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NOISE AND *NOISE*: THE MICROPOLITICS OF SOUND IN EVERYDAY LIFE**

Abstract: This paper deals with the issues of possible relationships between the categories of exteriority and interiority in the soundscape of contemporary city life. The aim is to try and map complex relationships between these categories and to show how they are maintained in everyday life through the micropolitics of sound, especially during listening to the quotidian noise of a city and *noise* music.

Key words: noise, *noise*, micropolitics, everyday life, Deleuze, Guattari, exteriority, interiority.

Апстракт: Овај рад се бави питањима могућих односа између категорија спољашњости и унутрашњости у звучном пејзажу савременог градског живота. Циљ рада је да покуша да мапира сложене односе између ових категорија и да покаже како се оне одражавају у свакодневном животу путем микрополитике звука, посебно при слушању свакодневне градске буке и *noise* музике.

Кључне речи: бука, *noise*, микрополитика, свакодневни живот, Делез, Гатари, спољашњост, унутрашњост.

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This paper will try and map the relationships between exteriority and interiority within the soundscape of an urban environment, as well as the methods of their creation. A soundscape is ‘simultaneously a physical environment and a way of perceiving that environment; it is both a world and a culture constructed to make sense of that world’, and in that sense, the physical environment does not encompass only sounds ‘but also the material objects that create, and sometimes destroy, those sounds’.¹ The relationship between the exteriority and interiority of an urban soundscape is a very complex issue, given that both categories are relative. Thus, this paper will focus on a city environment as an exteriority within which interiorities of a listening subject and domestic environment emerge, but we shall also deal with exteriority and interiority with respect to music. In that respect, they are intra-musical relationships (relationships between various musical components, their use in practice, etc.), but also the relationships towards exteriority and the use of the elements of that exteriority (e.g. the use of noise produced in an urban environment to create a piece of music). Due to the high flexibility of the categories of exteriority and interiority, it is possible to talk about the micropolitics of these categories, because it is exactly their relationship which creates the subject’s everyday life, even the subject itself. In other words, the subject as an interiority is made by folding the forces of exteriority through the process of territorialization, and the goal of this paper is to try and indicate possible territorializations, deterritorializations and reterritorializations of the categories of exteriority and interiority.

Complaints about noise have existed throughout almost the whole of human history, but since the end of the 19th century, such complaints have been more and more focused on the new technologies – sounds of factories, trains, trams, automobiles and gramophones. In the early 1900’s throughout Western Europe and the USA, societies against noise were founded which organized campaigns, conferences, exhibitions against noise, as well as ‘silence weeks’.² There are many reasons why noise is such a persistent problem, and some of the crucial ones are economic development and the population increase, specific characteristics of ways of listening, as well as the so-called visual mode of Western culture. This paper will be confined to ways of listening and conceptualizations of listening of a concrete sound within a city and urban culture, which in turn means that we are dealing primarily with noise produced by machines and other technological products used in everyday life.

¹ Karin Bijsterveld, *Mechanical Sound: Technology, Culture, and Public Problems of Noise in the Twentieth Century*, The MIT Press, Cambridge/London, 2008, 23.

² *Ibid.*, 1–2.

