

IDENTITY AS A SERIES OF AFFECTIVE TRANSACTIONS

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Abstract: This paper is an attempt to (re) think notions of identity through recourse to the idea of affects. I argue that identity is not a state of representation of some abstract concepts of ethnicity, nationality, religious and political systems but the expression of our interior affective engagement with the world. Identity is a mode of our expression of affects and affections produced when one body encounters other bodies in the world. Rather than defining identity through criteria imposed from without, I define it through a notion of self-affective interiority. The identity is figured as unactualized affective potential proper to subjectivity rather than external concepts which must then be interiorized.

IN THE TRADITIONALIST culturalist account, identity is often defined in terms of race, class and gender, and so on. And we have already produced numerous theoretical models to approach culture, politics and history, and their exercise in the formation of identity as effects of narrative seeing history “. . . as a kind of production of various kinds of narratives.”¹ But in this paper, I approach identity from another standpoint: the idea of “noncultural”/“nonnarrated” reality of affect² from the position of ethics of immanence³ in order to show identity as the power of activity of the body. Here, I am trying to make a claim that the idea of our identity can be understood in terms of affectivity of the body rather than in terms of the conceptual abstractions of culture, history and politics. My sense of “noncultural” does not deny culture rather it expands culture’s horizon opening new fields for individuations and helps to analyze the content and expression of culture, which we often overlook. In so doing, I divide the paper into two sections. In the first section, I present the role of affects and bodies in identity formation based on the discussion of Foucault, Spinoza and Deleuze; and in the second section, I present identity as an act of self-fashioning one’s own self as an act of “self-affectivity,” critiquing the views of some major philosophers such as Kant, Heidegger and Derrida on identity.

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¹Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “The Post-modern Conditions: The End of Politics?” in *Post-Colonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies, and Dialogues*, (ed) Sarah Harasym (London: Routledge, 1990) pp.17- 34, p.34.

²Is “noncultural”/“nonnarrated” reality of affect given by nature or is it still a sociocultural formation? It is the later but I am suggesting that identity as a “noncultural”/“nonnarrated” reality of affect constantly sets itself into series of becomings beyond a particular socio-cultural form of life.

³Ethics of immanence does not explicitly say anything on the issue of identity. But, I am trying to apply it to the concept of identity in this paper.

I. Identity as Affective Postulation of the Body

I want to start off this section with the two rhetorical questions: What is wrong with the representationalist account of cultural identity, and how can my alternative model of identity save an idealistic/humanistic mission for society? To start with the first question, I disagree with the idea that who am I is limited by ethnicity, nationality, or the political, religious and ethical systems of my origin. What I am cannot be just a representation of the summations of these social and geographical abstractions, nor am I mere effects of narratives under certain “regimes of power.” There is a third dimension which complements what I am. That is an idea of “becomings” in my life that tends to reside in a “plane of excess” or a “line of flight.”⁴ My intelligible extension is grounded in the real world where I encounter not the “clear and distinct” ideas or causations and effects of some conceptual abstractions that we call narratives of history, ideology, politics, and truth, but physical affects and affections⁵ that my body produces with another body. I am my affective investment to the world. In other words, the content of my identity is not the idea of some conceptual abstractions, but rather the expressive power of my body in a new relation with the others. My body, which largely shapes my becomings, is an immanent force that encounters other forces in the world, shapes what is in me and can possibly causes to shape what is in others. I am a force, a new emergence within me all the time. That emergence is a purely organic process, and it is an affirmative will to create new individuations. I am neither a de-organic (static) representation of any abstract stratifications that people name “culture,” “history,” etc., nor am I effects of discursive formation, as Foucault for instance thinks in his *later* writings. I am the organic body not a de-organic formation of effects of some social production. Body is generative organism, which creates affects and affections, which are structured around me and my surroundings. I as an expression of the generative organism (i. e. my body), is not reducible to any external disciplinary practices as Foucault maintains when he says: “True discourse, liberated by the nature of its form from desire and power, is incapable of recognizing the will to truth which pervades it; and the will to truth, having imposed itself upon us [body] for so long, is such that the truth it seeks to reveal cannot fail to mask it” (Foucault, 72a, 219).

