



14: peace

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Singing in the Wind: Beyond the Peace/War Dichotomy

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If the Other is a possible world, I am a past world. The mistake of theories of knowledge is that they postulate the contemporaneity of subject and object, whereas one is only constituted through the annihilation of the Other.

Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 1990.¹

In the months of May and June of 2011 Australia lost four soldiers in three weeks fighting the War on Terror in Afghanistan. It took the total number of Australian soldiers killed to twenty-seven. In their efforts to bring peace and democracy to the country the coalition of foreign forces was facing increasing resistance from the Taliban. Peace, in the context of our current wars (in Iraq and Afghanistan) seems a distant prospect and yet it is for that quixotic notion that the wars are being fought. The concept, peace, can only be illuminated by its opposite. Without war there would be no peace. In a geopolitical and technological dynamic that at once reinforces borders for some, while dissolving them for others, it seems that peace remains necessarily unattainable. In the biopolitical regulation of populations war is literally at the front line. As Michel Foucault pointed out, wars “are waged on behalf of the existence of everyone; entire populations are mobilized for the purposes of wholesale destruction in the name of life necessity.”² Writing in the 1970s Foucault presciently forecast the perpetual war that we now live in; a war fought on behalf of what? In his discussion of biopower and subjectivity Foucault concludes “massacres have become vital.”³ They are carried out under the promise of a peace to come; a striving-towards-peace; a becoming-peace; a peace that cannot unfold because, like the word ‘terror,’ it is an abstraction. In the past when peace was reached war still remained as a bruise. And so it will with our current wars. The wholesale destruction of a country’s population and infrastructure have become necessary spectacles in the administering of life for the individual, for underneath the shock and awe lies the message for the viewer – ‘you’ are allowed to live.

In this article, I suggest that it is at the threshold of life that biopolitical distinctions, and thus distinctions of peace and war, collapse. In their book, *Empire*, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri discuss biopower and biopolitical distinctions.⁴ For them, the concept of peace can only emerge through the process of war. The paradox that there can be no peace without war is co-extensive to Hardt and Negri’s description of the current “supranational right” which assumes and acts in (to use Giorgio Agamben’s now prevalent phrase), a “state of exception.” This “state of exception” enables preemptive strikes and the detention of people, outside the rule of law and *habeas corpus*,

in indeterminate places such as Guantanamo Bay.⁵ All this is seen in light of globalisation where the “supranational right”

presents itself as capable of treating the universal, planetary sphere as a single systemic set, it ... assume[s] an immediate prerequisite (acting in a state of exception) and an adequate, plastic, and constitutive technology (the techniques of the police).⁶

As part of the Coalition of the Willing, the Australian Army is a component of the corporeal body enforcing the aspirations of the “supranational right.” One of the major functions of the Australian army in Afghanistan is to train a local army and police force to maintain law and order once the foreign forces withdraw. Presumably, on the other side of the withdrawal, peace will reign, but it is a peace that comes about because of war and the imposition of a biopolitics that Agamben suggests constitutes the human as “the living being who ... separates and opposes himself to his own bare life.”⁷ At the same time, Agamben adds, humanity “maintains” its image “in relation to that bare life in an inclusive exclusion.”⁸ Beyond this intractable paradox where peace can only be conceived through war and a global, biopolitical conditioning, where borders and exclusions are maintained at all costs, perhaps another view of peace resides.

In the discussion that follows I use Gilles Deleuze’s analysis of Michel Tournier’s book, *Friday, or the Other Island* (1974), from the appendix to *The Logic of Sense*, as a set-piece to activate three movements of my own. The mythological complex of Friday, Crusoe and their Island is augmented by both Deleuze and Tournier within a biopolitical context that deconstitutes the human by opening the perceptual field. In this essay I perform a similar task. Using three key images – the Brisbane floods of 2011, the final moments of Charlie Kaufman’s film, *Synecdoche, New York* (2008), and the artist Richard Billingham’s photographs and films of animals in zoo enclosures – I explore situations that empty the subject of his or her stable reference points and biopolitically defined self. I note this not to find epiphany, freedom or pseudo-transcendental transformation, but to describe a re-combination whereby subjects lose their resemblance in others, the human appears in its absolute other (the animal), and the inside is revealed as the outside. These three movements presuppose a limit has been reached which gives way to a future perception, one that is not yet total, but will be. In the movements I describe, peace and war are rendered moot because biopolitical distinctions have dissolved.