The historiography and anthropology of sound show that noise and silence have been deeply rooted in the social and cultural hierarchies. In Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries, making decisions about what noise was and who had the right to make it was the privilege of those who were in certain positions of power, while those of a lower social rank (such as women, children and workers) were the ones who were supposed to be quiet or were suspected of making noise as a sign of social unrest. Thus, in 1908, Lessing in his treatise *Der Lärm: Eine Kapfschrift gegen die Geräusche unseres Leben* [*Noise: A Lampoon against the Din of Our Lives*] declared that he was annoyed by both traditional noise, such as the din of church bells and carpet-beating, and the more recent nuisance of rattling machines, shrilling gramophones, ringing telephones, and roaring automobiles, buses, trams, and trains. The latter type of noise, however, was ‘incomparably worse’ than the former and made present-day life ‘nerve-racking’. In his opinion, noise was profoundly anti-intellectual, because it raised and exaggerated deeply rooted human instincts and emotions, and narrowed and dimmed the intellectual and rational functions of the soul. It was in fact the ‘vengeance’ of the labourer working with his hands against the brainworker who laid down the law to him. Silence, on the other hand, was the sign of wisdom and justice.³ Noise as an unwanted sound was often associated with social disruption, while loud and rhythmic sounds have had connotations of strength, significance, masculinity, order, progress and being in control.⁴ According to Schafer, it is no coincidence that permissible noise was linked with the possession of power to technology, because what he called ‘Sacred Noise’ (e.g. the noise produced by church bells) was gradually transferred to machines, since power was transferring from ‘God, to the priest, to the industrialist, and more recently to the broadcaster and the aviator’, and so the industrialists of today, like priests of the past, are ‘granted a dispensation’ to make noise.⁵

Only when noise became a class issue, as can be seen from the examples of Lessing and anti-noise societies, a scientific notion of noise could be formed. Namely, since the Early Middle Ages to the beginning of the 20th century, at least in the dictionaries, noise was defined as ‘unwanted sound’,⁶ without a clear reference to the loudness and intensity of that sound. The meaning of the

³ Ibid., 96.

⁴ Ibid., 40.

⁵ Murray Schafer, *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World*, Destiny Books, Rochester, 1994, 76, quoted in: Karin Bijsterveld, *Mechanical Sound*: op. cit., 35.

⁶ Ibid., 104.

term ‘noise’ was precisely defined only between the 1920s and 1930s, in an attempt by acoustic engineers to deal with the problem of receiving a telephone signal after they discovered that the presence of other sounds interfered with the reception. They called those sounds ‘noise’,⁷ which resulted in the birth of the ‘bel’ and the ‘decibel’ as measurement units. After inventing a precise method for measuring noise, the battle against noise in city environments became possible. Hence, a complete reorganization of urban life was undertaken, which led to the emergence of cities as we know them. The campaign for the abatement of street noise produced by automobiles and pedestrians caused a total overhaul and regulation of the traffic by promoting the use of headlights instead of horns and by fostering name- plating, traffic lights, pedestrian crossings, notice signs, and visual announcements, together with spatial solutions, such as enlarging and straightening streets and the introduction of asphalt, rubber tires, and new rails. That completely transformed city noise into the general hum of blended sounds originating from the most diverse sources.⁸

On the other hand, the use of gramophones, radios, stereos and many other electric appliances for everyday life in private homes changed the way we understand privacy and the attitude towards noise coming from a relative interiority, unlike the noise clearly coming from a street, or the city in general. As one British physician wrote: ‘There is no doubt that noise is one of the features of uncontrolled development in a mechanical age – an undesired by-product of the machines which are increasingly employed for industrial and even domestic operations... In some residential quarters, in such quiet as the evening possesses... some owners of gramophones and radio-sets seem oblivious of the fact that their instruments are so grotesquely over-loud that speech items are audible and intelligible in a muffled sort of way for several yards up and down the street’.⁹ The change of attitude towards noise produced in the privacy of one’s home was facilitated by the change in class relationships, change in the status of the subject of the sound perception, as well as the acknowledgment of the right to make noise in one’s own home, but also the destandardization of the rhythm of everyday life, special attention paid to hygiene and, in that respect, installing new plumbing and heating systems that completely altered the interiority of buildings and houses. The need for better hygiene also changed the interiors of apartments, by introducing flat surfaces and floors, simple furniture, reduced

⁷ Ibid., 104–105.

⁸ Ibid., 135.