For *early* Foucault, my body is acted upon, and some external abstraction (which he calls “discourse”) acts upon my body. This is just what Foucault in his later works does not believe, a point that supports my claim in this section that affective postulations of the body largely shape our identity. My body acts upon other bodies and be acted upon. In its active investment to the world, it either enters into compositional or decompositional relationship with other bodies. It affects and is affected at the same time; it shapes its individuation and affects the shape of other’s

⁴Deleuze mainly in *Thousand Plateaus* and *Kafka* talks about the idea of becomings; how the becomings occurs beyond the linear social fields, which he calls “plane of excess” or a “line of flight.”

⁵Affection is not identical with affect. It is a mode of affects. The affection is an active because affect is its substance.

individuation. All the social practices and institutions are purely organic evolution of my body. My body is not a de-organic state that passively enters into some discursive practices imposed from without; nor is my body effect of such practices. My body is an “affectual self-organization,” which not only receives effects in its encounter with other bodies but affects their nature of encounter with it. My body evolves and emerges as well as makes other bodies evolve; it is not something passive recipient of external agency as *early* Foucault claims. It is not discourse that produces and controls my body; it is my body which produces and evolves countless discourses on the expressive accounts of my bodies. What is active is not some external that we can label history, truth, or language.⁶ It is my body’s active formation of affectual individuations, which give particular notions of outside such as representations. My body not only enters into a particular prior form of culture, like what Ronald Dworkin means in saying: “We inherited a cultural structure. . . .” (Dworkin, 1985, 223), but also actively produces various forms of cultures within me. Culture (and history) is not only the flow of “feelings like identification, loyalty, a sense of belonging” (Appiah, 2005, 181) as it is for some cultural preservationists but is also becoming others. It is not a matter of “fact-value;” it is the manner/mode of expression in or through which we create values. It is all otherwise. For example, when Foucault was in San Francisco with the gay community nearly forty years ago, he realized the possibility to go beyond the prevalent culture and discourses prescribed by regimes of truth and to create identity and social rights for the gay through recourse to body and affectivity. He realized that the affective self-organization (i. e. practice of homosexuality in the case of homosexual people) of the gay community can be a resistance to the prevalent cultural practice and discourse on homosexuality. I mean Foucault in his later career realized that subjective individuation is not, as he earlier had believed an effect of discourse and culture but instead the activity of the generative novelty of the body. That means, body not only receives effects of a particular form of cultural practice but also forms a new mode of cultural expression, shaping identity not simply as an ‘effect’ of the culture upon our bodies but the affectivity over external bodies.

Therefore, my active emergence defines who I am through the ideas of affects and affections, not through how my body enters into a prior form of socio-cultural-linguistic structures. Trying to define body in terms of such structures is not only a misunderstanding of the nature of laws of body but also, as Spinoza says, a matter of it is having “inadequate ideas”⁷ of such structures. The contents of our ideas of any

⁶I acknowledge that one can say these variables are not like something that makes its entry into life from outside but they are already there insides life. I am referring to my rejection to the concept of truth, history and language as abstractions. I believe that these stuffs are affectual states of one’s life.

⁷Spinoza calls it having “inadequate ideas,” if one does not know the laws of body in nature and he calls it for having “adequate ideas,” if one knows the laws. For example, I drink coffee because I know it enters into compositional relationship with my body. That means, I have adequate knowledge of coffee. Likewise if I drink poison, it will decompose my body. My