In *The Open: Man and Animal* Giorgio Agamben describes this future perception as a “zone of non-knowledge,” beyond logos and history, that charts the human’s becoming; no more a human perception because “every rational element” has been forgotten, every “project for mastering its animal life” deleted.⁹ The territory that Agamben marks out in his description of this impending collapse into “a-knowledge” draws a line through a number of other thinkers who have sought to articulate the problem of human subjectivity within the shifting contexts of the posthuman, including Bataille, Kojève and Heidegger, and adds to the antihumanist, decentring ideas of Foucault, Derrida and before them, Nietzsche. Near the end of his discussion Agamben includes a comparative analysis of Titian’s paintings *The Three Ages of Man* (1513-14) and *Nymph and Shepherd* (about 1570), concluding that between the two works a fundamental shift has taken place in the relations of the figures. In the latter work Agamben argues that Titian has gone beyond representing sensual pleasure and desire as precursors to sin and death, but renders them as mutual disinhibition and disenchantment. In exposing themselves the woman and man have “reached in their fulfillment ... a higher stage that is beyond both nature and knowledge,” and, Agamben suggests, “concealment and disconcealment.” Initiated to their own “lack of mystery” the figures lose their cultural and religious constraints and move into a realm where they become “inapparent.”¹⁰ The visual analysis that Agamben embarks upon is drawn from the compositional shifts that take place between Titian’s

works but quickly moves into an analysis of the much wider process of what it is to be human. Introducing a discussion of Heidegger's lectures from 1929-30 (*The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*) Agamben demonstrates how the philosopher re-formulates the processes of disinhibition. Far from being the animal-with-language, Agamben argues that Heidegger's *Dasein* (being) is "always already presupposed in every conception (philosophical and scientific) of life."¹¹ Human consciousness comes into being in an openness directly opposed to the animal's "captivation," or "poverty in world," as Heidegger terms it.¹² The human is "world-forming" while the animal is ensconced in a "disinhibiting ring" in which it is fully absorbed in itself. Basically, the animal is captivated within its ring of disinhibitors and cannot sense outside of it.

As a further example, Agamben uses nineteenth century zoologist Jacob Von Uexkull's discussion of the tick's absolute absorption in its environment, as distinct from Uexkull's anthropological description of it, to illuminate the austerity of the tick's experience. Its movement in its purely closed bushy environment is limited to the following disinhibitors: the "butyric acid contained in all mammals," "the temperature of 37 degrees Celsius" in mammal blood, and the hairy skin and blood vessels of mammals.¹³ This is the closed, but "disinhibited" environment of the tick, without time, and "without world." Following Heidegger's use of the term, "disinhibitor," Agamben concludes that the animal inhabits its own "disinhibiting ring," closed in "the few elements that define its perceptual world."¹⁴ Here, in contrast, Agamben asserts that the human world is open, because its perceptual field and symbolic order are so much more expansive. Even though we are on the same evolutionary continuum as the tick, the human is not "captivated" in its environment, like the tick, bee (Heidegger's example), or goat, but rather open to become inapparent to themselves – as in Agamben's reading of Titian's two paintings and Deleuze's reading of Michel Tournier's *Robinson*. Agamben suggests that disconcealment begets a burden that awakens human consciousness to, paradoxically, its own "being-captivated," while Deleuze interprets Robinson's radical re-structuring of the world as a disinhibition that liberates the senses in concert with the elements.¹⁵



Figure 1. Cameron Bishop, *Habitat No.1, After RB* (2010). 60 x 80 cm, digital print. Collection of the author.

Here, in the beyond of nature and knowledge, my two launching points come together. Eros, climbing the tree of knowledge in Titian's *The Three Ages* becomes a goat in the *Nymph and Shepherd*. Attempting to climb (it seems) the stump of the tree, the goat signifies the loss of mystery between the two lovers and a state beyond both nature and knowledge. In Tournier's text,

Deleuze points out, Friday fashions from the goat an instrument to capture the wind. He places it in the dead stump of a tree. It captures the elements, and for Deleuze, creates a "pansonority."¹⁶ From Agamben's perspective this might be seen as an act signifying the ways in which humanity suspends its animality, in

the very capturing and articulation of the animal.¹⁷ Deleuze takes this as an elemental inauguration, and the beginning of a series of metamorphoses of island, Friday and Robinson which culminates in Robinson's "dehumanisation."¹⁸ It is here on an island without others that Deleuze/Tournier release subjects and others from their place in the perceptual landscape. Indeed Robinson is freed from the desires of others; from having to be conscious of others' perspectives. Tournier's Robinson, by choosing not to be rescued, chooses not to go to war.