⁹ A. H. Davis, *Noise*, Watts & Co., London, 1937, quoted in: Karin Bijsterveld, *Mechanical Sound...*, op. cit., 159.

decoration, as well as reinforced concrete as a building material, and all of that had its particular acoustic consequences.¹⁰

Noticing this striatedness¹¹ of exteriority by the relations of power in the broadest sense, Karin Bijsterveld, from her extensive analysis of European novels written from 1875 to 1975, distinguishes four ideal types of noise dramatization produced in an urban environment, on the basis of the quantity of the sound source, the direction of the sound propagation, its distance, rhythm and evaluation. Those are intrusive sound, sensational sound, comforting sound and sinister sound.¹²

Auditory topoi of technology				
Evaluation of sound	Negative		Positive	
	Intrusive	Sinister	Sensational	Comforting
Quantity	Multitude	Single	Multitude	Single
Distance	Close	Diverse	Diverse	Far
Direction	To subject	Unclear	To and fro	Unspecified
Rhythm	Irregular or unpredictable	Unspecified	Regular	Regular or unspecified

Intrusive sounds are usually expressed as a multitude of different sounds. These sounds invade or threaten the existence of something or someone that is vulnerable or fragile, such as nature, harmony, or one's heart, mind, body or security. According to Karin Bijsterveld's analysis, these sounds are present in the context of urban surroundings, outside the subjects' homes.¹³ **Sensational** sound is the positive counterpoint of intrusive sound. Like intrusive sound, sensational sound refers to a multitude of sounds. Unlike intrusive sound, however, the sources of sensational sound can be felt both close and rather far away from the protagonist, and, in all cases, fill the environment. Such sources are the crowds in the city, the movement of traffic, and the running of machines.

¹⁰ Ibid., 163.

¹¹ I use the term *striatedness* in a Deleuzian-Guattarian sense of pervasion of exteriority by complex qualitative processes that include every semiotic system and produce various types of subjectivity. Cf. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, Continuum, London, 524–551.

¹² Karin Bijsterveld, *Mechanical Sound...*, op. cit., 43–44.

¹³ Ibid., 45.

Moreover, sensational sound often expresses a regular rhythm, in complete contrast to the irregularity or unpredictability of intrusive sound, and thus it is life, movement, energy, and power that predominate in the characterization of sensational sound.¹⁴ **Comforting** sound has, like sensational sound, a positive tone. Yet unlike sensational sound, a comforting one is a single source of sound, or a single type of source, and its rhythm may be regular. Often the shelter, security, and harmony of the subject's direct environment (the bed, the house) are highlighted, and thus it is 'the urban and auditory version of pastoral and visual depictions of the Arcadian mill... It is a sole and consoling sound, the sound that underlines tranquility'.¹⁵ **Sinister** sound is usually a single sound within a more or less silent environment. It functions as an ominous prognostication of what is going to happen, its distance may be close or indeterminate, and its direction is often unclear.¹⁶

Such conditions lead to the emergence of music that uses mechanical sounds in compositions. In 1926, George Antheil's musical composition *Ballet Mécanique* made its world premiere in Paris, featuring ten pianos, a player piano, xylophones, electric bells, sirens, airplane propellers and percussion. The concert had a lot in common with the first public performance of Luigi Russolo's compositions *Awakening of a City* and *Meeting of Automobiles and Airplanes* in 1914, for which he specially invented new noise-producing instruments. Futurists indeed adored urban noise, which they viewed as the symbol of a new and thrilling mechanical age: 'To them, as to many urban dwellers, noise was the attraction of the metropolis, a sign of the exciting speed of life'.¹⁷ About a hundred years later, at the beginning of the 21st century, the use of mechanical sounds in composing became almost a norm, and the unanimous futurist enthusiasm for cities and city noise grew into a multitude of ambiguous attitudes toward acoustic material and its relationship with various discourse units such as e.g. personal narratives on meaning and sense, in the shape of Utopian and dystopian projections.

I shall now consider pieces that confine their materials to drones, noises and repetitive rhythmic patterns, and that 'often studiously avoid any other types of sounds that might distract one from these elements',¹⁸ and that be-

¹⁴ Ibid., 46.