forms of life are the modes of affects. And my identity is nothing but the position of my body—how it affects other bodies in nature and how it is affected. There exists nothing that we can label culture, language, history and truth, which does not contain affects and affections in my identity. In other words, the ideas of culture, history and truth by which we define subjectivity are affective states of my body. My body is a, non-cultural and non-narrated “bundle” of affections that it produces in its encounter with other bodies—to affect and be affected—, and that reality gives me a different model of being political⁸. These affections are not passive effects as *early*⁹ Foucault understands them; they are my active understanding of the world. These affections are my direct and dynamic evolvment with the world, which not only shapes my identity but also shapes subjective positions that my affections encounter in the world. Identity is an active, direct, engaging and affectual relationship of my body with the other bodies. It is not effects of discourse, as for *early* Foucault; nor effects of narratives, as for Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak; nor *in-betweenness* of cultural traps, as for Salman Rushdie. And the ideas of culture and history that are structured around my identity or “I” is a “mode” of affect:¹⁰ a mode is the active and engaging expression or position of body— that the activity of my body form in certain way; they are not an ideological/political state constituted by some narratives (discourses, situatedness) of cultural and historical abstractions into which I make my passive entry.

Body in its modes of expression invents and reinvents infinite sensations in life ever postulating new emergence in me, or as Stephen Zepke puts it: “ Subjectivation [identity] is the ongoing emergence of new affective connections opening onto the outside of a subjective ‘I.’ In its aleatory affectual events, identity is always coming into being, assembling itself. . . becoming” (Zepke, 2005, 153). Therefore, the contents of identifications are “affectual events,” not cultural fixations, which traditional culturalists and ethnologists define in terms of misty cultural codes like ethnicity, race, nationality, and so on, which themselves are thus nothing, I reassert, but our affective investment to the world. In other words, the contents of our social identifications entail the affective states of our world. Our identity, therefore, is not a state of representation of some abstract concepts of ethnicity, nationality, religious and political systems but the expression of our emotive engagement with the world. And also, our affective states are not the effects of those concepts which can be qualified good or bad in advance; rather, they are the causes which constitute

action of taking poison is my inadequate knowledge of natural laws of body. See Spinoza’s *Ethics*, p. 231.

⁸This is what means by affective politics, and which makes us possible to do politics or being political beyond the given political set up. I have not discussed this topic in this paper though.

⁹I make distinction between *early* Foucault and *later* Foucault elsewhere in my discussion of Foucault. In his earlier writing like *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault treats identity as an effect of the power and discourse. In his later writing such as *History of Sexuality* and *Ethic*, Foucault changes his position of the concept of the subject and starts to talk about the “caring of the self”—self’s relation to itself when defining the identity.

¹⁰See Spinoza, p.123.

goodness/badness in our object of desire. Spinoza says: “. . . we neither strive for, nor will, neither want, nor desire anything because we judge it to be good; on the contrary, we judge something to be good because we strive for it, will it, want it, and desire it” (Spinoza, 1955, 230). Therefore, the good or bad of our [cultural] identities cannot be regarded as an intrinsic phenomenon. This is what opposes Charles Taylor’s view that “it’s hard to see how we could deny it [culture] the title of good, not just in some weakened, instrumental sense . . . but as intrinsically good” (Taylor, 1995, 142). Taylor’s view is misguided. Any pre-given judgment on the goodness or badness of any cultural groups (e.g. Western or Nonwestern, Orient or Occident, etc.) can have no foundation: such identifications are not “substance,” rather they are “modes of substance.”¹¹ Moreover, such modes do not work in generality, rather all expressive modes behave in a unique way. All affections structured in my identity are caused by the nature of my own body and external bodies to it. And the nature of their interaction depends on the ideas of joyful passions and sad passions.

Thus, in so as we perceive that a thing affects us with pleasure or pain, we call it good or evil; wherefore the knowledge of good and evil is nothing else but the idea of the pleasure or pain, which necessarily follows from pleasurable or painful emotion. . . ; that is, there is no real distinction between this idea and the emotion or the modification of the body, save in conception only. Therefore, knowledge of good and evil is nothing else but the emotion, in so far as we are conscious thereof (Spinoza, 1955, 195).

Therefore the connotative postulations of our identities are affections, not representations or ideas. And the nature of the affections rests on the power of activity of body. The power of the activity of the body assumes expression (not static representation) as one of the fundamental forces of our lives inasmuch as “expression takes its place at the heart of the individual, in his soul and in his body, his passions and his actions, his causes and his effects” (Zepke, 2005, 153). Expression invites a constructive self-engagement and constant interaction with the other, inviting a negation of what is given as identity and affirming what is within us—affective potentials of becomings.