There is no-one to go to war for or against on the island, but rather the island remains an outside where the Other reveals itself as the structure conditioning "the entire field and its functioning."¹⁹ In disavowing the structure-Other Robinson's subjectivity and relations are reconstituted in a space without hierarchy, beyond nature and knowledge. The human skull, in the metaphor of pansonority, could easily replace that of the goat's head, channeling and singing the elements in a space that closes off human openness and conjoins it with the disinhibited animal. Peace, in this consecration, remains unthought of, while war is rendered impossible. With the disappearance of those others that structure and limit consciousness on Tournier's and Deleuze's island, it follows that there are no longer any potential combatants or allies to enter into an aggravated peace – and in the context of our contemporary conflicts, a War on Terror that is, as Judith Butler describes, both "limitless and without end."²⁰

For the remainder of this essay, I explore three movements, or shifts, that subvert the structure and relations of self and others within the peace/war dichotomy. They each point to a future without the biopolitical distinctions that come from our relations with others, and hence imagine a future where peace is unthought of and war becomes an impossibility. In the duration of these movements subjects move smoothly across surfaces and through others, causing temporal shifts in identity and perspective, objects are caught in horizontal lines of strata, and, as Agamben might suggest, a disappearance of the human is triggered by the reactivation of its "animal relation with the disinhibitor."²¹ I take three different events as trigger points for analysis. The first, the Queensland floods of 2011, as filmed by citizens and news media and posted on YouTube, is concerned with the literal unfolding of the inside into the outside to reveal a movement without depth and a surface that emphasises horizontality. In the second movement I use the last set-piece of Charlie Kaufman's film *Synechdoche, New York*, to look at and through the character, Caden Cotard, as he wanders the streets of a city within a city within a city; a simulacrum where, in the trajectory he takes in the film, he ends up a shuffling husk through which others see, speak and act. Finally, in the third movement, I describe the works in Richard Billingham's 2007 exhibition at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art. Backgrounded by the artifice of the zoo enclosure, Billingham's images of animals capture the human in animal form, locating the anthropomorphic psychic trauma that comes with incarceration in the blank stares, regurgitations, and repetitive behaviours of a literal "animal captivity."²² Each movement opens a window onto possible experiences that lie beyond the biopolitical conditions of peace/war. They align the subject with three contemporary exit points, each heralding a future exodus from our abiding faiths.

FIRST MOVEMENT: THE RESEMBLANCE OF THINGS PRESENT

In late 2010 and early 2011 the east coast of Australia was inundated with a series of weather events that brought heavy rains and cyclones. They came at the end of a long drought; what at first was welcome became a ferocious torrent. The inland city of Toowoomba, Queensland, and its surrounding valley experienced unprecedented flash flooding, taking a number of lives and destroying hundreds of homes and businesses. Within hours the spectacle had been uploaded to YouTube.



Figure 2. Cameron Bishop *Afterimage, Object Stack No.1* (2011). 65 x 48 cm, digital print. Collection of the author.

Footage of cars and whole houses being swept away made for a spellbinding vision. Of course the spectacle was perpetuated by the compulsion to witness multiple angles on the single event, from the bird's eye view of the helicopter to the workers filming the street becoming a river from their second storey office. The spectacle was in everyone's eye, not just that of the journalist reporting the event.

