NOMAD THOUGHT IN PETER READING'S *PERDUTA GENTE* AND *EVAGATORY* AND MAGGIE O'SULLIVAN'S *IN THE HOUSE OF THE SHAMAN* AND *PALACE OF REPTILES*

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ABSTRACT

NOMAD THOUGHT IN PETER READING'S *PERDUTA GENTE* AND *EVAGATORY*
AND MAGGIE O'SULLIVAN'S *IN THE HOUSE OF THE SHAMAN* AND
PALACE OF REPTILES

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This study aims to explore the processes of becoming in Peter Reading's *Perduta Gente* and *Evagatory* and Maggie O'Sullivan's *In the House of the Shaman* and *Palace of Reptiles* by concentrating on the spatial, corporeal and performative politics in their poetry within a theoretical framework based on Deleuze and Guattari's nomad thought and their revisionary ideas on the politics of body, space and subjectivity. This study also investigates how nomadism as a critical category enables an exploration of the formal and linguistic experimentalism in Peter Reading and Maggie O'Sullivan's poetry. The analysis of poems is preceded by an introductory chapter about the 'poetry wars' in the post-war British poetry between the mainstream and marginalised camps of poets in order to unravel the key debates surrounding the reception and features of experimental poetries in Britain, and a theoretical chapter on the concepts such as nomadic subject, smooth/striated spaces, affect, explored throughout the study. A close reading of the poems reveals that the thematic, linguistic and formal concerns in Reading and O'Sullivan's poems foreground a trans-corporeal and nomadic aesthetics, displacing the anthropocentric assumptions about self and space, and

challenging poetic conventions by rendering language itself a poetic material. In conclusion, this study mainly argues that Reading and O'Sullivan's nomadic subjects in the poems are constantly reproduced in relation to non-human forces in urban spaces or landscapes. Furthermore, linguistic and formal innovations in Peter Reading and Maggie O'Sullivan's poetry, including lexical experiments, inventive syntax, neologizing and use of visual materials, metamorphose into sites where the nomadic trajectory of their poetry is discovered.

Keywords: Peter Reading, Maggie O'Sullivan, Nomad thought, Becoming, Linguistic and formal experimentation

ÖZ

PETER READING'İN *PERDUTA GENTE* (KAYIP İNSANLAR) VE *EVAGATORY* (GEZİNTİ)
VE MAGGIE O'SULLIVAN'IN *IN THE HOUSE OF THE SHAMAN* (ŞAMANIN EVİNDE)
VE *PALACE OF REPTILES* (SÜRÜNGENLERİN SARAYI) BAŞLIKLI ŞİİR KİTAPLARINDA
GÖÇEBE DÜŞÜNCE KAVRAMI

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Bu çalışmada, Peter Reading'in *Perduta Gente* (Kayıp İnsanlar) ve *Evagatory* (Gezinti) ve Maggie O'Sullivan'ın *In the House of the Shaman* (Şaman'ın Evinde) ve *Palace of Reptiles* (Sürüngenlerin Sarayı) isimli şiir kitapları, Deleuze ve Guattari'nin göçebe düşünce kavramı ve uzam, beden ve şiirsel performans politikaları çerçevesinde oluş süreçleri incelenmiştir. Kuramsal çerçeveyi oluşturan göçebe düşünce kavramı ve bu düşüncenin beden, uzam ve özne odaklı tartışmaları göz önünde bulundurularak göçebe düşünce kavramının Peter Reading ve Maggie O'Sullivan'ın şiirlerindeki dilsel ve biçemsel deneyselliği nasıl anlaşılır kıldığı da tartışılmıştır. Bu çalışma, şiir çözümlemelerine ait bölümlerle birlikte giriş ve kuramsal tartışmalar içeren diğer iki bölüme yer vermektedir. Giriş bölümünde, İkinci Dünya Savaşı sonrası İngiliz şiirinde, ana akım ve ötekileştirilmiş şiir ekolleri arasındaki 'şiir savaşlarına' dikkat çekilmiş ve İngiltere'de deneysel şiirlerin özellikleri ve algılanışıyla ilgili değerlendirmelere yer verilmiştir. Kuramsal tartışmalar bölümünde ise çalışma boyunca göndermeler yapılan göçebe özne, pürüzsüz/çizilmiş uzamlar ve duygulanım gibi kavramlar açıklanmıştır. Bu kuramsal çerçeveyle, Reading ve O'Sullivan'ın şiirsel tercihleri ve

biçemsel vurguları detaylı olarak incelendiğinde, insan merkezli özne ve uzam anlayışını sorgulayan ve dili şiirin nesnesi haline getirerek önceki şiir geleneklerine karşı çıkan bedenlerarası ve göçebe bir estetiğin ön plana çıktığı görülmektedir. Sonuç olarak, Reading ve O'Sullivan'ın şiirlerindeki göçebe öznelerin kentsel mekânlarda ve tabiatta 'öteki' (insanın dışındaki) nesne ve hayvanlarla devingen bir ilişki içerisinde olduğu görülmektedir. Ayrıca, bu şairlerin şiirlerindeki sözcüksel deneyler, özgün sözdizimi, neolojizm, görsel malzemelerin kullanımı gibi dilsel ve biçemsel yenilikler de şiirlerinde göçebe düşünce kavramının yüzeye çıktığı noktalar olarak görülmektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Peter Reading, Maggie O'Sullivan, Göçebe düşünce kavramı, Oluş, Dilsel ve biçemsel deneyselcilik

To

My lovely daughter,

AYLİN DOĞA,

who makes the world a better place

and

to those who

respect and fight for the freedom of

NATURE

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INTRODUCTION

The endless cycle of idea and action,
Endless innovation, endless experiment,
Brings knowledge of motion, but not of stillness…
(Eliot, "Choruses from 'The Rock', 1934" 147)

When I think of my body and ask what it does to earn that
name, two things stand out. It moves. It feels. In fact, it
does both at the same time. It moves as it feels, and it
feels itself moving. Can we think a body without this: an
intrinsic connection between movement and sensation
whereby each immediately summons the other?
(Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual* 1)

A nomadic poetics: mindfulness in & of the drift (la dérive)
there is no at homeness here   but only an ever more dis-
placed drifting.

(Joris, *A Nomad Poetics* 74)

1.1. Aim of the Study

Multiplicity might be the catchword that characterizes British poetry scene in the last few decades. In the face of a wide range and variety of poetry produced in the latter half of the twentieth century, poetry as a genre, unlike fiction, has had a declining popularity in the literary world. As Tony Frazer explains, along with the decline of poetry as an art form, public taste for reading has changed from poetry to works "telling stories, anecdotes in a light easy style that can safely be consumed at first sight without fear of later indigestion"

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(125). Sarah Broom too argues that "the whole of the poetry world appears to the majority to be esoteric and marginal enterprise" (222). The marginalization of poetry as a literary genre is largely caused by financial issues and its changing role within the capitalist modes of publishing: if it does not sell enough, the publishing houses do not profit from poetry as they do from other popular forms of publishing. Peter Middleton argues in the same way that, in the beginning of the 1990s, Oxford University Press "closed down the entire list" as poetry was not profitable enough, and poetry lists were only seen as "loss-leaders for mainstream publishers;" and publishing houses such as Penguin and Faber could generate revenue so long as they republished selections or well-established poets especially for colleges, libraries and other educational institutions ("Poetry" 771). Despite the disappointing sales figures, towards the end of the previous millennium, British poetry scene underwent serious changes and became overpopulated largely due to foreign influences like North American poetry and émigré poets from the former colonies of the United Kingdom. Meanwhile, diverse poetic forms and poetic activities flourished, which changed the way poetry is understood, read, published and valued at large. Therefore, it becomes difficult to produce a single history of the period this study is concerned with—mainly the late twentieth-century British poetry. One of these trends of contemporary British poetry that this study particularly focuses on is experimental or innovative poetries which can be used as an umbrella term for works which defy the establishment poetry, aim to promote linguistic and formal innovation, and revise the conventions of the lyric tradition.

By questioning the lyric subject, experimental or innovative poetries discard the very notion of all knowing and experiencing consciousness and turn language into poetic material itself. Such poetry does not "place the lyric voice in a central and authoritative position, as an origin beyond language, but views the 'I' as a position generated and solidified by its operation within a linguistic

system" (Broom 225). While some experimental poets completely reject the primacy of the lyric subject and its historically inflicted modes of existence in poetic history, others choose to work through it and deconstruct its very assumptions by divergent uses of the lyric 'I'. It is a political choice made by poets whether to have an authoritative poet figure or dominant poetic voice, or to give place to multiplicity of voices and subject positions. For John Kinsella, lyric is "a political registration" and "a declaration of relationship between self and text, self and the empirical 'outside.' It declares intentionality in appearance, in its desire for continuation … Modernism in poetry maps this frustration of self-expression" (xiii). Contemporary experimental poets inherit this 'frustration' from their modernist precursors, and either critique it or find ways to subvert the lyrical mode in their poetry.

The major formal qualities one can look for in experimental poetics, for Olsen, are "lack of closure, narrative redistribution, use of procedural methodologies of writing, fragmentation and proliferation of the lyric subject, use of found material, a demand for the active engagement of the reader" (48). Linguistic innovation largely comes as an outcome of the struggles to reconfigure the referential nature of language, its capacity to signify and to produce meaning through the accounts of a lyric subject or an authoritative poet-figure. The poets using language experimentally, Olsen further notes, "do not approach representation in language as pure and unmediated material; instead language becomes foregrounded as both the medium and the potential subject of poetry" (44). This concern is not only the preoccupation of experimental poetries per se, but also that of the poststructuralist and continental philosophy in the second half of the twentieth century. Joanne F. Diehl draws attention to the theoretical discussions around the concept of the self and language among the linguistically innovative poets: "[they] variously reconceptualize notions of selfhood in light of postmodernist theories of subjectivity [and] call into question the representational function of language

and thereby the nature of reality itself" (96). The Enlightenment dependence on the idea of a coherent self perceiving the world outside through her/his senses and experience is artistically and poetically reflected in the persona of lyric poetry whose voice stands[1] for the presence of the unified subjectivity. This lyric articulation of selfhood is tied to a "transcendental ego" which "resides outside of a reality that can be communicated through language, a medium imagined as a pure, transparent means for accessing 'truth' and speaking it to a listening public" (Kinnahan, "Contemporary" 178). Experimental poetries play with the emergence of that "transcendental ego" rather than affirming its premises of instituting a unified poetic voice, thus, involve in the political nature of poetic utterance. Jacques Rancière similarly argues that "[t]o emancipate lyricism means to liberate this 'I' from a certain politics of writing" (10). Such politics of writing produces a "writerly text" in the Barthesian sense—the process of reading also becomes the process of rewriting the text with the involvement of the reader (4).