Since identity is a mode of our expression of affects and affections and our cultural goodness depends on whether our actions bring us joyful passions or sad passions, the idealistic mission of our intellectual inquiry for society is to teach how to build a “compositional” relationship with other bodies so that our actions bring us joyful passions. Our inability to recognize this aspect of identity formation leads us into “decompositional” relationships with others and brings us sad passions. Therefore, for the understanding of all this, we do not need any brands of cultural viewpoint of identity and their logic of cultural violence. The immanent Spinozian idea of body can teach us how we should live with others; the theory of affects can teach us how to live with others when we view identity (me and other) as modes of affects.

¹¹For Spinoza, substance is not a pure idea but a mode of physical affect and affection.

To understand affective identities in terms of modes of affects means transvaluing all the coordinates of traditional culturalist accounts of identity. In such accounts, identity is being used to create othering of the otherness of others whether culturally or linguistically, which is the expression of “sad passions” because othering the other in any abstract terms is inviting the other into “decompositional” relationships and producing nothing but resentment and remorse, hatred and intolerance. This attempt suffers from a serious flaw on the parts of both those who exclude their others and those who feel excluded. For they do not have a Spinozian “adequate idea” about others as active participants in the maximization of pleasure in me. They lack an art of existence which helps them to maximize happiness in relation with the other. Those who have “inadequate ideas” of how the natural laws of body work relate to the strangeness of others in an unfriendly way. Their inimical stances vis-à-vis others, thus, preclude entering into compositional relationship and so bring sad passions to other bodies and, in turn, to themselves. Therefore the immanence (pure affective materials of the body) is a positive philosophy that teaches us to respect and recognize the strangeness of others, to prevent any “epistemic humility” projected into the other by the others, and to create “new affectual individuations that are not produced by an “I” as their subjective reference point, but produce it as a part of a wider ontological process of creation” (Deleuze, 1990b, 327). This is a necessary condition for a creator of a new value, a new civilization.

When we begin to recognize and honor the strangeness of the other from some solid immanent ethical position aiming at maximizing pleasure for ourselves, we enter into an ethico-aesthetic level where we start to treat other as friends or as an “affectual self-organizing body” like myself whose maximization of joyful passions rests on our ability to enter our interactions with each other into compositional relationship, which calls for the “respect for imaginative differences and the capacity to flesh out those differences in order to see how they might each create powerful and dense visions of values in specific ways of responding to the world” (Altieri, 2008a, 113). The manner in which we each approach the world is very important; this is even more important to the one who invents one’s own thoughts, feelings and actions and thereby one’s own identity.

Then, when we recognize that “our conative expressivity entails a will to power specifiable in terms of character and recognition. Seen as aspects of processes, the conative drives need not be connected directly to projections about specifiable persons [with specific historical and cultural backgrounds] or even ideal egos” (Altieri, 2003b, 143). Especially when we recognize that identity is not a fixated state embodying history, culture, ideology, geography, etc., but a mode in which we express ourselves through those entities, we begin to recognize that we are eternally self-organizing “conative drive (s)” whose liberation rests not on any given cultural values but on creating values for ourselves, opening the immense possibilities for joyful passions to myself and others which ultimately define us not in relation to any “epistemic violence” or self-humiliating references of culture and politics but on the active understanding of the emergence of my being and the role of my dynamic understanding of the laws of body in my emergence.

Summing up, all the narratives of my identity are not the truest narratives; truest are the “non-narrated”/“non-represented” affects and affections. My own narratives, which define my continual emergent identities, are not only the consequential discursive activity, but they are the fundamental forces in the emergence of my being. And my ethico-aesthetic individuation is not a cultural relation of friend and enemy /self and other but of creative emergence, which maximizes joyful passions for me. Such interpersonally composed social identifications, I believe, hold a new hope for the promise of meaningful humanity for all of us.