After the initial floods in the upper valley, hydrologists and meteorologists soon began warning of a massive volume of water headed Brisbane's way. The spectacle moved down river. In Brisbane, at Kangaroo Point, Australia's news media gathered to watch the slow inundation take effect. From this elevation and other safe distances around Brisbane thousands of hours of footage were taken of the flood's slow progression into many of Brisbane's low lying suburbs. The flood itself lasted about three days, yet if you were to string all the possible versions of the event together the footage would outlast the actual event by many months. The event, in this instance,

became dispersed among many authors. With the conjunction of new technology and spectacle the event was decentralized. Each version of it represented a possible world as described by Deleuze:

the expressed possible world certainly exists, but it does not exist (actually) outside of that which expresses it.²³

The catastrophic event, as it sweeps away, in real-time, subjects and objects, becomes incommensurable with its representation. The many views and durations offered of the one event are distributed by digital code and form into what is ostensibly a horizontal dispersal across the network and onto screens, like the floodwaters, they accentuate a horizontal movement and lateral becoming. As the floodwaters rose to inundate around sixty suburbs of Brisbane, it moved without favour; the water flooded homes, streets, and suburbs and, inevitably, met with some blockages and resistance to flows, but its surface spread could not be contained. Artifacts from contemporary society were unhinged from their use-value, and forced downstream, into a flow of equilibrium. The movement mirrors Robinson's loss of others on the island where he discovers "the surface" and the "otherwise-other" (Friday) after severing himself from the structure-Other.²⁴ Watching footage of the floods rising, unfolding and spreading, does not necessarily designate a depth reading, but also signifies the surface, at which for Deleuze an "unknown image of things" becomes detached.²⁵

By participating in the many views of the event I am opened to new worlds, in this case multiple views of the same disaster. If I were Robinson, I would know nothing of this disaster from my island, I could not recognise it. I have not yet disavowed the structure-Other but in the images I am able to

envisage its erasure. The others with their cameras and mobile phones relay to me a great cultural disturbance, one which reflects Robinson's insinuation into a "pure surface."²⁶ Both a rupture and lateral-becoming are described in the floating objects, at once bound to use and cultural significance. In this instance, they are lifted horizontally, into a plane of immanence without depth and beyond the binary distinctions that encode objects with cultural value. Deleuze articulates Robinson's loss of depth perception thus: "In opposition to the deep earth, air and sky describe a pure surface."²⁷ He links this loss of depth perception to the disappearance of others and a new solipsistic vision in which Robinson inhabits an environment "without potentialities or virtualities," where the "abyss and the abstract line have replaced the relief and the background".²⁸ Resemblance has lost its affect in Robinson's world as Deleuze describes it. The flood, in its duration and spectacle, allowed a glimpse into a world without resemblance, not in its sublime power and depth, but in its even dispersion and surface release.

From the cliffs of Kangaroo Point, residents of the city of Brisbane whose houses were under no immediate threat, and hundreds of media personnel, charged with the responsibility of distributing the spectacle, witnessed a deterritorialisation of contemporary artifacts. Luxury boats, floating restaurants, and fixed (1000 tonne) walkways detached from their moorings, furniture, and millions of other everyday artifacts passed by on their slow journey to the sea. There were connections and dislocations, inexorable destruction. The giant waterway, which spread itself across a width of many kilometres in some areas, became a mobile floating object, its use value rendered null and void; an instance where there "is no possible hierarchy, no second, no third ..."²⁹ For me, the images, captured from numerous vantage points above the swollen river, bear witness to Deleuze's interpretation of the simulacrum. The simulacrum of images renders the "fixity of distribution" and "the determination of the hierarchy impossible," establishing a "world of nomadic distributions and crowned anarchies." "Resemblance subsists," for a time, "but it is produced as the external effect of the simulacrum, in as much as it is built on divergent series and makes them resonate."³⁰

Amid the numerous images of the floods that wrought havoc on Queensland and Victoria, a few stand out. Many of the houses hit by the torrent in the upper reaches of the Lockyer valley resembled broken husks; relieved of their insides they were often found hundreds of metres from where they originally stood. Once the waters reached Brisbane it was more of a slow rise, from which people had the opportunity to escape. In moving images of the event, the objects, in many cases backgrounded only by the milky brown of the river, gave the impression that it was the viewer who was moving. It is mesmerising to watch a city's contents laid bare in peaceful repose. The world becomes unfounded and unfolds itself in a universal breakdown of its contents. In one piece of footage, what was once an exclusive, floating restaurant becomes artifact as it peacefully drifts downstream. Suddenly a bridge looms up and it is clear the restaurant is too high for it to pass under safely. As it hits the bridge the elemental force of the water folds the restaurant into itself; it emerges on the other side of the bridge like a picnic table, flattened, without resemblance. The inside folds outward, to reveal itself as always having been exterior, open to the elements, like the objects revealed to us at a rubbish dump – "the shit end of capitalism."³¹ And on the sea floor in Moreton Bay, at the mouth of the Brisbane River, lie millions of incidental items from our present culture; perhaps the first in a stratified layer of objects to be put on display in some post-Empire museum.

