience relates to Deleuze and Guattari’s discussion of the differences in the psychoanalytic process between the traditional conception of individual fantasy and the process of group fantasy based on Guattari’s experiments at the La Borde Clinic. They begin by describing two major differences. The first is that in individual fantasy, the entire social field is perceived only through the expressive unconscious, which can only conceive of specific social machines (such as capitalism, the state, or the university) as transcendent of the individual subject, giving these institutions an immortality. This transcendence and immortality allows the institutions to capture the subject’s desire and direct it into channels that serve to maintain their own structures, and the structure of the Oedipal, expressive unconscious. In other words, since the individual is already trapped within the structure of this subjectivity, their fantasies or desires cannot escape from that structure, and in fact only reinforce it. In the group fantasy, however, the subjects together had “the power to experience institutions themselves as mortal, to destroy them or change them according to the articulations of
desire and the social field” (63). As Deleuze and Guattari go on to write, that is exactly the formal “criterion... that distinguishes the revolutionary institution from the enormous inertia which the law communicates to institutions in an established order” (63).

The second difference is in the subject of the fantasy. The individual fantasy’s subject is the ego, or the classical “subject”, which is an Oedipal, expressive subjectivity, which experiences disjunctions as exclusive. The group fantasy no longer addresses the individual ego, and instead takes the desiring-machines that make up the body of the group as a subject, without distinguishing between individual subjects within the group. This opens new pathways for desires to flow within the group, and to escape from the rigidity applied to it by the institutions that control the individual subject. Deleuze and Guattari go on to point out that, as the relationship between the individual and the social institutions shows, there is in fact no way in one can think of “individual fantasy”, as all fantasies, or expressions of desire, are intrinsically linked to all other bodies which make up that field. Instead, they say, the two models of fantasy they have been describing should be thought off as two different types of groups: *subjugated groups*, in which the members of the group are “induced to live or fantasize individually their membership in the group” (64), and *subject-groups*, in which the members are “discharged of [their] personal identity, but not of [their] singularities” (64).

Ultimately, the constitution of these types of group determines the ability of the group members to make certain investments of desire, with only the subject group
being able to escape the static cycle of investment to maintain a system that only allows investments to maintain that system. Deleuze and Guattari call those investments of desire which maintain the system that creates them fascist investments, describing them as only able to consider molar aggregates, which are inherently reductive and representational, and which repress the desire of individual persons in favor of forming a central sovereignty such as capitalism or the state. Investments of desire which move in the opposite direction, destroying or escaping the structures of reduction and representation, instead deal with the molecular reality of desiring-machines and flows.

**Application**

These investments of desire are another way to think through Megan’s statements about making love, as well as Foucault’s. Deleuze and Guattari figure the concept of making love as even more generalized than I wrote above, stating on page 294 that “we always make love with worlds”, and on page 293 that this love, or investment of desire, “changes its function, depending on whether it engages in desire in the oedipal impasses of the couple and the family in the service of the repressive machines, or whether on the contrary it condenses a free energy capable of fueling a revolutionary machine”. It is not enough to further the process of subjectivity without consideration for the direction one furthers the process in, for it easy to end up running in place, continually forming seemingly new connections that simply further serve the repressive machines. Deleuze and Guattari point out that it is quite easy for an unconscious investment of the fascist type can exist alongside a conscious investment
of the revolutionary type\textsuperscript{6}, because the investment of desire is created by a subjugate-
group as opposed to a subject-group.

This is exactly what we see occur in Chantier in the movement between
“Manifest Destiny”, through “Teeth In My Hands”, and then into “More Red Than
The Devil Is”. Megan begins contained within the structure of the expressive
unconscious, and therefore the production of her desire or fantasy takes place within
the model of the subjugated group. The proto-nuclear family of which she is shown to
be a part of in “Manifest Destiny” is the easiest example of this type of group, those
structures being, as referenced above, always “in the service of the repressive
machines” (293). This subjugated group extends even further, though, as one can
imagine that each of the bland mansions shown in the beginning of this section
contains this same repressive structure. The social space of Perrysburg, Ohio, where
this section of the film was shot, is a perfect example of a subjugated-group whose
members are “induced to live or fantasize individually their membership in the group”
(64).