Regarding these major discussions in the field of experimental poetries, this dissertation aims to explore the complex processes of becoming in Peter Reading and Maggie O'Sullivan's poetry with a particular focus on spatial, corporeal and performative politics drawing on recent theories of nomad thought[2]. Through nomadic articulations of space and subjectivity, Deleuze and

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[1] This idea is remisniscent of the concept of *s'entendre parler* in Derrida's discussion of phonocentricism in *Of Grammatology*: "The logos can be infinite and self-present, it can be *produced as auto-affection*, only through the *voice*: an order of the signifier by which the subject takes from itself into itself, does not borrow outside of itself the signifier that it emits and that affects it at the same time. Such is at least the experience-or consciousness-of the voice: of hearing (understanding)-oneself-speak [*s'entendre-parler*]" (98).

[2] Brian Massumi, the translator of *A Thousand Plateaus*, chooses to translate "pensée nomade" as "nomad thought." However, in the text he translates "nomade" as "nomadic" while using it as an adjective such as "nomadic deterritorialization" (5), "nomadic notions—such as becoming" (363), "nomadic transit in smooth space" (482), only with one exception, "nomad space" (*l'espace nomade*). "Nomad space" is interchangeably used with "smooth space" in the book. Rosi Braidotti also prefers to use "nomadic" rather than "nomad" in her discussions of the concept of subjectivity as her book title, *Nomadic Subjects*, also shows. The use of "nomad" and "nomadic" in this study is consistent with Brian Massumi's translation in *A Thousand Plateaus*.

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Guattari argue against the rational and unified sense of self and space by offering the discourse of the multiple and the ontology of becoming as an alternative. They propose an ethical revisioning of our humanist notions of subjectivity based on the binary opposition between mind and body with the intention of discovering "bodily roots of subjectivity" (Ponzanesi 215) and uprooting the metaphysical subject. By focusing on nomad thought in the analysis of poems and particularly drawing on the politics of body, space and subjectivity, this study investigates how nomadism as a critical category helps us explore the formal and linguistic experimentalism in the poetry of Peter Reading and Maggie O'Sullivan. The concept of becoming is central to the analysis of subjectivity, corporeality and space, as the "[p]rocesses of becoming … are not predicated on a stable, centralized Self who supervises their unfolding. They rest rather on a non-unitary, multi-layered, dynamic subject" (Braidotti, *Metamorphoses* 118). What makes nomad thought a fruitful methodological tool in this study is its open form of composition, its dislike of conventional forms of writing and thinking, and its envisioning experimentation as a site of thinking. This study, in a way, offers a stylistic parallelism between the works explored and the nomadic articulations of thinking and aesthetic-philosophical experiments of Deleuze and Guattari, particularly bearing in mind the capacity of experimental poetries to employ recent theoretical and philosophical arguments.

The poetic and formal choices in Reading and O'Sullivan's poetry foreground a trans-corporeal[3] and nomadic[4] aesthetics which creates an

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[3] The term trans-corporeality has been taken from Stacy Alaimo's recent work, in which she adopts Gail Weiss' concept of "intercorporeality" and proposes "trans-corporeality" as a term that describes the human as material and "emphasizes the imbrication of human bodies not only with each other, but with non-human creatures and physical landscapes" (18). The decentred human subject exists as part of 'a wider material world' and the human body is "radically open to its surroundings and can be composed, recomposed, and decomposed by other bodies" (24).

interstitial moment for the disruption of poetic and social codes and for experimentation with the capacities of language as poetic material. The discussion of subjectivity in nomadic poetics is therefore closely linked with the ways in which the text comes into existence through the particular style of the poet, through unconventional uses of language and form. The ultimate aim of linguistic deterritorialization and discovery of lines of flight in linguistic and stylistic terms is to "become imperceptible;" in other words, the text itself is being caught in "a process of elimination whereby one divests oneself of all coded identity and engages the abstract lines of a nonorganic life, the immanent, virtual lines of continuous variation that play through discursive regime of signs and nondiscursive machinic assemblages" (Bogue, "Minor" 109). When poems in question are considered, "continuous variation" here might imply going beyond the limits of genre, art forms, identity markers or binary structures of thinking. In his discussion of the transformative power of literature on language, Deleuze argues that writing experimentally brings about a minorization of language—"becoming-other of language"—and these attempts are loaded with power relations and political aspects of literature, following "a witch's line that escapes the dominant system" (*Essays* 5).

Following a line of thinkers such as Spinoza, Bergson, Nietszche and Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari propose a new ontology, a bodily materialism departing from the metaphysical models to be found in logocentric epistemologies or linguistic models to be found in poststructuralist epistemologies. By foregrounding the ontology of the body and becoming, they suggest a radical departure from the previous epistemologies. In short, they force the words to give expression to corporeality without referring to any

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[4] The nomadic poetics this study is interested in is described in Pierre Joris's *A Nomad Poetics*, as quoted at the opening of this chapter. Pierre Jorris is not consistent in his use of the terms "nomad" and "nomadic." The earlier copies of his work *A Nomad Poetics* was entitled *Towards a Nomadic Poetics*, which was published by Spanner in 1999. Then, it has been revised in 2000 to describe what he means by nomadic poetics through verbal collages. It is clear that his project is informed by Deleuze and Guattari's terminology about nomad thought and its dialogue with poetry.

transcendental contraband in Derridean sense. As Keith Pheby argues in *Interventions: Displacing the Metaphysical Subject*, the metaphysical tradition has always been interested in capturing the "elusive nature of being *qua* being" to interpret being as "self-contained and self-identical" (6). In opposition to the ontological and epistemological claims of the metaphysical tradition in quest of the 'intrinsic' nature of being, nomadology might also be taken as a project to locate the signified onto the bodily realm, to disconnect it from its fixed, stable, absolute, ideological position and move it to a slippery plane where flux, or constant movement, determines the course of things.

By mainly adopting Deleuze and Guattari's theoretical writings on nomad thought, figuration of nomadic subjectivity and articulation of contesting spaces through 'smooth' and 'striated' division, this study will focus on the work of two contemporary British poets who are producing innovative oeuvre to a large extent: Peter Reading and Maggie O'Sullivan. Each of these poets offers a different opportunity for my analyses, beginning with Peter Reading's pessimistic commentary on the contemporary ecological decline, urban atrocities and critique on capitalistic societies to Maggie O'Sullivan's critical engagement with the materiality of language, performance and shamanistic ritual. Reading and O'Sullivan's poems undertake a rhizomatic[5] exchange between different planes of thought and disciplines—ranging from philosophy, zoology, meteorology, botanics, chemistry, biotechnology, astronomy, cognitive studies to alternative belief systems such as shamanism—which makes it available for the researcher to employ theoretical and critical debates using recent poststructuralist vocabulary and other interdisciplinary discourses.

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[5] Deleuze and Guattari open *A Thousand Plateaus* by introducing the concept of rhizome against the arborescent tree model of continental philosophy. "Rhizomatics" is the first plateau they explore in this book among other plateaus: "We just used words that in turn function for us as plateaus. RHIZOMATICS=SCHIZOANALYSIS=STRATOANALYSIS=PRAGMATICS=MICROPOLITICS" (2). The concept of rhizome is explained in the theoretical section of this study in detail. Please see pages 73-4.

My approach to the poems is organized through two thematic and formal planes of analysis, each of which corresponds to the sub-sections of body chapters, by making use of the theoretical discussions about experimental poetries and the body of work produced on nomadic subjectivity and smooth/nomad spaces. The first is that the poems under scrutiny follow a nomadic trajectory[6] in content and form which can be conceived by the trope of movement or thinking of human body in relation to other material forces in terms of corporeal, textual, or performative aspects of the poems. Secondly, by linguistic experimentation and non-discursive sound/visual patterns, it is possible to explore how poems produce an affective space of "encounter" and movement towards exteriority (discovering otherness, experimenting and making language "stutter"), forcing the reader to engage with the very processes of poetic creation self-reflexively at the moment of analyzing the poems. Textual configuration of sound and other visual devices is significant in understanding the nomadic trajectory while analyzing the poems.

Chapter Four aims to analyze Peter Reading's *Perduta Gente* (1989) and *Evagatory* (1992) by focusing on the trans-corporeal engagements between the human subject, physical objects, urban space and landscape—in order to discover how Reading's poetry trespasses the boundaries of anthropocentric thinking and power relations in a capitalist society. Such trans-corporeal engagements show us the emergence of two types of space in both volumes: the first one is "smooth"[7] space of emotions and pre-personal intensities that can be called spaces of affect and sensation, while the other is based more on empirical knowledge and experience, which can be termed as "striated" spaces

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[6] The concept of "trajectory" is again borrowed from Deleuze and Guattari's nomad thought that metaphorically describes the mobilizing path that the nomads follow. The nomads are conscious of their territory and the points that they temporarily occupy; their life takes place "in the intermezzo." As opposed to the "sedentary road" that "*parcel out a closed space to people*," nomadic trajectory "*distributes people (or animals) in an open space*, one that is indefinite and noncommunicating" (*Thousand* 380).

[7] These concepts have been explored in the theoretical section in detail. Please see pages 71-75.

controlled by the State and its bureaucracies. The focus on movement between smooth and striated spaces affects the ways in which we analyze the concept of space only as a static description of geography. The relation between different bodies—the human, non-human, the body of the poet or different textualities—gives form to the poems' stylistic performance by communicating intensities of affect and sensation[8].