SECOND MOVEMENT: THE SELF DISPERSED

The specifics hardly matter. Everyone is everyone.

Caden Cotard in *Synecdoche, New York* (2008).³²

At the end of Charlie Kaufman's 2008 film *Synecdoche, New York* the main character, Caden Cotard, wanders the streets of a city of his own imagining. The space he roams is in a warehouse within a warehouse, each one containing Cotard's scaled-down replicas of New York. A theatre director, he receives a grant with a limitless budget and in spending it becomes immersed in a vain search for the truth of his life. As a result, down to the tiniest detail, every simulation he comes to recreate must represent the truth of what happened (happens) in Caden Cotard's life. This includes the interactions he has with people both close to him and peripheral, revived in the actors he hires to play them. Within the increasingly faithful recreations of New York City that he builds, Cotard goes as far as commissioning several versions of himself. With each new Cotard, it seems, there is a corresponding replica of New York that must be built in ever more exacting detail. His supplementary selves end up improvising his life, in his place, both with the first versions of those from outside the stage and the supplementary versions of others in his life. At one point he sleeps with the actress playing the woman he is in love with. Although the palimpsest is absurdist in its implied, infinite layers, the final walk the director takes is quite moving, precisely because we watch a husk of a man, emptied of self, negotiate the last moments of his "bare life."³³



Figure 3. Charlie Kaufman, *Synecdoche, New York* (2008). Film still. Reproduced with permission from Likely Story and Village Roadshow.

He comes to live his real-time life in a simulacrum, before and beyond an original, replica, or model. This space that no longer has an outside exemplifies Deleuze's understanding that one of the dominant themes in Foucault's work is that the "inside is constituted by the folding of the outside."³⁴ It is apparent that what is inside this space/subject at the end of Kaufman's film is constructed purely from the outside. With Cotard's immersion in simulacra we bear witness to a "becoming-mad," or a "becoming unlimited."³⁵ At the end of the film there are four versions of himself, the last of whom is embodied by a woman. The last actor hired to play Cotard directs and narrates him through the last moments of his life. After being woken by gunfire, the last shots in an unnamed war, coming from the outside he himself has constructed, his body dutifully takes instructions from

this last actor. She tells him to get up, and walk through the streets where he discovers everybody is dead; all of his friends and their doubles (and their doubles) are dead. All of the Others are gone. Not in a conscious rejection of the structure-Other, like Deleuze/Tournier's Robinson, but through attrition, the others have disappeared and he, as a result, is rendered inapparent. There are no longer any other possible worlds that Others can open for him; like Robinson, his is a space that is now an abyss: open, unforgiving, without limits and others; both closed (closing) and liberated.

In Deleuze/Tournier's Robinson, we witness the closing of a perceptual field due to the absence of others. It mimics that of the tick, mentioned earlier, who finds itself embedded within a "disinhibited" environment without time and "without world."³⁶ Not limited to the extreme of the tick's, Robinson's perceptual field is, however, at once closed and liberated, because it is without resistance, on the disinhibited environment of the island. Even when Friday arrives on the island Robinson's libidinal desires have been channeled into Speranza (the island). For Deleuze, Friday is not a re-vivified other who brings structure and depth to the world again (they are gone) but a channel for the liberation of the "image without resemblance." Robinson discovers through Friday an "otherwise-other," and "the elemental beyond" in the body of a double, and in pricking the surface "ethereal images rise up."³⁷ At the end of *Synecdoche, New York* Kaufman performs a similar pricking of the surface as the viewer's perceptual field shifts in the channeling of others through the body we know as Cotard. Not only have we been insinuated into Cotard's view of things, and beyond that into the view of the others that see and act through him, but the actor narrating his/her last moments speaks in the second person, to us. Cotard becomes her Friday and ours, and in these moments of multiple channelling, identity scrambling and desubjectivisation, a melancholic realisation takes hold. The empty shell of Cotard channels for us our last moments; moments where objects and subjects become detached from the spaces and the narratives that supported them.