II. Identity as a Self-relational Interiority

Rather than defining identity through criteria imposed from without, I define it through a notion of self-relational interiority. Here the identity is figured as unactualized potential proper to subjectivity rather than external concepts which must then be interiorized. A sovereign subject is its own cause; and knows how to use “forces of the outside” to form his interiority. My main aim in this section is to take to task the traditional philosophical practice of defining subjective individuation¹² through criteria that are external to one’s inner, subjective potentials. For, our essential identity is a practice of self-fashioning from within these potentials rather than a construction borrowed from some positive social or political project. Within the tradition of Western thought, I will (re)read Kant, Heidegger, Derrida and Foucault’s notions of subjective individuations in a very brief way for my present purpose, in order to point out what remain problematic in their approaches to subjectivity. I will describe subjectivity as non-subjectivity¹³ and show how non-subjectivity can be created by oneself without imagining any alterity.

Kant rejects the Cartesian model of sovereign subject which can independently know the truth of the world without the mediation of any external set of criteria—“universal laws.” For Kant, the autonomy of the subject depends on the self-legislation of the moral law giving rules that one gives to oneself: “Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law” (Kant, 1995, 30). Kant frees the subject from surrounding social contents, but locates it in a transcendental position. Kantian transcendental self was centered by a rational uniform set of universal principles that the subject held independent of social stuffs. Kant’s challenge to Descartes is that subjectivity is not self-contained but works with transcendentially imposed, and thereby external, universal moral laws—categorical imperatives.

Contrary to this priority of the subject, Heidegger's goal is to show that there is no subject distinct, a-priori, from the external world of things, because *Dasein* is essentially Being-in-the-world. Therefore, Heidegger combines the separated subject and object with the concept of *Dasein* which is essentially a Being-in-the-world.

¹²I am alternatively using the terms subjective individuation, subject and subjectivity, which all refer to identity in the present discussion.

¹³Subjectivity as non-subjectivity does not mean one term cancels the other but it means that subjectivity finds itself in a new relation with the subject.

Heidegger states that Being-in the world goes unnoticed in trite everydayness, but we are conscious of it when we are really concerned about something significant. On these terms, subjectivity is an epistemic condition set by the exteriority. Derrida questions the distinction between other-exteriority and me-interiority and the impossibility of any solid essence that would make up one's being. One's being is an indeterminable space of in-between-ness in the presence and absence of essence, a space that language, for instance, cannot ultimately resolve. He remarks, "It is because I am not one with myself that I can speak with the other and address the other" (Derrida, 1997, 14).

The problem with these writers, as mentioned, is that they treat subjectivity as an essence (being) rather than as an act of self-creation (becomings), giving undue emphasis to the exteriority of constructed epistemic conditions. Foucault suggests that the self is an externally manipulated instrument of subjection. In other words, subjectivity is an effect of human sciences and political power. Externally imposed power creates effects on my interiority. So, to understand my interiority there is required an understanding of exteriority, which then functions as an epistemic condition of self-understanding.

Descartes' idea of the sovereign self, which regulates the body, has been the target of much criticism. He minimizes the role of body, giving the mind autonomy in its exclusion of body as its other. In fact, mind is not a separate entity. Consciousness, as Damasio puts it in his *Descartes' Error*, is about of "minding the body." All the modes in which body is affected are determined by the nature of the body affected and the nature of the body that affects. The human body is affected by a 'mode' caused by external bodies, and human consciousness is constituted by an idea of that body. All affections are caused by the nature of my own body and external bodies to it. We do not need to relate it to any ideal ego. Subjectivity is a body's postulation to itself or other bodies in nature. That's why the mind is just an idea of body. Spinoza says, "An idea, which excludes the existence of our body, cannot be postulated in our mind, but contrary thereto. Our mind is the endeavor to affirm the existence of our body: thus an idea, which negates the existence of our body, is contrary to our mind. . . ." (Spinoza, 1995, 123). Kant was right to reject the Cartesian model of subjectivity but wrong to place the self in a transcendental position. As Spinoza makes it clear in the above lines, the self is totally ingrained in the modes of its affects—the body's affectivity is (its) nature. Heidegger, too, is right in his attempt to synthesize the subject and object separation. Yet, Heidegger misunderstands the nature of the subject's relation condition vis-à-vis the world. *Dasein's* "Being-in-the-World" reveals our relational to the world—our community. This relation, however, is not of meanings but of affective states/intensities. The idea of *Dasein's* "Being-in-the-World" is problematic in the frame of my political structure of the identity in two ways: first, it is silent about the possibility of the inventing new worlds by the self; and second, it overlooks the affective nature of the communities shaping our subjective individuations. Heidegger is also overlooking the self-relation to itself or self-relational interiority as the contents of our identity overtly depending self to others— "Being-in-the-World". We might have asked Heidegger, can we surrender our subjective existence to a chaotic alterity or theyness? The sense of belonging to