Peter Reading's body of work is presided over by a dominant sense of despair which is accompanied by sensations of wrath, violence and loss. While many critics have analysed these aspects of his work as devaluating his entire oeuvre artistically, he certainly established "monumentality"[9] in Deleuzian terms of style in his prolific poetic career. His presence in contemporary British poetry is a different case from other poets of his generation. He is mostly considered to be a "solitary figure" publishing at least one poetry volume every year—very prolific, but hardly appreciated by critics due to the notoriously pessimistic mode of his poetry (Kennedy 120). Critics like Sarah Broom claim that Reading's poetry bridges the gap between the mainstream and the experimental divide (231). He has been extensively producing poetry from the 1970s onwards—employing most of the experimental procedures similar to those of experimental writers while also making use of traditional meters. His early poetry has been largely published by Secker and Warburg, which is neither a small press nor a large publishing house like Penguin or OUP, and whose poetry lists include both established and emerging poets. His later poetry, starting from the mid-1990s onwards, has been published by Northumberland-

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[8] Please see pages between 75-86 for a detailed discussion of the concepts of affect and percept.

[9] Deleuze and Guattari discuss the monumentality of a work of art in their *What is Philosophy?* Monumentality is particularly related with the ways in which an artwork creates the "language of sensation" through different materials such as "words, colors, sounds, or stone:" "A monument does not commemorate or celebrate something that happened but confides to the ear of the future the persistent sensations that embody the event: the constantly renewed suffering of men and women, their re-created protestations, their constantly resumed struggle" (176).

based Bloodaxe Books, which is known for its tremendous support for contemporary British poets. Unlike Maggie O'Sullivan, Peter Reading is associated more with "major" veins of poetry industry:

> [Reading] is not part of the experimental poetry scene in Britain, and while he is often seen as something of an outsider in general, he has always been published by major publishers, has frequently reviewed poetry for major publications like *TLS*, has devoted if not vast readership, and has won major prizes. (Broom 246)

Although he is not officially part of any group in British poetry, David Kennedy's analysis of the generational divides in post-war British poetry situates Reading within the third group of New Generation poets (NewGen), along with other poets such as Carol Ann Dufy, Selima Hill, Jo Shapcott and David Dabydeen (8). One might agree with David Kennedy's grouping only if one considers the basic concern of these poets and reads their work content-wise—voicing the tremendous cultural changes in contemporary Britain accompanied by the decline of it as a nation and weakening of the idea of national identities. However, the formal and linguistic experimentation in Reading's work, disjunctive narrative patterns, collages of found materials and experimentation with traditional meters like Basil Bunting's poetry draw Peter Reading closer to the label of experimental poet. Sarah Broom similarly argues that, despite his association with mainstream ways of publishing, "[i]f any poet truly deserves the epithet 'experimental,' with its implications of newness and originality, Reading is surely a candidate, because of his strikingly original combination of strategies derived from visual art, traditional verse, and postmodern poetics" (249).

Finally, the second part of Chapter Four focuses on the formal aspects of Peter Reading's work, particularly on the amalgamation of voices and discourses from different modes of writing such as newspaper columns, diary writing, poetry or rapports, collage of found material, visual tactics, in order to understand how his texts make multiple possible "in the simplest of ways" and

create a minor literature within a major one (Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand* 6). Peter Reading's collage practices and experimentation with traditional meters and verse structures are the basic procedures in his work that describe other ways of becoming, such as "becoming a polyglot in [one's] mother tongue" as Rosi Braidotti argues in *Nomadic Subjects* (15). Moreover, by analyzing his pastiche technique, it is possible to question the notions of authenticity, univocity of one poetic voice and multiplicity of rhizomatic entanglements between different texts, voices and perspectives without a hierarchical ordering. Like Deleuze and Guattari's composition of *A Thousand Plateaus* as an open form of assemblages, one can read Peter Reading's *Perduta Gente* and *Evagatory* starting from any poem, collage-work or page, as the absence of page numbers and proper titles would also suggest.

The experimental work of Maggie O'Sullivan in this study shows a radical departure from the forms and language use of the male-dominated poetic scene. Maggie O'Sullivan is among the most important experimental women poets who are still publishing their poetry, frequently reviewed and written about. Linda Kinnahan classifies Maggie O'Sullivan's poetry, accompanied by Wendy Mulford, Geraldine Monk, Denise Riley, Caroline Bergvall, as "avant-garde, American-influenced, theoretical poets in Britain, whose texts reject conventional forms of language, favoring disruptive, paratactic, associative, and self-referential strategies that emphasize textuality and the materiality of language" ("Contemporary" 196). The corporeal and spatial investments in Maggie O'Sullivan's poetry enable the construction of another type of subjectivity which is both political and revisionary in terms of binary structures that position female subject and sexuality within patriarchal constructions of language and poetry. The performative quality of O'Sullivan's poetry draws attention to the "multiple registers of sensation" (Thrift 12), forcing a corporeal involvement on part of the reader through textual movements and disruptive sound patterns. Moreover, she consciously avoids "a lyric-based reporting of

women's experience assuming a unified self, voiced through accessible language" (Kinnahan, "Feminisms" 155).

In Chapter Five, I aim to read Maggie O'Sullivan's poems as multisensory assemblages mediated through topographical choices, sound patterns and movement as in machinic artworks. In *In the House of the Shaman* (1993) and *Palace of the Reptiles* (2003), O'Sullivan re-maps space through soundscapes and auditory patterns, and her poems are caught up within constant transformation of different registers of otherness associated with nomadic subjectivity. These two volumes place the subject into a multisensory environment that unfolds several time-space relations that enable multiple becomings and engagements between the human and the non-human world. The inquiry of metaphysical concepts in Maggie O'Sullivan's poetry also creates a line of neologistic, animistic and shamanistic vocabulary which competes with the traditional belief systems and their system of thought. The bodies performing in her poems can be read as sites of connection with the non-human world, mainly foregrounding the processes of becoming-animal through formal tactics. Rather than arguing that the human develops a similar appearance to the animal, such becomings are discovered through "the animal's ability to symbolically represent and act as a vehicle for the subject's fantasies and physical investments" (Grosz, *Volatile* 173). Moreover, the chapter will focus on linguistic experimentation in her poems in order to understand how her sonic performances disrupt the supposed hierarchies maintained through the capacities of human language and explore the complexities of the non-human world. Such a focus on sonic performances as "blocks of sensations" at work in her poetry may unfold various molecular, 'non-unitary'[10] becomings, such as becoming-animal, becoming-imperceptible in Deleuze and Guattarian sense.

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[10] Non-unitary subjectivity is used in relation to Braidotti's envisioning of an ethical and political subject: "Non-unitary subjectivity here means a nomadic, dispersed, fragmented vision, which is

The reading of poems finally involves the analysis of the ritualistic strategies of healing and spatio-temporal investigation of how the subject engages with the landscape. The texts in *In the House of the Shaman* and *Palace of Reptiles* can be read as "the shaman's ecstatic journeys in the beyond" (Eliade 98). In other words, the shamanistic ritual sets the framework for the discovery of processes of becoming and nomadic poetics in O'Sullivan's poems. The shamanic subject exists in its multiplicity and discontinuities, manifesting non-human qualities of the human subject by its relations with the outer world, which is revealed though affective engagements with different weather systems, shamanic ritual and trance, and an animistic worldview. The shamanic ritual comes to have a healing function in the poems as the pre-linguistic self is discovered, a self stripped of the boundaries of the anthropocentric universe. Descriptions of the landscape take us to a space which is not urbanized, put away from the civilized, mechanized setting. It has its own weather system, where the animals and plants become the major performers in it. In such a civilisation, the "semiotic is nonsignifying, nonsubjective, essentially collective, polyvocal, and corporeal, playing on very diverse forms and substances" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand* 175).

Lastly, the detailed analysis of Reading and O'Sullivan's poems aims to understand the stuttering nature of Peter Reading and Maggie O'Sullivan's poems as an expression of becoming-other of language itself through repetition, syntactic plays, use of non-poetic registers (scientific terminology, documents) and neologisms. In *Essays Clinical and Critical*, Deleuze writes that stuttering produces "an affective and intensive language" and that language is not communicated through the character, instead "it is *the writer who becomes a stutterer in language*. He makes the language as such stutter" (107). Deleuze does not view stuttering simply as a speech defect, but a creative procedure

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nonetheless functional, coherent and accountable, mostly because it is embedded and embodied" (Braidotti, *Transpositions* 4).

integral to linguistic production. Rather than focusing on the stutterer, he trie to discover the linguistic components that make the stuttering possible. He further argues that "[c]reative stuttering is what makes language grow from the middle, like grass;" and such language is put in "perpetual disequilibrium" through repetitions, unexpected multiplication of propositions in the middle of sentences, strange use of punctuation marks such as parentheses, and "a creation of syntax that gives birth to a foreign language within language" (111-112). Peter Reading and Maggie O'Sullivan's poems, in that respect, provide possibilities of stuttering in terms of their linguistic usages and technical details.

1.2 Methodological Concerns: Selection of Poets

My approach to Reading and O'Sullivan's poetry is largely informed by recent theoretical discussions about philosophical nomadism, trans-corporeality and affect studies, as well as the concepts of subjectivity, language and space as treated in linguistically innovative poetries. I will attempt at reading the poems against the backdrop of particularly Deleuze and Guattari's understanding of nomad thought, just as they argue in their readings of literature that their concepts should be taken as a 'toolbox' for aesthetic criticism rather than viewed as totalizing theories about the very notions I investigate in this study. The theoretical chapter thus aims to foreground the philosophical and aesthetic discussions in the field in order to provide a conceptual framework to draw discourses around Deleuze and Guattari studies and experimental poetries closer in the literary analysis of the poems selected.

Experimental poetries in the late twentieth century are in close contact with literary theories developed from the sixties onwards, and obviously along with what modernism has left behind theoretically. Dealing with a particular theoretical "thinking" or ways of practicing this thinking along with reading/writing the poems, I claim, is what the poets under scrutiny are themselves doing in their poems. In doing so, this study will try to pay attention

to how propositions of any theory might produce a hegemonic discourse about a certain experience or an aesthetic encounter, and therefore, will be cautious against making theory another grand narrative about reading works of literature and art. The theoretical discussion will become a "toolbox" that I will make use of while analyzing the poems. This study considers theoretical explorations as encounters between theory and poetry, making neither of them have an upper position in their productive dialogue[11].