¹⁵ Ibid., 48.

¹⁶ Ibid., 49.

¹⁷ Ibid., 139.

¹⁸ Joanna Demers, *Listening Through the Noise: The Aesthetics of Experimental Electronic Music*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2010, 92.

long to different subgenres of electronic music, such as *field recording*, *drone* and *noise*.¹⁹ These subgenres are mostly marked by long durations, the seeming avoidance of change and loudness/noise, i.e. by being static: ‘Static music goes nowhere, achieves no goals, does no work, and sounds the same, three hours into the work, as it did when the work began... Static music is not only music that avoids conventional harmonic or melodic goals but also music that takes specific steps to obscure any sense of the passage of time.’²⁰ It imposes a kind of sensory deprivation through effacing the variation we take for granted, the ebb and flow of acoustic data that occur not only in music but in daily life, as well.

Still, one of the more remarkable aspects of *drone* and *noise* music is its surprising variety, from the works of La Monte Young, to Éliane Radigue, to contemporary authors such as Jim O’Rourke, Phill Niblock, Merzbow, Fennesz, William Basinski and many others. For example, *Trilogie de la mort* (1998) by Éliane Radigue is a three-movement work. The first movement begins with two pitches, and continues after some time by introducing a third pitch with no particular rhythm, trajectory, or development. This section continues with little variation until around 5:45, when two new sustained tones enter. According to Demers, eleven discernible sections can be heard in the first movement, and almost all of them progress in a manner similar to the section described above, with one exception that takes place in the sixth and seventh sections.²¹ The sixth section begins at around 28:00 with a drone. After about a minute, what sounds like the tape sample of an orchestral work enters, a brief, looped

¹⁹ *Drone* – any sustained or unchanging pitch or group of pitches. In Western experimentalist music, drones came to prominence thanks to minimalist composers Phill Niblock, Charlemagne Palestine and La Monte Young. Drones are especially common in recent electronic music and have also entered experimental popular music by way of the Velvet Underground. *Field recording* – audio footage taken on location. Field recordings are used in disciplines like anthropology and zoology to document sounds in their natural contexts, such as languages or animal sounds. They have also become a popular form of sound art. Unlike *musique concrète* and recent electro-acoustic music, which edits audio footage and often uses small portions of material, field recordings often focus on the sounds of one location for several minutes, aspiring toward an unmediated representation of reality. Notable field recordists include Peter Cusack, Francisco López, and Toshiya Tsunoda. *Noise* – A variant of recent electronica featuring distortion and loud volumes. Noise music as such emerged with industrial groups such as Cabaret Voltaire and Throbbing Gristle in the early 1980’s. Several Japanese musicians, most famously Merzbow, use noise at deafening levels. References and definitions taken from Joanna Demers, *Listening Through the Noise...*, op. cit., 166, 168, 172–173.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 93.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 95.

fragment lasting only a few seconds. This material is accompanied by what sounds like a recording of wind blowing. This section continues for several minutes like this, only to fade into the new seventh section at around 37:20. The seventh section consists of quiet electrical static and intermittent low pulses of a single pitch. Unlike this sectional and episodic piece, whose climax of sorts occurs with sounds resembling an orchestra and the wind, the composition *Long Night* (1990) by Jim O'Rourke avoids any hint of increasing tension or climax, maintaining the same glacial pace throughout its longer than two-hour duration. The process driving *Long Night* is simple: the piece begins with one single pitch to which other pitches are gradually added. The time between modulations is great. As the piece unfolds, some pitches fade out as others fade in. In Phill Niblock's *Harm* (2006) the drone consists of a single note played on the cello, and then subjected to slight microtonal manipulation. Merzbow, on the other hand, uses pure static monotonous noise which sometimes tests the listener's limits. Many other artists use not only the noise created by electronic synthesizers but also the noise of the immediate environment to create music. According to Demers, *noise* and *drone* artists and musicians seemingly do everything they can to avoid conventional notions of beauty, but this resistance is an ambivalent gesture, for the very act of thwarting beauty by creating ugliness in fact reinforces the idea of beauty.