others, as Heidegger illustrates, makes us irresponsible to oneself [ourselves?] because being is more about belongingness than self-affectivity. Such a passive notion of self creates alienation, boredom and anxiety. Given this, I propose to recast Dasein's ontology in immediate tactile sensations (affects) that the body presents to us. Dasein—subjective individuation—is not Being-in-the-World," it is "Being-in-the-body beside the world." The manner in which my body affects and is affected by the ontic-world determines the ontology of *Dasein*. *Dasein* does not oppose any imaginary or real other but participate in the self-making process of its becoming. *Dasein* also determines the forms of the world for me. And again I reiterate that it's not Being-in-the-World (because the world does not exist prior to bodily affects) but it's through "Being-in-the-body beside the world" that my *Dasein* infolds its becomings.

Derrida assaults the traditional search for a sovereign subject as a center of consciousness, but too often stages his critique in terms of an imperialistic and hegemonic obedience to language. I can agree with Derrida that language works in the system of 'différance,' but I reject the claim that *différance* can be the only content of identity. The content of identity for me is the mode of affect and each mode is a substance¹⁴ (not a void language created in self). Language is only one, albeit a powerful, way these modes might be expressed. Here I go along with Habermas who says: "Thus, Derrida achieves an inversion of Husserlian Foundationalism inasmuch as the originative transcendental power of creative subjectivity passes over into the anonymous, history-making productivity of writing [language]" (Habermas, 1998, 178). I believe that without affects language cannot give possibilities of meaning to our feelings. Affect is the most abstract experiences because affect cannot be fully realised in language, and because affect is always prior to and/or outside of consciousness (Massumi, *Parables*). The body has a grammar of its own that cannot be fully captured in language because it "doesn't just absorb pulses or discrete stimulations; it infolds contexts. . ." (Massumi, 2002, 30). Lastly, I reject Foucault's idea of self as an effect of disciplinary society, a thesis which he himself discarded in his later works where he adopts an aesthetic approach to self. Foucault discusses the Greek notion of "caring for oneself" as an ethical way to the formation of the self. On this understanding, self is not the formation of the order of things from top (state) to bottom (people). The self can influence its immediate surroundings without any direct relation to any larger political institutions on the top of the ladder. In the 1980s, Foucault was aware of the nature of the ethical shift in the power dynamics in human society. That was the reason he abandoned his idea of self as a product of disciplinary society and embraced the aesthetic approach to subjectivity based on the idea of self-affectivity. In sum, Foucault yields to the fact that an independent force of our "inner nature" can find its own way of self-making, and he conceptualizes this process of self-making in relation to given power structures. Actually, that idea minimizes the self's capacity to transcend the possibility of force that resists it.

¹⁴Spinoza says that a mode is a substance. I am implying that the style that we give to our existence fashions what we are.

It's not exteriority that determines what I am, but my "AM" is beyond exteriority and beyond itself. What defines oneself is intrinsic 'passion' or FORCE, which always strives to actualize the potential of 'being otherwise.' Charles Altieri says, "The 'I' that emerges . . . does not fight for its imaginary substance by opposing itself to other people's identifications. Rather this 'I' depends on its ability to adopt itself to the various forces of perception and memory and reflection that in effect call into existence" (Altieri, 2003b, 204). And these forces are certainly available to us in different frameworks of [cultural] otherness, for instance, Muslim versus Christian, West versus East, and so forth. The nature of such actualizations does not follow any prior pattern/ knowledge of who one is. Its principle is affect, but an affect does not follow from any postulation of our innate nature or essence. The nature of our identity is stylistically different from 'prior' forms of existence, different aesthetically rather than epistemologically.