Peter Reading and Maggie O'Sullivan's preoccupation with formal and linguistic experimentation, albeit not of the same degree, is one of the major criteria of selection in this study. Sarah Broom notes that it is not easy to label a poet "experimental," yet it is a common tendency for these poets to have "disjunction and disruption of conventional reading strategies" in their work; and being mostly published by small presses; and activities they are involved in such as "conferences, joint publications, performance circuits and internet discussion groups associated with the experimental scene" will make them be categorized as experimental "even if in other contexts their work could be viewed as on the edge of the mainstream" (225). Reading and O'Sullivan's early collections were published by small presses. When their poetry got noticed in time, they began to be published by relatively more major publishing houses. Their work certainly defies the conventional uses of language and reading habits.

Peter Reading and Maggie O'Sullivan did not take active part in British Poetry Revival; Peter Reading openly rejected the literary circles in London with his reclusion in rural Britain, and similarly, Maggie O'Sullivan escaped from the

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[11] Lyn Hejinian similarly draws attention to the relationship between theory and poetry in *The Language of Inquiry* as follows: "Theory asks what practice does and in asking, it sees the connections that practice makes. Poetic language, then, insofar as it is a language of linkage, is a practice. It is practical. But poetry, insofar as it comments on itself (and poetic form is, among other things, always a poem's self-commentary), is also theoretical. Theoretical thought examines, theoretical thought makes meaningful. It takes into account and in doing so it makes what it is thinking about count. But there is a difference between thinking about and thinking, and thinking itself is meaningful too" (356).

literary circles in London and made collaborations with the American language poets, which gave her late recognition as a "British" poet. Another important aspect of their work is related to their educational backgrounds as poets: they are trained as artists, visual or other, which can be reflected in the visual and sonic performances of their poetry. The main reason why their names would be drawn together was their "outsider" status in the dominant history of contemporary British poetry. Besides, their work went slightly unnoticed despite their substantial contributions. This lack of attention might be caused by Peter Reading's personal background as a working-class poet and Maggie O'Sullivan's trans-Atlantic affiliations. By offering a formal analysis of Reading's poetry, this study also contributes to this ignored aspect of his oeuvre. Such a reading also aimed at offering a renewed categorization of his poetry apart from the groupings such as NewGen, working-class poetry or homogenizing tendencies of the postmodern label. This study claims that his poetry should also be mentioned among the experimental and linguistically innovative works produced in Britain around the 1990s. In this respect, the reading of Peter Reading's poetry focusing on the formal qualities rather than only on its thematic aspects also aimed to critique how experimental poetries are classified and considered in poetic circles.

Though not having primarily generational concerns, I paid attention to selecting poets who are still "alive" (regrettably, Peter Reading passed away while this study was still in progress)—having careers spanning from twenty to forty years—keeping in mind Eric Mottram's objection to the study of only dead poets who have safely established careers when compared to those living ones who struggle to get published and studied: "waiting for a poet to be safely dead before you even begin to contemplate studying, even teaching, him or her— provided the poet fits established definitions of the catch-all term for conservative panics, 'tradition'" ("British" 31). This study thus attempts at

writing about alternative poetries while they are still being made, written about, despite their limited circulation and appreciation.

The major reason why I brought these poets together—in spite of their assumed differences—is to have a variety of voices, forms, and stylistic orientations in order to approach contemporary experimental aesthetics with comparatist and interdisciplinary reading strategies. Besides, the study aims to explore a range of experimental styles of poets who align themselves with "alternative" poetries in contemporary poetry scene. This study will try to find the textual, material, aesthetic and philosophical practices that are shared by them in general. Another motive might be that their poetry provides a realm where political aspects of poetry related to language, formal qualities and the lyric subject can be discovered and argued. The poetry collections and individual poems for analysis open themselves up for creative dialogue between literary, philosophical and theoretical debates in recent studies in the humanities. These poets have been chosen largely for the comparison that their work would allow, regarding the experimentalism engaged in their poetry; and finally, there is, I believe, enough critical commentary on their work that I can benefit from. The chapters are arranged separately for each poet's work so as to have a more detailed exploration of common and individual differences their work might posit.

Within the scope and goals of this study, some aspects of both Peter Reading and Maggie O'Sullivan's poetry were not considered in the analysis of the poems. The issue of class, gender and identity-based interpretations, along with the detailed analysis of the social and cultural developments at the time the poems were written, were intentionally left outside the discussion of their poetry with the intention of focusing on the stylistic and discursive qualities of the poems. Accordingly, the poems explored in this dissertation have close affinity with the practices of post-war modernisms. These belated modernisms, as Peter Middleton argues in "Poetry after 1970," reveal that "language is

already in play as the scene of desire and the field of the 'other', that it can be found, fragmented, neologistic, philosophical, and can show subjectivity in the process of emergence and deconstruction" (771). Moreover, the discussion of poems was methodologically limited by the concept of becoming and nomad thought as theorized by Deleuze and Guattari.

This dissertation thus aims to contribute particularly to the recent poetry studies by enabling another instance of dialogue between poetry and philosophy, poetic discourse and literary theory. Moreover, it intends to contribute to the recent poetry studies by extending Deleuze and Guattari's understanding of nomad thought in relation to poetic preoccupations with subjectivity, space and poetic material. In his seminal article "Resistance to Theory," Paul de Man argues that "[t]he resistance to theory is a resistance to the use of language about language. It is therefore a resistance to language itself or to the possibility that language contains factors or functions that cannot be reduced to intuition" (13). Innovative poetries aim to foreground those "factors and functions" that displace the transparent and mimetic, in de Man's words, intuitive qualities of language. In doing that, the critical writings in this field mostly refer to the philosophical and theoretical discussions about the issues of language, self and subjectivity. This dissertation aims to show that these theoretical debates do not intend to limit the scope of poetic discourse, instead offer alternative ways of proliferating it.

Formal innovation and experimentation strove to find an outlet for expression several times in poetic history of the twentieth century British poetry and remained largely beyond critical discussion and attention due to several reasons. In order to understand the context in which Peter Reading and Maggie O'Sullivan wrote their poetry, the next chapter aims to explore the "poetry wars" in the post-war period between the mainstream and marginalised camps of poets and to question the categorizations in British poetry industry. Furthermore, it will try to unravel key debates surrounding the

reception and features of experimental poetries in Britain, which also helps us answer the methodological questions regarding the selection of poets and their works. The analysis of poems will also be preceded by a theoretical discussion of the concepts mentioned in the "Aim of the Study" part.

CHAPTER II

POST-WAR REVERBERATIONS IN CONTEMPORARY BRITISH POETRY

> Contemporary British poetry presents an anachronistic facade. The great bulk of the poetry that is published by the main commercial publishers, reviewed in newspapers, and distributed to ordinary bookstores, maintains a poetics that belongs to a premodernist era. Alongside but less visible to the ordinary reader, is a heterogeneous range of modernist, avant-garde, performance and political poetry that is largely kept out of sight by underfunding and deliberate exclusion, and usually vilified when its existence is noticed by mainstream reviewers. (Middleton, "Imagined" 128)

2.1. "Poetry Wars"

As Ken Edwards argues in "The Two Poetries," telling the story of British poetry in the post-war period, "it is impossible to understand any poetry without taking into account the paradigm within which it is made: that is to say, its cultural history, its overall aesthetic purpose, the expectations it assumes in its community of readers" (25). Rather than literary history, he sees these particular literary contexts as "paradigms" making any poetic movement possible. Peter Middleton's pertinent analysis of contemporary poetry scene in Britain is the driving force of this introductory chapter which mainly deals with the tension between more traditional and conservative poetry circles that run the industry, and more innovatively oriented circle of poets, reviewers, critics and publishers who try to produce a literary mode that can be more than a

passing poetic fashion. Hence, this chapter attempts to look at a period of literary history, and particularly poetic history in Britain, which provides several complications to the researcher especially due to many roads that have been paved, many literary interests whose sources cannot be easily discovered, and the operation of interdisciplinarity as a principle.

This part of the study will attempt to offer an overview of the poetry scene in the post-war period, particularly focusing on the preservation of the establishment poetry and its conflict with alternative micronarratives which have close affiliation with pre-world war modernist traditions. While drawing on this particular literary conflict—which is not then invented, but a continuation of old hostilities between those who hold on to traditions and those who strive to 'make it new'—this section tries to draw attention to the role of poetry industry in Britain in turning a blind eye to the alternative poetries emerging in Britain and elsewhere in the world. The discussions will be mostly literary rather than relating to other societal changes that scrupulously affect the literary arena.

Poets have followed myriad directions in contemporary poetry in the midst of complex transformations of traditional forms of poetry and reformulation of alternative canons during the second half of the twentieth century. Therefore, one of the major difficulties in contemporary poetry studies is the problem of categorization; and it is difficult to identify a clear-cut line of demarcation between poetic schools or major poetic movements. The main dividing line that exists in Contemporary British poetry now—actually at any moment in poetic history—might be the claims of mainstream poetry and those of marginal/alternative poetries. The claims of 'mainstream' and 'marginality' in poetry are highly "relative" as Sarah Broom contends in *Contemporary British and Irish Poetry* (222). Likewise, W. H. Auden poses a similar question in his introduction to *19th Century British Minor Poetry* (1966): "Who is a major, who a minor poet?" and responds immediately: "it is impossible to give even a fairly

satisfactory answer" (15). For Auden, aesthetic qualities of one's poetry or finding place in the academic circles might not be the appropriate criteria to be accepted as a major poet. Instead, Auden lists five conditions to qualify as a major poet, though it would not be possible for some major poets to satisfy all these conditions: First, a major poet must be very productive; second, the poems must have a variety of "subject matter and treatment;" then, the poet must prove her/his originality in terms of "vision and style;" fourth, s/he must be "a master of verse technique," and finally, a major poet's maturing process requires a lifetime development (15-6). When Auden's criteria are considered, the poets in this study qualify as major poets of their period especially due to their prolific career as poets, originality in terms of style and variety of their subject matter. However, in contemporary poetry Auden's formula does not sound satisfactory for a number of reasons this chapter will explain. Another example to clarify this divide comes from Linda Kinnahan who contrasts Carol Ann Dufy as a "mainstream" poet to Denise Riley as a more "marginalized" poet from a circle of experimental writers. The criteria that make Dufy a mainstream poet, for Kinnahan, are "her popularity, awards, and publishing support by major houses;" and those that make Denise Riley a "marginalized" experimental poet are her liaison with "small independent presses" and the association of her work with "often an explicitly theoretical inflection" ("Contemporary" 196). Such elusive comments on that division are largely dealt with by editors, literary critics and scholars in the field; and the curricula of English departments and individual syllabus of every English poetry course put forth this dilemma in terms of the choice of poets and elimination of particular ones. The eminence of any poet or the value the reader attaches to her/his poetry is mostly the outcome of these claims of mainstream and marginal/alternative trends. Thus, this introduction serves as food for thought rather than a conclusive or generalizing overview of the very institutional discourses that we take up while defining the mainstream and the marginal in poetry industry. It might offer

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perspectives that one can work through while analysing the poetries of the twentieth century.