In such a relationship of exteriority and interiority – from the exteriority of a city from where the noise comes, to the interiority of a home filled with both urban sounds and sounds of everything that makes everyday life in one's home, to the complex interplay of exteriority and interiority within music itself – individuals live, listen and actively build their own boundaries between exteriority and interiority. The use of personal stereo devices, such as MP3 players, plays a special role in that construction. The ethnographic study by Michael Bull shows that one of the important roles of using such devices is the maintenance of a particular narrative or mood, and it begins at home, to be continued in the outside environment.²² The control exerted over the external environment through use is also described in terms of clearing a 'space' for thoughts or the imagination, meaning that the random sounds of the street do not facilitate focusing thoughts in the desired direction, and thus the music has to be played loudly.²³ Users' relations to representational space are transformed, enabling them to construct forms of 'habitable' space for themselves. In doing so, users can be described

²² Michael Bull, *Sounding out the City: Personal Stereos and the Management of Everyday Life*, Berg, Oxford/New York, 2000, 46.

²³ *Ibid.*, 38, 41.

as creating a fragile world of certainty within a contingent world. The lifeworld of personal-stereo users is constructed and bounded through reorganizing their relationship to ‘both the “space” within which their thoughts and intentions arise and the field or social horizon within which they are physically situated.’²⁴ That field of social horizon in relation to the user is exteriority. Given that this exteriority is experienced as the source of contingency and as the sound of the public realm, it is, in the act of listening, replaced by the world of sounds that a personal-stereo user chooses alone, thus simplifying the environment they move through and live in, and making a connection between the interiority and exteriority: ‘As they awake each morning to face the day ahead they invariably are not alone, their day normally begins accompanied by the radio, television or the sound system. The beginning of the day with its domestic routines is constituted through “being with” the products of these artifacts of the culture industry. Preparation time for the day, rather than being experienced as “empty” is rather filled. Personal-stereo use enables them to continue to manage segments of their daily routine as they leave home. In the street, users demonstrate an attentiveness to the daily management of their time consonant to their desire to manage other areas of their daily life.’²⁵ Therefore, personal-stereo use acts to transform users’ horizons of experience by superimposing itself onto the environment, cloaking the alien with the familiar and in doing so transforms the subjective response to it, even erects a sort of barrier between the subject and the exterior world.

What facilitates the erecting of a ‘sound barrier’ in such a way, i.e. the producing of the feeling of interiority, are the processes of territorialization, deterritorialization and reterritorialization. In short, the idea of territory is understood very widely, so that it describes a lived space or a perceived system in which a subject ‘feels at home’, and territory is synonymous with appropriation, subjectification closed in on itself. A territory can also be deterritorialized, i.e. open up, in an attempt to recompose a territory engaged in a process of deterritorialization.²⁶ How an affect and a territory can be related and how and why a territory is produced? First of all, it is necessary to establish something stable because of the ‘absolute’ outside, from where the most diverse fluxes come in all the time, which in turn represents a potential for deterritorialization and creating a flight line. In this particular case, those would be all the forces outside the subject, but also the forces in the relative exteriority, i.e. forces out

²⁴ Ibid., 44.

²⁵ Ibid., 55.