The end of “Manifest Destiny” then shows how Megan is able to consciously
use the charged objects described by Foucault to pass into an “other space”, removing
herself from the confines of the social-machine of Perrysburg and the structure of the
Oedipal family. Here, she makes a conscious revolutionary investment to flee those
confines, attempting to follow a path away from reductive and expressive structures.
In a way, she succeeds in this process, as we see in the next section of the film, “Teeth

\textsuperscript{6} 105
In My Hands”. In this section, we see a detailed analysis of the way in which a new subjectivity is created by the reorganization of desiring-machines triggered by Megan’s creation of the “witches jar”. Rather than the reduced, closed off, stratified space of the Perrysburg home, Megan’s new subjectivity is created by interactions within the open, complex space of the wilderness. The freedom this new arrangement allows Megan’s body can be seen in this section of the film in many ways. The first shot, for example, shows Megan easily hopping a fence separating the highway from the wilderness, an action it is hard to imagine the earlier subject from “Manifest Destiny” carrying out, given how contained she is in the winding halls of the suburban home she lived in. This ease at passing by artificial boundaries calls to mind Deleuze and Guattari’s description of investments of desire towards the “schizorevolutionary” pole as an investment that “breaches the walls and cause flows to move” (277). Furthermore, the voiceover and subtitles within this film are meant to show the increasingly complicated flows of desire that have created this subjectivity, tracing the social and historical conception of the witch or *haexen* and the material objects which form connections and relationships with that history, and tying both of these concepts to the physical space Megan passes through, and the way her subjectivity is produced as a result of the entirety of those complex connections. The journey Megan takes in this section of the film could be seen as a visual transcription of the suddenly accelerated process of drift that her subjectivity experiences due to her conscious investment of desire in the revolutionary pole.
As noted above, though, this conscious revolutionary investment is in no way contradictory with a simultaneous unconscious investment of desire into a fascist or reductive pole. In Foucault’s essay, there is little explicit distinction between these two poles. The operation he describes, of tearing a body away from its space and placing it in another through interactions with external objects, could apply just as easily to an escape from the established order as to a renewed or even increased investment in it. One of the specific examples Foucault provides is the use of specific types of clothing to enter “the invisible network of society” (9). One can see how the decision to don for example, a suit for a job interview impacts the creation of a new subjectivity, and how this action could just as easily constitute an investment of desire in the reactionary pole as it could disguise an investment of desire in the revolutionary pole. Regardless of the conscious investment, these same actions can also contain unconscious investments in an opposite direction. This explains how, despite the journey depicted in “Teeth In My Hands” being set off by an action designed to escape a reactionary social organization, Megan’s drifting subjectivity actually circles back to the same contained subjectivity she began with in “More Red Than The Devil Is”. The completion of the “spell” cast by the creation of the witches jar results in a shifted subjectivity, but one that remains entrenched in a subjugated group – the difference simply being the makeup of the group: college-age partygoers in Athens rather than isolated suburbanites in Perrysburg. This reveals the flaw in Foucault’s formulation of the strategy of mask or disguise. Without somehow ensuring the replacement of the subjugated group with the subject-group, or in other words, without finding a way to
escape the expressive, reductive structure inflicted upon the unconscious, the pathways of escape seemingly offered by Foucault’s technique will inevitably lead back to a startlingly similar territory – perhaps not in the topographical appearance of the new situation, but in the underlying stratification and limitation of the flows of desire. As Deleuze and Guattari point out, escape is only revolutionary “provided one sweeps away sweeps away the social cover upon leaving, or causes a piece of the system to get lost in the shuffle” (277), or, as The Invisible Committee puts it even more succinctly in To Our Friends, “A thing is revolutionary that actually causes revolutions” (146).

The Revolutionary-Analytic Machine

How does one move from the subjugated group to the subject-group? How does one escape the expressive, reductive, Oedipal unconscious to free the flows of desire? How does one produce new subjectivities by forming connections with new arrangements of desiring-machines in a way that ruptures the social space being left beyond so irreparably that it is impossible to become trapped again in the same patterns of striation? What causes revolutions?