Considering the measures proposed by Kinnahan's comparison, the distinguishing features of the experimental stream seem to be lacking (or not looking for) enough support from major publishing houses and insisting on formal innovation informed by recent theoretical debates, particularly postmodernism and poststructuralism. Poets like Carol Ann Dufy are now considered to be "major" poets since they have somehow established themselves as important figures in the poetry industry and made their way onto the lists of mainstream poetry. The allegedly "marginal" anthologies published by small publishing houses have a long and complicated path to be included in the canon of twentieth century poetry, except that they create an alternative canon and publishing industry for themselves. Regarding the anticapitalistic modes of publishing by small independent presses, 'industry' here would mean a separate, heterogeneous body of literary association of poets, writers, critics, performance artists, not particularly involved in the industrialized ways of poetry production. Both categories encompass such a range and diversity of poetic styles, commitments and orientations that it is often challenging to define those labels as steady. Moreover, mainstream poetry publications are too marginalized in a sense within the policies of publishing houses when compared to best-selling fiction and other publications.

Before the theoretical discussion of the concepts I made use of in my argument, this part tries to outline the most significant moments in the development of experimental poetries in the second half of the twentieth century. This outline does not of course claim to be all-encompassing concerning the wide range of discussions still taking place about the positioning of the mainstream and alternative poetries in Britain and Ireland. Both areas are diverse in the poetic strategies taken up, resources consulted and publications represented. Such a background study is necessary to contextualize

Peter Reading and Maggie O'Sullivan's poetry within the literary paradigm they write and to explore how these paradigmatic features are reflected in their poetry.

2.2. The Problem with Labelling

There is still no consensus among the poets or the critics about how to categorize and label the poems produced in late modernist era with experimental sensibilities. The most commonly used titles are "linguistically innovative/investigative poetry," "avant-garde poetry," "exploratory poetics," "radical poetry" or "experimental poetry." These working titles are concerned with the formal qualities of the poems with an internationalist attitude, disregarding any regional or ethnic categorization, as recent anthology titles also suggest. Experimentation, innovation, radicalism as suggested by the labels put emphasis on how these poetries strip ties off from what belongs to the traditional, conservative, and standard. Sarah Broom uses "experimental" and "avant-garde" interchangeably, as other critics do, and describes this kind of poetry as "disjunctive in its procedures," foregrounding "the materiality of language;" and its difference from other poetries' self-awareness of language is the degree of its radicalism (223). However, critics like Drew Milne argue that, although contemporary British poets have tried to train themselves in European and American avant-garde practices, "what is most evident is the way in which the terms of avant-garde theory, organization, and social practice have been so systematically resisted in Britain" (172). Another proposed term for such poetics is "linguistically innovative poetry" which was borrowed from Maggie O'Sullivan's anthology *Out of Everywhere: Linguistically Innovative Poetry by Women in North America and the U.K.*, putting particular emphasis on the linguistic practices at work in such poetries.

Although there are many similarities between the postmodern aesthetics and post-war modernist poetic trends, "postmodern" is not a

frequently preferred title for the latter. John Kinsella and Rod Mengham, for instance, avoid using "postmodern" in their title of 2004 anthology, *Vanishing Points*, and prefer to write "new modernist poets" as their subheading. In the same vein, Redell Olsen points out the homogenizing effect of the word 'postmodern' in contemporary British poetry; and not only the anthologies of contemporary poetry, but also the poets themselves keep their work from being entitled 'postmodern' as it is mostly associated "with delusions of cultural capital and a culture industry which is intent on commodifying intellectual labour" (43). What they really avoid is the political connotations of the term 'postmodern;' they welcome other titles including the term 'modernist,' as more of a political decision rather than an aesthetic one: "In recent years the decision to call oneself 'neo-modernist', 'late modernist' as opposed to 'postmodernist' is a determined gesture on the part of some poets and critics to avoid the latest dominant cultural whim of the fashion market in ideas" (43-44).

Labelling those poems as 'avant-garde' might also cause problems of misconception, considering the historical situatedness of the term 'avant-garde' in the early twentieth century. Due to its martial origin, avant-garde has been thought to "make of poetry as a weapon to challenge a 'false' or 'deceptive' status quo" (Roberts 110). Raymond Williams finds it difficult to draw a sharp line between 'modernism' and 'avant-garde,' but views them as steps taken forward, having modernism as the second type with innovative orientations, and avant-garde as a further step, a third group having a "fully oppositional type." Avant-garde was not only oppositional and "aggressive," but was also a "breakthrough to future" with its "militants of creativity which would revive and liberate humanity" (51). Rather than liberation and revival, the aggressive terminology and practices of *advance guard* art are thought to lead to disappointments of wars and fascistic dictatorships. Despite his hesitations about the use of an inclusive term to describe the poetries of modernist

experimentation, Andrew Michael Roberts still prefers to use the term avant-garde due to the following reasons:

> I use the term 'avant-garde' because, despite the problematic nature of the concept of avant-garde 'tradition', this work seems to me to share most characteristics of the historical twentieth-century avant-garde in various arts: an emphasis on testing the boundaries and conventions of the medium, a self-reflexive questioning of the concept of art, an anti-establishment political engagement and an inclination to *épater les bourgeois*, a fluid and experimental interaction of different media and art forms, an anti-traditional, anti-conventional rhetoric and a dependence on self-organized performance display or self-produced and self-distributed publication. (110-11)

Roberts' description of the characteristics of the avant-garde aesthetics reveals similar concerns with the aesthetic interests of the poets this study calls experimental. Michael Davidson finds the positioning of historical avant-garde intriguing when it is also used extensively compatible with "postmodern" and its aesthetic paradigm, and offers that, read along with "claims for an enduring … avant-garde," postmodernism "can be read positively as a continuation of these avant-garde tendencies or negatively as a series of self-reflexive, parodic gestures" (21-22).

As such, the use of "late modernism" can also lead to some conceptual misreadings. Following the critics who view the experimental strain in contemporary British poetry as a continuum of international modernism, which was in fashion before the wars broke out, late modernism embodies a reference to the techniques and innovations modernism sought to introduce. Likewise, Drew Milne maintains that "late" suggests "the belated publication or delayed reception of aspects of modernism;" and though modernism is an "overburdened" term to consider in the twenty-first century, it is important to return to it to discover its legacy "for possibilities of poetry" now (165). Except for references in direct quotations or comments referred to, this study will try

to be consistent in using the terms experimental and innovative poetries rather than avant-garde or postmodern, since "the persistence of terms such as 'experimental' and 'innovative' points to the difficulty of providing more than indicative outlines of key tendencies" (173). Additionally, they work more practically as umbrella terms due to not only the formal qualities of the poems, but also largely to their terminologically untainted trajectories within poetic history.

2.3. An Account of 'Poetry Wars' through Anthologies and Magazines

Anthologies which constitute the indispensible part of poetry publishing are compiled for various motives and objectives. Not only do they reflect the attributes of a particular literary period but they also frame new modes of writing and inform the readers about emerging poets and writers. Anthologists thus play a dual role: that of a "cultural historian" and of "promoter of a particular group or movement" (Roberts 101). In the twentieth century, anthologies that engage with particular poetic movements are accompanied with the ones that have geographical focus such as Welsh, Irish, Scottish poetry, and with those including poetries written in English regardless of its non-UK origins. With the flourishing of various modes and motives of anthologizing, London-based poetry industry has been confronted with alternative locales of anthology publishing. Andrew M. Roberts argues that the selection process for the anthologists involves "a standard repertoire of value criteria" which consists of:

> novelty (the 'new' poetry), innovation (the technically new poetry), traditionalism (the organic line of value), representiveness (the poets of a social group, a geographical area or a generation), oppositionality (the poetry of dissent), centrality (the 'mainstream'), marginality (in opposition to the mainstream), inclusiveness (range and variety), exclusiveness (*not* some particular style or aesthetic, usually presented as superseded). (102)

This repertoire finely provides us with the keywords to discuss the position of a particular poet in a particular literary period. Moreover, key theoretical and academic debates of poetry revolve around the same repertoire of criteria. An extensive reading and contextual examination of contemporary poetry, especially experimental modes, might be conducted by a close focus on the anthologies published and most frequently reviewed. Anthology introductions, titles, table of contents, and the decisions of inclusion and exclusion provide a detailed narrative of poetry wars that have been taking place in British poetry scene from the early twentieth century onwards. An apparent rivalry is observed between the anthologies published after Robert Conquest's *New Lines* (1956), which sets forth to introduce Movement poets as a group representing the late forties' and the fifties' poetry and offering "unabashed and untheoretical eye to visual and emotional events" (xvii). Few anthologists followed a supportive line of these preceding anthologies, as Peter Childs argues, "anthologists have reacted against each other—that each widely accepted and adopted collection … has sought to challenge the view of poetry advocated by a previous editor" (7).

Robert Conquest's *New Lines* introduces the poetry written in the immediate aftermath of World War II by bringing together poets like Elizabeth Jennings, Philip Larkin, Thom Gunn, Donald Davie and John Wain. Although he does not call those poets Movement poets, he establishes the basic characteristics of this poetic trend as the selection criteria of his anthology. The foremost feature of the poetry of the late forties and the early fifties, for Conquest, is the conscious avoidance of theoretical guidelines. Moreover, the poems are "empirical" in terms of subject matter and accessible to the reader since the poets admire "real persons and events" in the composition of poems (xiv-xv). Conquest's approach to the poetry of this period hints at an attempt to displace the influence of modernist poetry in the post-war period.