²⁶ Félix Guattari, *The Anti-Oedipus Papers*, Semiotext(e), New York, 2006, 421.

of the immediate vicinity that may threaten every stable identity reference. The refrain, as that which fixes the existential order of the sensory world, plays a major role, because without this ritornellizing of the sensory world, the surrounding objects would lose their 'air' of familiarity and would collapse into an anguishing and uncanny strangeness.²⁷ Hence, it is worthwhile to present the following unabridged quotation from *A Thousand Plateaus*: 'A child in the dark, gripped with fear, comforts himself by singing under his breath. He walks and halts to his song. Lost, he takes shelter, or orients himself with his little song as best as he can. The song is like a rough sketch of a calming and stabilizing, calm and stable, center in the heart of chaos. Perhaps the child skips as he sings, hastens or slows his pace. But the song itself is already a skip: it jumps from chaos to the beginnings of order in chaos and is in danger of breaking apart at any moment... Now we are at home. But home does not preexist: it was necessary to draw a circle around that uncertain and fragile center, to organize a limited space. Many, very diverse, components have a part in this, landmarks and marks of all kinds. This was already true of the previous case. But no the components are used for organizing a space, not for the momentary determination of a center. The forces of chaos are kept outside as much as possible, and the interior space protects the germinal forces of a task to fulfill or a deed to do. This involves an activity of selection, elimination and extraction, in order to prevent the interior forces of the earth from being submerged, to enable them to resist, or even to take something from chaos across the filter or sieve of the space that has been drawn. Sonorous or vocal components are very important: a wall of sound, or at least a wall with some sonic bricks in it. A child hums to summon the strength for the schoolwork she has to hand in. A housewife sings to herself, or listens to the radio, as she marshals the antichaos forces of her work. Radios and television sets are like sound walls around every household and mark territories (the neighbor complains when it gets too loud)... A mistake in speed, rhythm, or harmony would be catastrophic because it would bring back the forces of chaos, destroying both creator and creation.'²⁸

Therefore, every refrain has three basic components. First, a point of order or inside – 'a home, nest, or space of safety that filters out or keeps the forces of chaos temporarily at bay';²⁹ second, a circle of control that defines not only a

²⁷ Félix Guattari, 'Ritornellos and Existential Affects', in: Gary Genosko (ed.), *The Guattari Reader*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1996, 162, 164.

²⁸ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, Continuum, London/New York, 2004, 343.

²⁹ Elizabeth Grosz, *Chaos, Territory, Art: Deleuze and the Framing of the Earth*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2008, 52.

safe inside but also a malleable or containable outside, ‘a terrain to be marked, a field to be guarded’;³⁰ and, third, a line of flight to the outside, a movement of migration, transformation, or deformation. Thus, the refrain wards off chaos by creating a rhythm, tempo, melody that taps chaos by structuring it through the constitution of a territory and a mode of occupation of that territory, ‘a musical frame’.³¹ On the other hand, a territory is the delimitation of a milieu in accordance with the force of a rhythm; it is the rhythmic alliance of a limited milieu and a restricted range of bodies and body movements. A milieu, the congealing of a block of space-time, and a rhythm, the emergence of a periodicity, are not separable from the block of emergent territoriality. In that respect, a territory is an external synthesis of geographical elements, environmental characteristics, material features that create both an inside and an outside, ‘and a space that is annexed, outside: a cohesion inside.’³² This boundary between inside and outside is not self-protective but erotico-proprietorial, in the sense that ‘it defines a stage of performance, an arena of enchantment, a *mise-en-scène* for seduction that brings together heterogeneous and otherwise unrelated elements: melody and rhythms, a series of gestures, bows, and dips, a tree or a perch, a nest, a clearing, an audience of rivals, an audience of desired ones.’³³ Territory operates according to a double imperative: a proprietorial relation to a piece of the earth and a qualitative relation to properties unleashed or newly available: ‘The territory is first of all the critical distance between two beings of the same species: Mark your distance. What is mine is first of all my distance; I possess only distances. Don’t anybody touch me, I growl if anyone enters my territory, I put up placards. Critical distance is a relation based on matters of expression. It is a question of keeping at a distance the forces of chaos knocking at the door.’³⁴ The refrain is fundamentally constructive: it brings together a series of disparate elements – sights, sounds, rhythms, material objects, geographical features, found objects – into an organized synthetic totality, a territory that now contains all of these expressive qualities.