Opposed to the surface release that the viewer witnesses at the end of Charlie Kaufman's film, the approach humans have towards space – territorializing it and segmenting it to give it background and depth (as Foucault and Baudrillard have pointed out) – presupposes that what exists outside, like the outside of Plato's cave, is the real space. The zoo, like Deleuze/Tournier's island and Cotard's giant set, is a space against which the human illuminates and tests its own reality.

THIRD MOVEMENT: INHIBITED ANIMAL

Giorgio Agamben articulates for us the limits within which modern subjectivity is restrained. In his book on the figure of *homo sacer* (sacred or accursed man) he suggests that contemporary subjectivity emerges in "the camp as biopolitical space of the modern."³⁸ *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* extends Foucault's analysis of subjectivisation whereby the individual comes to internalise external power structures and check themselves accordingly.³⁹ Agamben posits the camp, the space where the juridico-political order is suspended in a state of exception (most notably in Nazi Germany), as a space where the local is rendered foreign, and in which the bare life – the simple fact of biological existence – of the individual is exposed.⁴⁰ Agamben maps out the idea of bare life as the very fact of our biological existence – a delineated life made clear in the biopolitical conjoining of space and subject. Agamben argues that the human maintains itself in relation to its animal self by creating lines of demarcation in a number of discourses and that the conception of space is critical to this delineation. In his view, the concentration camp, where the animal is separated out from the human, is "the new biopolitical *nomos* of the planet."⁴¹ Agamben shows how "an apparently innocuous space actually delimits a space in which the normal order is de facto suspended."⁴² Here a state of exception beyond the limit of the juridico-political order is imposed.

He asserts that this is the paradigm in which we are currently ensconced even though we may carry on as if space was segmented. The camp is totalising (just as the globalising affects of Empire are for Hardt and Negri). The camp can appear anywhere. Agamben calls this a “dislocating localization that exceeds” determinate space and “into which every form of life and every rule can be virtually taken.”⁴³ He argues that delineated/disciplinary space is no longer necessary to ordering our “forms of life;” that juridico-political black holes can appear anywhere and any one of us is liable to be dragged into one.⁴⁴ Agamben articulates this as the Western individual’s modern day underlying fear, against which we structure our behaviour.⁴⁵

Subjection to such a black hole creates a jarring effect, a dislocation, whereby home is suddenly rendered alien, and there are no others to see through. Displaced from home, the subject is stripped of any tendrils that place it in a cultural, even biological order, as in spaces such as Guantanamo Bay and on Australia’s Christmas Island Detention Centre for asylum seekers. Agamben, though, tells us that those spaces that operate in a “state of exception” suspend us all in a paradoxical position of “inclusive exclusion;” simply because the human “is the living being” whose biopolitic “separates and opposes itself to its own bare life and, at the same time, maintains itself in relation to that bare life in an inclusive exclusion.”⁴⁶ We all live with the threat of encampment, of being rendered without Others. This experience of being delocalised at home finds an analogue in the experience of the animals we see living out their days in the zoo and in Richard Billingham’s 2007 exhibition, *People, Places, Animals* at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art.



Figure 4. Cameron Bishop, *Habitat No.2, After RB* (2010). 42 x 80 cm, digital print. Collection of the author.

In his dystopic rendering of life in the zoo which, when exhibited at ACCA in 2007, sat alongside the series of photographs, *Ray’s a Laugh* (2000), Billingham reveals some uncomfortable anthropomorphic features of the animal. They come to light in the artifice of the zoo, a space where animals have been removed from their habitat and placed in environs that mimic it; they are literally inhibited. Disinhibition, as it was for the lovers in Titian’s painting, is both an opening and a closing, folding and unfolding into a paradoxical becoming of disconcealment. The silverback gorilla in Billingham’s film at first looks to be eating for sustenance (as we all must). After a while though

it becomes clear that what he is in fact doing is swallowing his food and then regurgitating it, over and over again, in a repetition that signifies the human-becoming of animal. Elephants sway back and forth in what at first seems like a short film loop, a panda lies slumped in its enclosure; this is their endurance, and it comes in a space of inclusive exclusion. Literally delocalised, the animals' disinhibitors become facsimiles, degraded copies of what they might find in their natural habitat – gravel as opposed to forest floor, concrete pools instead of rivers, lakes or ponds. The simulation of their environment acts as a counterpoint to Robinson's restructured perceptual field on the island. Deleuze interprets the island as a simulacrum of pure surfaces, without depth, whereas the zoo enacts depth readings and biopolitical distinctions on a number of fronts: anthropological, zoological and evolutionary. Billingham's images suggest an anthropogenic becoming-mad and, at the same time, suggest a real capacity for the animal to perceive things outside of its disinhibiting ring.