Looking closely at the titles and introductions of anthologies published in the post-war period, one can easily notice the attempts to invent "new" grounds for poetry or to pursue modernist statements like Ezra Pounds' "making it new." As Morrison and Motion write, "the word 'new' is conspicuous in all these titles, and making it new is the oldest of all anthologists' arts" (11). While anthologies have such assertions as representing the characteristics of a particular generation of poets, they also have a revisionist attitude towards earlier poetic styles and poets belonging to former literary traditions. An early reference point for anthology wars in the twentieth century poetry is Morrison and Motion's *The Penguin Book of Contemporary British Poetry (1982),* an anthology that excludes poets who appeared earlier in Al Alvarez's anthology and that aspires to be "didactic," as well as "representative" of the age (10). Lumsden criticizes the selection of poets in this anthology by defining it as "more a supper party" (19). Although not made explicit in their title, Morrison and Motion also claim that their poetry features the new energy of British poetry of the 1960s and the 1970s. Its energy stems primarily from their partition from the Movement exposure, "a departure, one which may be said to exhibit something of the spirit of post-modernism" (20). Put differently, their anthology might be accepted as a gesture that anticipates the work of experimental writers of the seventies who "extend the imaginative franchise" (20).

The poet-editors of *The New British Poetry* published in 1988 by Paladin Press—Gillian Allnutt, Fred D'Aguiar, Ken Edwards, and Eric Mottram—seem to have attempted to provide a variety in their choice of poems. Four editors took up the responsibility of four different sections, including poems by eighty-five writers: feminist, Black British poetry, open form poets and experimental pieces of younger poets. John Muckle, the publisher of Paladin Poetry, makes it clear that their anthology has brought to light formerly "marginalized" contemporary poets, thus is antagonistic towards "narrowly-defined orthodoxy" that decides

on who are "true" or "real" poets (vi). In their attempt to display "the vitality and strength it reveals amongst younger poets across the entire spectrum of British poetry now," the editors include Allen Fisher as an open field poet, Maggie O'Sullivan as an emerging, promising woman poet at the time (vi). Considering the motivations of the four different chapters, Allnutt et al.'s anthology might be seen as the first comprehensive attempt to voice experimental and neo-modernist poets after the British Poetry Revival lost its impetus half way.

Michael Hulse, David Kennedy and David Morley compiled an anthology entitled *The New Poetry* in 1993, which has been widely used in contemporary poetry classes at colleges due to its inclusion of fifty-five 'new' poets who are believed to represent the age in the "best" way. In their Preface, the editors explain their criteria of inclusion and claim that the poems included are "the best poetry written in the British Isles in the 1980s and early 1990s" (14). They prefer not to include poets who have been previously published in *The Penguin Book of Contemporary British Poetry*; and, in order to provide more space for new generation poets, they exclude poets who were born before 1940. They also frankly acknowledge their sources in the choice of the poets and poems— "lists of major publishers, specialist poetry publishers and small presses, as well as trawling exhaustively through magazines and pamphlets" (14), an acknowledgement which reveals their efforts to bridge the gap between more mainstream poets and those whose voices are relatively marginalized. Their stress on plurality and deflation of common values in society displays their deliberate choice of a variety of poets from different social, political and aesthetic backgrounds, finding it "healthy" to pluralize rather than to cause "further decline" (21, 27). Their anthology sounds like the updated version of Alvarez's anthology of the same title, *The New Poetry* (1993); however, they mark their difference from formerly traditional poetry by proclaiming that their anthology "emphasises accessibility, democracy, and responsiveness, humour

and seriousness, and reaffirms the art's significance as public utterance" (16). Hans-Werner Ludwig views this as "a very special case of 'making it new'," since one cannot exactly make sure whether it is a "friendly gesture" to take up someone else's title or it is an effort to produce "Orwellian Newspeak: obliterating the old by replacing it by the new?" (184). Ludwig's question is a rhetorical one, as the editors make it clear that theirs is a political gesture to dispose contemporary poetry of what belongs to the earlier tradition of poetry Conquest and Alvarez's anthologies publicized.

Five years after the publication of *The New Poetry*, Armitage and Crawford issued an anthology, *The Penguin Book of Poetry from Britain and Ireland since 1945*, mainly having "mainstream" poets or poets customarily published by major presses. The editors aim to have a "democratic voice" in their selection of poems by considering the "alteration in politics and history" of England and Ireland (xix). This "democratic voice," as Armitage and Crawford discuss, represents the pluralistic consciousness in post-war society in Britain and Ireland which salutes different "vernacular" languages, embraces its own critique of linguistic authority, and enjoys the freedom of different poetic forms (xxi). The claims of democracy and pluralism in their anthology echo the change in value systems of post-war British society and transformation of it in general. Redell Olsen claims that all these anthologies claiming to promote "new" poetries one way or another lack the modernist trajectory and drag on the traditionalism associated with the Movement poets (46). Another anthology carrying a similar title is Eleanor Crawforth et al.'s *New Poetries* published in 2007 by Carcanet. This time "poetry" of the previous collections is pluralized as "poetries," which becomes a key diversion from its antecedents. Not only have the criteria concerning poets' background but also the standards of representing a culture or a particular nation have changed through their selection of poets. The anthology has eleven poets with cosmopolitan identities, coming from diverse geographical backgrounds, the only common

ground being English as the medium of expression. So, through numerous border-crossings—with poets described as "intellectually well-travelled and internationally curious individuals," *New Poetries* offers a new way of looking at Britishness: "That we do not need the protection of isolation; that belonging implies—indeed entails—a blurring of borders, and a consequent enhancement of resources, is part of this new sense of Britishness" (Crawforth et al ix-x). Anthologies such as *New Poetries* take English as the medium of choice, regardless of the geographical and ethnic origin of the poet, and offer a more internationalist approach to poetries produced in English.

Experimental poetries have been largely framed by neo-modernist anthologies that were published from the seventies onwards in Britain and the United States. The anthologies published in the United States have more radical traits in terms of formal and linguistic innovation. They not only draw attention to the North American influence on British poetry, but also bring new perspectives on the condition and reception of British poetry in North American literary circles. To some anthology editors, American influence is like a virus taking over what is 'truly' British with its neo-modernist practices. However, some North American anthology editors such as Edna Longley follow the traditional narrative of poetic trends that would "truly" represent what then should be considered as British poetry. Edna Longley's selection of poets in *The Bloodaxe Book of Twentieth Century Poetry from Britain and Ireland* (2000) exposes such a view: it puts too much emphasis on tradition and defence of lyric poetry as the defining characteristic of the twentieth century poetry. Tony Frazer criticizes Longley's anthology due to its prejudiced stance towards the premises of modernist poetics: "Modernism for Professor Longley was an unfortunate historical error, a blind alley, an unwanted American intrusion into the natural Yeatsian order of things" (130). Moreover, Longley still trusts the representative capacity of poetry to "make sense of human experience" and to

"cover the whole human personality or the whole of life," and thus traces the presence and continuity of lyric in contemporary poetry (15, 22).

Apart from the lyric focus in British poetry, Adrian Clarke and Robert Sheppard's *Floating Capital* (1991), published in the United States, has been seen as a transatlantic effort to publicize innovative poetries in Britain and North America. Bruce Andrews' highly experimental prelude to the poems concludes with the unfolding of what the title of the anthology might suggest in Deleuzian vocabulary: "Capital allows territorialized interiors of its deterritorializing, of its float. Ubiquitous pseudosubjectifying against cooption. As Utility's tightrope act we're vehicles for limits, amphitheatricalized. Consequences: multiply-connected placebos" (v). While the editors aim to introduce British poetry in the 1980s to North American readers, they seem to have acknowledged the 'marginal' status of the poets in their anthology.

Keith Tuma's *Anthology of Twentieth-Century of British and Irish Poetry* (2001) published by Oxford University Press is particularly significant to consider in this study, since the work of all the poets under scrutiny are selected within Tuma's collection from the entire century. This is one of the examples of how poets once associated with more marginal and experimental writing can find place for themselves in more mainstream publications and become 'established' poets in time. As Tuma writes in the Introduction, the anthology surprisingly presents the reader with "a picture of British and Irish poetry unlike any other picture available" with an aim to "complicate the categories while discarding the potted histories, or rather while encouraging … the reader, to rewrite these histories" (xxii, xxvi). Tuma's method of selection depends basically upon what he thinks is the most identifying aspects of British poetry in the twentieth century; and, tracing the influence of modernist practices on British and Irish poetry, his anthology adopts the method of "critical pluralism," including as "many modes of poetry" as possible (xxi). Though printed by a mainstream publishing house, Tuma could realize his aim of having a

"revisionist" literary canon in his choice of post-1945 British and Irish poetry. His revisionism is mostly connected with the alternative poetries which can only be found in small press publications.

In addition to Tuma's comprehensive work, it is possible to find other "corrective anthologies," (Frazer 122) such as Richard Caddel and Peter Quartermain's *Other*, Maggie O'Sullivan's *Out of Everywhere*, and Sinclair's *Conductors of Chaos.* Sinclair takes one of the less travelled roads in the anthology making process: letting poets choose their own poems to be included in the anthology. Sinclair summarizes his unaccustomed method of compiling the poems in *Conductors of Chaos*: "I offered space to those who seemed to want it most. I let them make their own choice of material" (xix). It is rather a bold decision to edit an anthology with newly starring poets mostly selecting their own poems. Along with this decision, Sinclair's depiction of the type of poetry included as "remote, alienated, fractured" also makes this anthology a more attractive 'alternative' in the poetry society (xvii).

Caddel and Quartermain's anthology seems to feature poets who are somehow "othered" by the establishment poetry, as an alternative to marginal and mainstream divide. Although they find it difficult to define what mainstream means, Caddel and Quartermain try to provide a working description of this stream of poets: "mainstream in this context may be said to include the narrow lineage of contemporary poets from Philip Larkin to Craig Raine and Simon Armitage, and encompassing their attendant 'collectives' (Movement, Martians, New Generation)" (xv). The editors describe their oppositional stance towards the "mainstream" with an awareness of poets who are pushed out of the poetry scene, mostly due to neglect. This is a double-edged sword, as, while the poets are less publicized by the mainstream, they actually preserve a degree of "freedom" in their poetry (xvi). The poets of British Poetry Revival, such as Eric Mottram, Bob Cobbing, and J. H. Prynne, and their feud at the Poetry Society is the dominating narrative of the 1970s British

poetic history in their Introduction. Additionally, poets who are in close contact with American modernism and Charles Olson's poetics, and those who are associated with the performance poetry, such as Maggie O'Sullivan, are also included. The anthology edited by Maggie O'Sullivan gives place to the experimental poems of women poets from all over the world. She seems to have brought together a wide range of poems from different countries, claiming to point out a different canon as opposed to the dominant modes of anthologizing. As suggested by its name, *Out of Everywhere*, this attempt to bring together various poets with different backgrounds is an experimental act per se.