The nature of identity as a series of affective transactions still leads us to the further questions here in my present discussion: how can we perform ethical practices of the bodies as a sovereign subject without the imposition of political, moral, and hermeneutic codes in a political community? How can we transcend hermeneutics to define identity? I contest that it is with the exercise of the intensity of constitutive force inherent in our subjective interiority that we can create identity as singularity: "those intentional and voluntary actions by which men [. . .] seek to transform themselves, to change themselves in their singular being, and to make their life into an oeuvre that carries aesthetic values and meets certain stylistic criteria" shape our identity (Foucault, 1990b, 10). This deployment of inner force enhances our capacity to expand the possibilities lying within in our existential interiority without letting any positive social project limiting what we can potentially be; letting identity stand beyond "bio-politics." On this scheme, our identity is laid open to any possible becomings. It's not stagnated in any fixation. Identity is always in a process of becoming different—different from and beyond what it is. It always crosses the fixation of 'is' to become 'isn't'. Identity is always in making/becoming different, ". . . always retaining the capacity to be other than what it is" (Prozorov, 2007, 55) by "a dangerous and open-ended encounter with the outside, the 'folding' of the forces of outside inside the self, whereby the free subject is formed as 'the inside of the outside'" (Deleuze, 1988a, 118). Each movement, from inside to outside and vice versa, resists actualization. It always remains in movement; each movement is singular, self-contained, an unactualized possible. This is the picture of our identity as non-identity¹⁵. Thus the aesthetic nature of self-fashioning identity, as opposed to the identity as a construction of a positive social project, refutes any diagrammatic fixation of our essential identity. Identity is a movement, an unpacking the packs of becomings—the eternal conversion and remodeling.

Such type of identity as the affective becomings can be asocial and anarchical but it remains irreducible to any social order. A dynamic nature of identity is achieved through transgression rather than actualized in a utopian end. Therefore, identity is

¹⁵The two terms "identity" and "non-identity" do not negate each other. I understand non-identity as a new way of being identified i. e. identity as becomings.

not finding our place within some traditional or ethical code rather it is found in dissolving or changing the polities that embody our nature, and as such it is anarchical. Our identity is not the outcome or effect of any utopian social project but always transcends such axiomatization (or division) in order to define what it is. A sovereign individual transgresses any actual identity that the social diagram may impose on it. A “. . . sovereign [individual]. . . [is] the *transgressor in relation to itself*. Sovereign is s/he who is simultaneously inside the space of order as the source of its constitutive principles and *outside* it as something that cannot be subsumed under these principles. . . .” (Prozorov, 2007, 84). The sovereign individual thinks its own thought and actualizes its own conditions for new becomings. It unfolds the affective dimensions of experience and creates its own conditions for life. For, it expresses the particular structure of affects. Intensity and the involvement of our body with other bodies free us from the imaginary confinement of our ego as an identity. Identity is formed with tactile sensations of intensity; it finds its way through a moment of “unformed and unstructured” potentials in body, i.e. affect which prepares itself for action in a given circumstance by adding a quantitative dimension of intensity to the quality of sensations. When your body infolds a context and another body (real or virtual) is expressing intensity in that context, one intensity is infolded into another. By resonating with the intensity of the contexts it infolds, the body attempts to ensure that it is prepared to respond appropriately to a given circumstance. In this way, subjective positions emerge and dissolve in the transmission of affects. Without affect, contexts—social or political—cannot constitute ideas about them because they would then have no intensity. In short, affect plays an important role in determining the relationship between our bodies, our political environment, shaping our very identity. Therefore, our identity is an unrolling of affective transactions between our body and the other bodies we encounter in the world.

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