For this article, I bestow upon the tick consciousness; a knowledge that it is in the world. I imagine an animal consciousness which Agamben, drawing on Heidegger's 1929-30 course and discussion of animal captivation and the open, attempts to push beyond. Agamben suggests that, rather than being outside in a purity beyond human consciousness, the animal is "open in a non-disconcealment."⁴⁷ Disinhibited, Tournier's Robinson has no relation to others, he becomes closed-in-the-world rather than open to it, no longer inside or outside but immersed in the pure surface of the simulacrum. Billingham's animals, on the other hand, paradoxically display the most depressing signs of humanity – madness – while allowing the human subject a reterritorialisation in the world; to know themselves against others. To see through the eyes of Billingham's depressed animals allows for a reappraisal of the way we order our own space; like Kaufman's film it prompts the human to recognise its own spatial simulations, limitations and hierarchical fictions.

A PEACEFUL CONTUSION: CONCLUSION

...I must consider myself human and a bride of the sky. But that kind of anthropomorphism is meaningless. The truth is that at the height to which Friday and I have soared, difference of sex is left behind. Friday may be identified with Venus, just as I might be said, in human terms, to open my body to the embrace of the sun.

Michel Tournier, *Friday*.⁴⁸

In Deleuze's reading of the structure-Other affect, the perceptual field is governed by the possibilities the Other offers. This perceptual field of possibilities is also evident in Caden Cotard's dissolution as increasingly, in the trajectory his form takes in the film, he is filled with the thoughts of others. He is at first de-captivated, the space in which he takes his final steps is a palimpsest with no floor and no end; the space can go on in a limitless reproduction of itself, ever widening. As Cotard rides his golf cart, and shuffles through the remaining moments of his life a sense of calm envelops him. His inner monologue, delivered to him, and to us, by the last of the hired actors, speaks to him in the second person and in a female voice, finally disconnecting Cotard from himself. His simulacra, of his own creation, become his ring of disinhibitors within which he is captivated. He is no longer the hinge for the inward-folding of space and the outward-folding of self. His conscious trajectory comes to its inevitable end. The walking husk that we see rendered in the final set-piece has marked a passage for others to see through, as others have opened new worlds for him.

Like an embedded tick with no visible effect on the skin we continue to reject the possibilities that the structure-Other presents in us. The animal, as Other par-excellence (having its modern avatars in the form of the terrorist and foreigner) presents a possible world of disinhibition, like the lovers in Titian's painting. The gorilla looks at us with our own eyes. This is not a transcendent imagining

of animal-becoming but a pure surface with no inhibitors to measure oneself against, only others to see through and become aerial with – as in Tournier’s solar metaphor. The affects of watching the devastated Queensland floods, photographing the aftermath of the Victorian floods, and most distressingly, as I first sat down to write this conclusion, watching the Christchurch earthquake, force me to confront the loss of others and what that means to me. The events have allowed me to open three windows that provide alternatives to the peace/war dichotomy. Additionally, they activate a reading of surface in a post structure-Other world. Violence has been enacted, but without peace as its end goal, and in catastrophic natural disasters it is non-hierarchical, as in Deleuze’s simulacrum.⁴⁹ Robinson’s withdrawal, like Cotard’s essential vacancy and the fusion of the human with its absolute other in the visage of the ape, engenders a disinhibited freedom beyond knowledge; a singing in the wind.