As may have been seen, the relationship between the categories of exteriority and interiority while listening to *drone* and *noise* music in an urban environment is extremely complex. On one hand, the purpose of listening to music is to create

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid., 53.

³² Ibid., 47

³³ Ibid., 48.

³⁴ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, Continuum, London/New York, 2004, 352.

a sphere that is considered internal. On the other hand, the act creates an exterior with respect to the individual who listens. It is, therefore, a complex affective process of creating exteriority and interiority through a sort of sound barrier. 'Affect is', said Félix Guattari, 'a process of existential appropriation through the continual creation of heterogeneous durations of being... Finitude, completion, the existential singularizing of the person in his or her relation to him/herself, just as much as the circumscription of his or her domain of alterity, are not self-evident, are given neither by right nor by fact, but result from complex processes in the production of subjectivity', and continues: 'And, in very particular historical conditions, artistic creation has represented an extraordinary excrescence and exacerbation of this production.'³⁵ The sound barrier, as an affective product, plays a key role in establishing boundaries between what is outside and what is inside, i.e. between what belongs to the person's sphere and what does not.

'Tražimo samo malo reda da bismo se zaštitili od haosa' ['We require just a little order to protect us from chaos'],³⁶ and the absolute outside is chaos, unthinkable and unbearable for "the slow beings" that we are'.³⁷ Chaos, however, neither forms a *whole* nor a unity, because its dispersion is pure, and openness infinite, in the sense that virtual intensities and fluxes move at infinite velocity and that actual things are their mere decelerations. 'Le chaos, comme dehors absolu, extériorité excluante, qui ne peut jamais devenir intérieure, est défini topologiquement comme ce qui se tient au terme, à la limite du champ d'immanence de la pensée, ce qui n'implique aucune transcendance.' ['Chaos, as the absolute outside, exclusive exteriority that can never become interiority, is defined topologically as what stands at the edge of the field of the immanence of thought, what never implies transcendence.']³⁸ This implies that a clear distinction should be made between the outside as the absolute outside and the pair of notions of exteriority and interiority. The outside is a prerequisite for the existence of difference between exteriority and interiority, and the latter pair is relative. In other words, exteriority and interiority are flexible notions, and the context will define what exteriority and interiority are, i.e. what is exterior to a certain interiority and vice versa, while the outside is always the absolute out-

³⁵ Félix Guattari, 'Ritornellos and Existential Affects', in: Gary Genosko (ed.), *The Guattari Reader*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1996, 159.

³⁶ Žil Delez i Feliks Gatar [Gilles Deleuze et Félix Guattari], *Šta je filozofija? [Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?]*, trans. Slavica Miletić, Izdavačka knjižarnica Zorana Stojanovića, Novi Sad, 1995, 254.

³⁷ Gilles Deleuze et Félix Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?*, Minuit, Paris, 2005, 39.

³⁸ Philippe Mengue, 'Dehors, chaos et matières intensives dans la philosophie de Gilles Deleuze', *Nessie*, 1, 2011, 9.