It is probably true that these questions cannot be answered in writing at all, and must be experimented with and experienced in the world, as part of the process of desiring-production undergone by that world at every moment. No grand program can be applied to all situations without tending towards the molar, rather than the molecular. Instead, we must analyze each situation at hand, accounting for all the complexities of each of the connections between desiring-machines, of the forces of
repression, of the power in lying latent in the unconscious, of the possibilities of actions and reactions. The Invisible Committee writes:

An accumulation of gestures is not enough to make up a strategy because there is no gesture in the absolute. A gesture is revolutionary not by its own content but by the sequence of effects it engenders. The situation is what determines the meaning of the act, not the intention of its authors... Every situation is composite, traversed by lines of force, tensions, explicit or latent conflicts. Engaging with the war that is present, acting strategically, requires that we start from an openness to the situation, that we understand its inner dynamic, the relations of force that configure it, the polarities that give it its dynamism. An action is revolutionary or not depending on the meaning it acquires from contact with the world... While this can only be determined after the event, a certain sensitivity to the situation plus a dose of historical knowledge can help one intuit the matter.

This is a very broad formulation of the process of analysis which many authors call by many different names, depending on the particularities of their work.

For Deleuze and Guattari, concerned as they are with the psychoanalytic process, the cultivation of this openness and sensitivity to the situation is named “Schizoanalysis”. They describe schizoanalysis as the “discovering in a subject the nature, formation, and functioning of its desiring machines” (322). Schizoanalysis would, as opposed to psychoanalysis, forgo the examination of molar aggregations of machines, as well as the representative structures of the unconscious, in favor of the analyzing the specific possible and actual formations of the molecular machines and flows that make up bodies. Deleuze and Guattari have no illusions that simply thinking about things differently will change the results of analysis – embarking on a process of schizoanalysis requires concrete interventions, and the authors state that the process of schizoanalysis “goes by way of destruction” (311), destruction of the myth of Oedipus, of all forms of representation and reduction.
Tiqqun, the collective writing project which eventually spawned The Invisible Committee, offers a similar form of analysis in their book *This Is Not a Program*, which they term “critical metaphysics” or “a science of apparatuses”. Tiqqun’s focus in this text is similar to Deleuze and Guattari’s in that is focused on how structures of power are erected and maintained in order to limit the potential of revolutionary action. However, they are not invested in critiquing the psychoanalytic process, and instead focus on the material structures of power, or apparatuses. One example they examine is the highway system, which they say “was made—with its wide turns, its calculated, signalized uniformity—solely in order to merge all types of behavior into a single one: the non-surprise, sensible and smooth, consistently steered toward a destination, the whole traveled at an average and regular speed” (152). The process they describe here as being carried out upon the bodies of travelers is strikingly similar to the process Deleuze and Guattari show psychoanalysis to inflict upon the unconscious - the quietly violent reduction of multiplicity and the free movement of flows into a single, unitary, static structure. Tiqqun’s prescription for beginning to escape the governance of these apparatuses also echoes the process of schizoanalysis: “A science of apparatuses can only be *local*. It can only consist in the regional, circumstancial, and circumstanced mapping of how one or several apparatuses work” (175). In other words, the science of apparatuses in simply a molecular, non-representative analysis of all the complexities of a certain apparatus, such as, to use
Tiqqun’s other example, a subway system, in order to begin the process of liberating the flows it contains (via, for example, jumping the turnstile).

**Application**

Tiqqun goes on to further describe development of a science of apparatuses as an examination of the “musical” qualities the apparatuses contain:

*To identify the patterns, links, dissonances; each apparatus possesses its own little music, which must be put slightly out of tune, incidentally distorted, pushed to decay, to destruction, to become unhinged. Those who flow into the apparatus don’t notice the music, their steps stick too close to the rhythm to hear it distinctly. For the latter, another temporality is needed, a specific rhythmicity, so that, although we enter the apparatus, we remain attentive to the prevailing norm. That is what the thief, the criminal learns: to unsync internal and external tempos, to split, to layer one’s conscience, being at once mobile and static, on the lookout and deceptively distracted. To accept the dissolution of presence in the name of a simultaneous, asynchronous multiplication of its modalities.*

In the final section of *Chantier*, the “Coda”, we humbly attempt to begin the process of schizoanalysis, to take the first stumbling steps towards a science of apparatuses. We analyze a few choice desiring-machines, a selection of the partial objects that regulate the flows of Megan’s desire. We visualize the endless, incomprehensible connections of these machines, and others, through the vast web of kudzu vines, and we further attempt to render visible the way in which Megan’s subjectivity orbits around these machines, drifting back and forth – created as a whole which is not even the sum of its parts. We try to see the rhythms of the world, to watch their effect on the body, and to watch the body’s effect on them. Above all, we try to survive, to make some time to think how we might free the flows of desire, to recapture the production of desire, to exist with love on the brain.
Bibliography