- 1 Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense* (London: The Athlone Press, 1990), 310.
- 2 Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1*, trans. Robert Hurley (Australia: Penguin Books, 2008), 137.
- 3 Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1*, 137.
- 4 Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: Harvard University Press, 2000), 26.
- 5 Giorgio Agamben entitled his 2005 book *The State of Exception*, but concisely summarised his thoughts on the concept in an earlier work when writing about the interiorisation of sovereignty: “The state of exception is thus not the chaos that precedes order but rather the situation that results from its suspension. In this sense, the exception is truly, according to its etymological root, ‘taken outside’ (*ex-capere*), and not simply excluded.” *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (USA: Leland Stanford Junior University, 1998), 18.
- 6 Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, 26.
- 7 Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, 8.
- 8 Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, 8.
- 9 Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal* (California: Stanford University Press, 2004), 90-91.
- 10 Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, 87.
- 11 Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, 50.
- 12 Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, 59, 55.
- 13 Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, 46.
- 14 Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, 5.
- 15 Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, 70.
- 16 Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 302.
- 17 Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, 62.
- 18 Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 303.
- 19 Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 309.
- 20 Butler, Judith, *Precious Life* (London: Verso, 2006), 65.
- 21 Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, 68.
- 22 Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, 59.
- 23 Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 307.
- 24 Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 319.
- 25 Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 315.
- 26 Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 315.
- 27 Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 315.
- 28 Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 306.
- 29 Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 262.
- 30 Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 261, 262.
- 31 Stephen Muecke, *Ancient and Modern* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2004), 50.
- 32 Charlie Kaufman, dir. *Synecdoche, New York*, Sony Pictures Classic, 2008.
- 33 Agamben, *Homo Sacer, Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, (USA: Leland Stanford Junior University, 1998), 175-176.
- 34 Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, trans. and ed. S. Hand, (London: The Athlone Press, 1988), 119.
- 35 At the beginning of *The Logic of Sense* Deleuze discusses becoming mad and becoming unlimited in relation to the stoics’ “radical inversion” of platonic dialectics. Becoming mad and becoming unlimited are not awaiting release beneath the surface and cannot be correlated to a depth reading, but are effects mixing with other effects already at the surface; they “climb to the surface of things and become impassive.” (7.)
- 36 Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, 51.
- 37 Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 315-19.
- 38 Agamben, *Homo Sacer, Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, 117.
- 39 See in particular Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison* trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).
- 40 For instance, Australia’s colonial history reveals numerous examples of the local turned foreign. The famous Australian Impressionist painter Arthur Streeton’s *Near Heidelberg* (1890), is painted from just outside Melbourne – the perspective follows the path of the Yarra River to Mount Donna Buang on the horizon, and in the valley to which the group of people gaze sits the Aboriginal reserve of Coranderrk. At the time, the reserve was made-up mostly of people from the Kulin nations, and was a contested piece of land, particularly in the 1890s. White settlers in the area refused to acknowledge its long success as a self-sustaining community and, importantly,

as a community adapted to European economic culture. In 1886 the Half Caste Act was instituted, meaning that Coranderrk became a settlement where people of mixed descent under the age of thirty-five were banned. It was thought that they would eventually assimilate – the Aboriginal blood line over generations would fade into white. Meanwhile, the “Half Caste Act and its policy of exclusions and removals caused populations on reserves to plummet, but people still attempted to live close to their traditional lands and families, even if that meant living in fringe camps and rubbish tips.” See Rachel Perkins and Marcia Langton, *The First Australians*, (Melbourne: The Miegunyah Press, 2008), 142-169. This biopolitical segmentation continues to this day in the state of emergency declared by the Howard Government in 2007 that allowed for what is commonly known as the Northern Territory Intervention.

- 41 Agamben, *Homo Sacer, Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, 175-176.
- 42 Agamben, *Homo Sacer, Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, 174-175.
- 43 Agamben, *Homo Sacer, Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, 174-175.
- 44 Agamben, *Homo Sacer, Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, 174-175.
- 45 Guantanamo Bay's transformation into a detention facility is a literal example of this suspension. *Habeas corpus* and the principles of the Geneva Convention for the treatment of enemy combatants are rendered null and void in the legally indeterminate “Gitmo,” the location of which was used because it is able to operate in a legal black-hole. See Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* (Australia: Penguin Group, 2007).
- 46 Agamben, *Homo Sacer, Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, 8.
- 47 Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, 59.
- 48 Michel Tournier, *Friday*, trans. Norman Denny (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), 212.
- 49 That is not to say that all natural-disasters affect all people equally; of course, in low lying, flood prone parts of the world, for example, the poor are most affected, as they are in earthquake zones where the infrastructure is most likely to be compromised. In *The Logic of Sense* Deleuze makes the point that the simulacrum reunites “the conditions of real experience and the structure of the work of art.” (261).