side. Analyzing Foucault's notion of power, Deleuze said that there is an emergence of forces that operates in a different dimension, 'u nekom spolja (dehors) udaljenijem od svakog spoljašnjeg sveta čak i od svake forme spoljašnjosti (*exteriorité*), a samim tim beskrajno bližem' ['in an outside (dehors) which is farther away than any external world and even any form of exteriority (*exteriorité*), which henceforth becomes infinitely closer'].³⁹ What is the outside and how it is different from an exteriority, since Deleuze obviously made that distinction? In brief, the outside is the plane of immanence. For the outside is not exterior to something. Only exteriority is exterior to interiority and by its exteriority constitutes and affirms the interiority of interiority. The outside is however outside of any exteriority as well as of any interiority. 'The outside is the outsideness beyond the difference between exteriority and interiority, beyond the being for the exteriority of an interiority', in the words of Branka Arsić.⁴⁰ That outside is the absolute outside (*dehors absolu*): 'Jedno spolja koje je udaljenije od svakog spoljašnjeg sveta zato što je u isti mah i unutar koje je dublje od čitavog unutrašnjeg sveta: to je imanencija... Neprestano kretanje ravni tamo-amo, beskonačno kretanje' ['An outside more distant than any external world because it is an inside deeper than any internal world: it is immanence... The incessant to-ing and fro-ing of the plane, infinite movement'].⁴¹ Immanence as absolute immanence is beyond the division to subject and object, or subjectivity and objectivity, exteriority and interiority. Absolute immanence is the prerequisite for such a division. It is immanent to itself and 'kada imanencija nije više imanencija nečemu drugom osim sebi, može se govoriti o planu imanencije' ['it is only when immanence is no longer immanence to anything other than itself that we can speak of a plane of immanence'].⁴² The plane of immanence is itself virtual: the events that populate it are virtualities, events and singularities. Only the actualization of virtual singularities leads to an object and a subject.⁴³ As a pure field of virtuality, the plane of immanence is a difference in itself.

In Deleuze's and Guattari's words, everything is political, but all politics is simultaneously macropolitics and micropolitics: 'Take aggregates of the per-

³⁹ Žil Delez [Gilles Deleuze], *Fuko [Foucault]*, trans. Svetlana Stojanović, Izdavačka knjižarnica Zorana Stojanovića, Sremski Karlovci, 1989, 90.

⁴⁰ Branka Arsić, 'Active Habits and Passive Events or Bartleby', in: Paul Patton and John Protevi (eds.), *Between Deleuze and Derrida*, Continuum, London/New York, 2003, 146.

⁴¹ Žil Delez i Feliks Gatari, *Šta je filozofija?*, op. cit., 76.

⁴² Žil Delez [Gilles Deleuze], 'Imanencija: život... ['Immanence: Life...'], in: Kristina Bojanović (ed.), *Slike mišljenja Žila Deleza*, trans. Andrija Filipović, Društvo filozofa Crne Gore, Nikšić, 2011, 10.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 12.

ception or feeling type: their molar organization, their rigid segmentarity, does not preclude the existence of an entire world of unconscious microperepts, unconscious affects, fine segmentations that grasp or experience different things, are distributed and operate differently. There is the micropolitics of perception, affection, conversation, and so forth.⁴⁴ On the one side, but certainly not completely separate, is the macropolitics of molar formations, while on the other side, is the micropolitics of molecular fluxes. These two types of politics are mutually implicit, so speaking of affectivity, one must take into account a specific body in a very precise context, because that affective body is always a part of a larger molar formation. In this case, it would be the body of a listener that exists in an urban environment and that by the act of listening to *noise* music produces its own subjectivity under conditions of the striatedness of the exteriority by various relations of power, i.e. its being interwoven with molar formations. The micropolitical aspect is in the potentially self-organizing and autopoietic manner of subject production. Namely, by the act of listening to *noise* music, the subject erects a kind of sound barrier against the relative exteriority – also understood as the immediate exteriority within the space perceived as home, and as the exteriority understood as the city environment – thus creating potential space, their own territory, for the creation of new affects that might not comply to the logic of molar formations. But even if it were not for that ‘subversive’ aspect, we would still speak of micropolitics, because these are singular bodies that in a relationship with the molar (all ‘big stories’, as Lyotard would say) create their own ways of existence and life through establishing a territory. Such existential-affective territories, due to the effect of molar formations, undergo processes of deterritorialization and reterritorialization (both exteriority and interiority are in a constant process of becoming), being incessantly displaced and re-established. In other words, bodies-subjects are constantly negotiating with the most diverse discursive and non-discursive processes that surround and constitute them.

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⁴⁴ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, op. cit., 235.

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