Small magazines also publish anthologies that bring together the work of linguistically innovative poets and performance artists/poets. Bob Cobbing and Bill Griffith's *verbi vici voco* (1992) introduces a completely alternative picture in British poetry scene with its endeavour to assemble performance pieces, whether textual, visual or phonic. The anthology was published by Writers Forum, which started as a series of workshops in 1952, then grew into a small magazine and press in the upcoming years. The editors and the name of the small press suggest a lot about the experimental nature of poetry presented in this anthology. Eric Mottram, who writes an introduction to it, concedes the "inventive vitality of British poetry" and alternative nature of this 500th publication of Writers Forum:

> VERBIVISIVOCO is in itself a publication performance that exposes the sheer imitative dullness of official British poetry as presented by the capitalist publishing houses, their official backers, agents and minions, as well as the virtually defunct cabaret-performance poetasters, the almost defunct Poetry Society, the English departments of universities and their wilfully ignorant librarians, and the unenterprising but greedy bookstore chains. But this is no news to those who have purchased Writers Forum publications since the 1963 …("Celebrating")

As he also states in his article about the events taking place in the Poetry Society in the early 1970s, Mottram's Introduction is highly critical of the British poetry establishment and their curtailing of investigative and inventive poetry. What Mottram celebrates in his Introduction is the perseverance of Writers Forum in the publishing industry, whose capitalist machinations would have already swallowed such an independent press.

Last of all, Rod Mengham and John Kinsella's *Vanishing Points: New Modernist Poems* published by Salt in 2004 provides another theoretical and critical orientation in the analysis of experimentalism in contemporary poetry. As their title suggests, experimental or radical poetics of the late 20th and early 21st century is an extension of modernist poetry of the previous century. Mengham and Kinsella do not follow generational or regional selection criteria in the choice of the poets; rather, they offer a continuum of "identifiable form of international writing that sets a premium experiment with form and language" (Mengham xviii). Their selection of poets like John Ashbery, Susan Howe, Lee Ann Brown from the United States, Caroline Bergvall, Tony Lopez, Peter Riley from the UK, and more of a cosmopolitan poet of German origin such as Ulli Freer, makes it clear that new modernist poets, as forwarded in the title, are actually successors of an international group of poets. Mengham argues that these poets still pursue the interests of historical modernists; therefore, he avoids calling them "postmodern" and prefers "late modernist writers" instead (xviii).

Title words of the anthologies overviewed above, such as "Other," "Floating Capital," "Chaos," and so forth, illustrate a lot about their possible content, whether they are available to a wider readership or in harmony with what is central in the poetry scene. Poems and poets "float" [in] the capital, as the linguistic play with "float" would try to signify, changing the poetic practices of London and London-based poetry. New poems might be read as "chaotic" in the sense that they are mostly difficult to read or highly experimental for the

general public to analyze or enjoy them. They challenge poetic traditions through their form and poetic practices by collaging from all previous traditions and deauthorizing them with innovative ways and means. British poetry might be encountering its "others" with Quartermain's anthology, since poems somewhat are estrangements of what has been accepted as dominant forms of poetry. Peter Middleton argues in "Imagined Readership & Innovation in U.K. Poetry" that this alternative poetry scene eludes any identification or category commonly associated with the compilation of anthologies: "[e]ditors and poets carefully avoid any hint that poets might belong to groups or movements, share manifestoes, or emerge from a common class, education, sexuality, gender, or whiteness" (130).

Experimental poetries have been largely circulated by non-commercial means of publishing such as little magazines, distributing poetry on the web, or allying with independent presses. R. J. Ellis, in his attempt to map out the little magazine profile in Britain, argues that "little magazines stand in an inherently contradictory relationship to commercial publishing;" and a little magazine's financial independence also draws it closer to heterogeneity and inclusion of more "independent/marginalized" forms of poetry (76). This does not of course mean that little magazines were only restricted to work by avant-garde or 'new' poets; little magazines voicing more traditional poetic styles existed in somewhat limited number. In the 50s and the 60s, Movement poets were not at all interested in being published in little magazines; however, "the United Kingdom modernist revival had a clear and contrasting regard for little magazines … by writers working with new forms" (Ellis 82). Small presses joined forces with the formation of Association of Little Presses, which played an important role in building a new network for poets who were underrepresented in mainstream publications. Apart from these joint efforts, Stuart Montgomery's Fulcrum Press, Bob Cobbing's Writers Forum, Thurburn and Shayer's Migrant Press frequently published work which set an alternative

canon to what we would call the mainstream. Among their publishing trends are "extremely distinctive hand-produced books," use of "coloured typefaces, drawings and complex typographical layouts to distinguish these works from the highly standardised productions of the commercial presses" (Middleton, "Poetry" 773).

Public attention is relatively less on the small press poetry than mainstream publishing; and even how a book is published is a factor that makes a particular poet a mainstream one. In other words, the readers judge the poetry books by its cover as Eric Mottram complains of: "Many 'little presses' use modern techniques to produce decent, often elegant, books and pamphlets of poetry, in both hard and soft cover editions, but this productivity is largely ignored by the agents of information and distribution" ("British" 18). These "agents" might not be interested in the publishing or circulating poetry as such largely due to financial considerations. Circulating their poetry through small presses with limited editions look very disadvantageous for the experimental or British Poetry Revival poets; however, this very fact provides them with a deterritorializing function for the type of poetry they are trying to promote in Deleuzian terms. As Mottram explains, the readers intended were not particularly "middle-class rapid reader … looking for significance and alibis with established, authenticated products" (18), a readership which publishing houses would fancy having in their sales figures. Though not appealing to a wide readership, small magazines increased in number independent of ask-and-demand discrepancy. As Robert Hampson refers to Wolfgang Görtschaher's extensive study on the little magazine field *Little Magazine Profiles* (1993), during the period titled as the British Poetry Revival, more than four hundred small magazines came to existence, alongside more of them which perished in the meantime (xv).

2.4. British Poetry Revival

Post-war poetry abounds with diverse poetic trends while the poets and readers evenly try to recover from the images of war, loss and mass destruction, and their representation in poetry. Meanwhile, the poets too were responding to the tremendous social and cultural transformations in Britain as a declining empire and nation in their poetry, as Peter Childs analyses, with a heightened awareness of "the levelling of classes, the appearance of consensus politics, new forms of mass entertainment, the rise of service industries and consumerism" (124). Consumerist trends, in addition, affected the publication, circulation and consumption of poetry with the dominance of big publishing houses, university presses and journals.

Blake Morrison, who is a poet himself writing in the post-war period, describes the poetry of that period to be characterized by the image of "restraint." The most frequent words employed by the poetry industry from 1945 onwards, for Morrison, are "restraint, restriction, limitation, moderation, diminution, containment" ("Poetry" 96). The major reason for this restraint and conservatism is usually thought to be the poets grouped around Larkin, the Movement, who unlike their modernist precursors were looking for clarity, precision and control. These poets—Donald Davie, Martin Amis, Thom Gunn, Philip Larkin, mainly—were all graduates of either Oxford or Cambridge and officially came to prominence due to an article titled "In the Movement" which was published by *Spectator* in 1954, Enright's *Poets of the 1950's* (1955) and Robert Conquest's anthology *New Lines* in 1956. Although the poets themselves did not consent to the existence of such a group, anthologists worked hard to announce them as a unified group of poets associated with the ideals of the Movement poetics.

Stephen Burt argues that the Movement poets' insistence on restraint and clarity, and their "intellectual program of anti-modernism and anti-

Romanticism" should be analysed in the light of the social and political conditions in which Movement poetry emerged: "an internationally salient liberal anti-communist empiricism, a post-war suspicion that ambitious programs for the rapid transformation of anything—whether a text, a state, or a single human being—do more harm than good" (34, 35). Being published mostly by recognised publishing houses such as Macmillan and Penguin, the Movement poets were chiefly considered to be mainstream poets with their anti-modernist home-grown poetic tradition. In his extensive study on Movement poetry, *The Movement: English Poetry and Fiction of the 1950s*, Blake Morrison contends that Movement poets had a biased attitude towards all things foreign as the reflection of the socio-political atmosphere in post-war Britain (60). Provincialism and anti-intellectualism become defining characteristics of Movement poetry. Although provincial life was valued over the metropolitan values, the poets did not idealize nature as Romantic poets did. Movement poetry was openly reactionary towards the Romantic conception of nature: "nature is seen not as an autonomous organism which sometimes inspires 'sublime' feelings but as a mechanism calculated to induce, and existing solely for, human pleasure" (168). Moreover, the poet plays a significant role in leading the reader throughout his/her work:

> The Movement's emphasis upon the writer's responsibility towards his public may partly be seen, therefore, as a reflection of contemporary ideology. When Larkin talks of leading the reader by the hand, when Davie admonishes Pound for breaking contracts and denying the reader assistance, and when Enright asks the poet to do his fair share of work, a socio-political code is transformed into a code for writer-reader relations: the poet or critic, privileged because of a superior knowledge of the text, must make special efforts to help the 'underprivileged' reader. (Morrison, *Movement* 137)

The poets are expected to enlighten the reader with their objective observations and clarity of expression. The poet and the reader are not equal in

power as Morrison's description suggests; and this gap in this hierarchical structure can be bridged by the guidance of the writer and the critic. While Movement poetry criticizes modernist poetics due to its difficulty and intellectualism that make the poems inaccessible to the readers, it perpetuates the role given to the poet and critic by underlining the responsibility of the poet towards the reader.

The analysis of post-1945 poetry and the hostility between Movement conservatism and Modernist experimentation is one of the most frequent accounts while reworking through the history of poetry between the 1960s and the 1980s:

> [T]he history of post-war British poetry has not just been about swings between free verse and formalism, elitism and common language or regionalism and centralism: a fundamental plot line has involved and continues to involve a troubled relationship with the self-congratulatory conservatism that the Movement represents. (Kennedy 188)

In the same way, Redell Olsen argues that if we are to outline the development of British poetry towards postmodern poetics, we see that conservatism that was bred in the aftermath of the Second World War has been still preserved in today's poetry (47).

Similarly, in *Sensation, Contemporary Poetry and Deleuze*, Jon Clay admits that he comes across linguistically innovative poetries as a revelation (1). His discovery of that kind of poetry so late is because of the institutionalization of British poetry and its fundamental evasion of modernist styles after the short-lived avant-garde trends which are interrupted by the two devastating world wars. Post-war poetry was mainly influenced by the Movement poetry which adopted tradition as opposed to innovation conveyed by modernist claims of rendering poetics anew. Clay's late exposure to innovative British poetries is largely due to the decline of modernist attitudes. The legitimacy of linguistically innovative poetries, for Clay, is questioned largely due to the

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standards that the Movement poetry and its practitioners recognized and employed in the post-war era: "This has been the normative model for 'legitimate' poetry in the United Kingdom for 50 years and more, a normativity produced and reproduced particularly through anthologies" (3).

In his account of the British Poetry Revival—the period is named so by Eric Mottram himself—Mottram in retrospect complains about how experimental or modernist trends in the post-war period were intentionally ignored by mainstream poetry magazines, publishing houses, educational institutions, and the "reviewing fraternity" ("British" 15). The Poetry Society was among those establishment institutions as the "centre of reaction and tediously restricted conservatism" until it underwent an unforeseen transformation that made it "a centre of the [short-lived] Revival" (19). The influence of late modernists like Basil Bunting and Bob Cobbing is immense in British Poetry Revival, which retrieved experimentation and critique of modes of representation in modernist poetry. Not based on hierarchies and vertical structures of power, the trajectory of innovative poetries since British Poetry Revival has been multidirectional without manifestos, among uninstitutionalized groups of poets and small press publications.

British Poetry Revival, roughly taking place between 1960 and 1975, was the climax for the promotion of new poetics in Britain with the revolutionary changes taking place in the Poetry Society which ends with Eric Mottram's displacement from the editorship of *Poetry Review*, the Society's official journal. Peter Barry's *Poetry Wars: British Poetry of the 1970s and the Battle of Earls Court*[12] reveals the rarely told events that took place between 1971 and 1977 regarding the takeover of the Poetry Society and its journal *Poetry Review* by experimental poets pioneered by Bob Cobbing and Eric Mottram. These years heightened the struggle between the mainstream establishment poets, writers,

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[12] The "Earls Court" in the subtitle refers to the headquarters of the Poetry Society, which is at 21 Earls Court Square.

critics, and radical and experimental ones, as the former believed that this was an uncalled-for intervention. Peter Barry's analysis of this particular historical moment in British poetry revolves around a number of binary oppositions to define the root of the conflict: first, large or "commercial press" poets; second, "neo-conservatives" and "neo-modernists," the earlier as the continuum of anti-modernist strain, while the latter is a variation of high modernism; "mainstream" and "other" poets; "mainstream" and the "parallel tradition"; "empirical and lyrical I poetries" versus Linguistically Innovative Poetries as used in Maggie O'Sullivan's 1996 anthology; and finally "conservatives and radicals," both of which have their own various fractions (7-8).

Clearly, the Poetry Society and its journal *Poetry Review* have been imperative actors in the promotion and funding of poetry. In his foreword to Peter Barry's *Poetry Wars*, Andrew Motion relates how the change of editors in *Poetry Review* during the 1970s played an important role in the circulation, reception and production of poetry written at the time. In the fifties, the journal intentionally kept the Modernists away from the poetry scene and tried to restore "the good old Georgian ways." Then with the crowning of Eric Mottram as the chief editor of the *Review*, the tide has turned to the Modernists again, which was more than shocking for its members: "Eric Mottram had been appointed Editor and published poems, articles and opinions, which jerked the Society so fast and far towards the opposite camp, the membership suffered a collective heart attack" (xi). For Andrew Motion, Eric Mottram's contested decisions in the course of his editorship of *Poetry Review* brings the "climax" of the historically-rooted struggles between these two poles of post-war British poetry; and Mottram was indisputably "fighting a necessary fight" (xi, xii) and the narrative of this fight is instructive in many ways:

> For most of last century, Britain marginalized the heirs of
> the great Modernists. We're more accommodating
> today—but that doesn't stop us finding Mottram's Poetry

Review story intriguing, enlightening, and in its own way
heroic. It still has a good deal to teach us. (xii)

The Poetry Society at the time decided to launch evening reading series, invited poets to the Poets Conference and even had an underground print-shop for publishing poetry. Eric Mottram finds the number of poetry readings very inadequate when compared to American universities; yet, with Poetic Revival, these readings provided an important outlet for the new and revived poetry in Britain. With the banishment of Mottram and his fellow poets from the Poetry Society in 1977, British poetry suffered a period of retrieval of experimental poets. As Peter Barry argues, "[e]choes of this conflict continue to reverberate today, and the deposed radicals of the 1970s were effectively written out of the record of contemporary British poetry, and have only recently been restored" (*Poetry Wars*, 1). The poets examined in this work can be seen as the figures of the interregnum who go on to produce works that remind the Mottram spirit and the 1990s poets who are still engaged in the experimental work enabled by the late modernist attempts in the 1970s.

This contextual reading of post-war modernisms, of course, carries the risk of perpetuating the dominant narratives concerning this period that focus on the schisms of mainstream and alternative mode of poetics. Despite this risk, this chapter has tried to provide a defense of how the poets in this study were selected, the processes these poets were involved in and the limitations such a study might draw. This study does not favour any of the sides in this poetry war; however, it critically focuses on the premises of more experimental work produced in contemporary British poetry, with an awareness of the question of value being economically and politically oriented rather than depending on personal taste. It would be obtuse to choose poems in this study on subjective notions of good and bad poetry as they produce subjective value judgments; therefore, I tried to consider their poetry within a theoretical, critical and

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literary discourse, largely conjectured by poet-critics, publishers and leading discussions in the anthologies.

2.5. Territorializing Experimental Poetries in Britain

Experimental or innovative poetries work against certain assumptions about ways of reading and writing poetry. While some critics see them as continuation of modernist poetry and its practices, some others try to save experimental poetries from the discussions of canonization and requirements of established écoles. As Jon Clay argues, tracing contemporary poetry to its 'roots'—which is a highly contestable word when its theoretical and philosophical orientations are considered—involves not only marking out "a lineage of direct influence (such as, for example, the influence of Pound on Zukofsky on Olson on Prynne)" but requires one to consider "modernism as institution" (6). It was not of course through British Poetry Revival that the form was challenged for the first time. The innovation brought by experimental poetries develops out of a certain philosophical background and literary agenda dislocating the representationalist[13] modes of poetry writing with formal and linguistic qualities of their work. The process of signification is interrupted; and language does not maintain its role in representing reality that exists outside the text. As Eric Mottram describes, experimental poetries have brought tremendous change over poetic space, the role of the reader, and how poems work rather than mean:

> Poetic space need not be rigidly enclosed or shaped under hard linear dimensions, restricted to traditional sentence logic and grammatical usage. The completion of a poem could include a reader's consciousness. The poet's meeting a reader in a formative process need not be dependent on straight-jacketing notation and the eyes following print on a silent page. […] A poem could be

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[13] As Karen Barad explains, "the representationalist belief in the power of words to mirror preexisting phenomena is the metaphysical substrate that supports social constructivist, as well as traditional realist, beliefs" (802).

proposition of energies that suggested their sources and need not terminate them in insistent limits. Instead of being marketed as a consumerist item, a poem could be part of the world of physics and philosophy interaction, requiring an attention beyond instant recognition and reaction. Instead of being an item in a school of rhetoric, a poem could have a variety of articulations, continuity and discontinuity, sentence and parataxis, and an awareness of the imaginative possibilities of relationships between particle, measure, line and paragraph, between existent and new forms. ("British" 27-8)

Experimental poetries extend poetry's engagement with other art forms and mix different media with what is traditionally known as the material of a poem. Eric Mottram's description shows that experimentalism in poetry has also a politically-committed nature. Despite the claims of critics who see postmodern aesthetics as apolitical, experimental poetries, though closely affected by postmodernist aesthetics, stand against the forces of capitalism and consumerist culture. Experimental poetries set themselves apart from the mainstream poetry by virtue of their distance from being an object of consumption. For many experimental poets, mainstream poetry is closely allied with the forces of capitalist regimes of poetry consumption. Sarah Broom argues that the reader is invited "to 'consume' a poem without questioning its nature, construction, and situation in history, just as modern capitalism seeks to seduce the consumer to buy goods without questioning the system in which they operate" (225-6). It is also important to highlight the plurality in the label experimental or innovative "poetries," since they do not homogenously represent a body of work produced by certain poets. These poetries are, what Peter Middleton calls, "heterogeneous universes" with wavering degrees of "dissidence" ("Imagined" 128).

Another distinguishing feature of experimental poetries is their affinities with internationally-moulded modernism, drawing inspiration from various modernisms that exist on a global scale, North American and East European

influences being among the major ones. Therefore, contemporary poetry takes up modernism as "an experimental orientation developed through cosmopolitan networks" rather than a historically situated category (Milne 161). One of the most widely discussed and contested topics about British innovative poetries is foreign influences, especially transatlantic ones. The comparison between the inclinations of British and North American poets is widespread in discussions of the advent of modernist aesthetics and poetics in both continents. Some British poets and critics propagate that the dominance of North American poetry over British poetry has been overrated, and this influence brought nothing but lack of taste in the British poetry scene:

> Of course the main point is that this image passes judgment, pejoratively suggesting that poetry since 1945 has been largely undistinguished. But the image also serves other purposes. It divides English poets from American ones: they are the risk-takers and expansionists, the confessionals and Beats; our poets, it is felt, are small beer. The image indicates too that after the big, bold advances of Modernism our poets have in some way held themselves back. And finally it concedes that our poets are very far from being prolific. (Morrison, "Poetry" 96)

However, critics like Peter Barry acknowledge the impact of American poetry on the waning interest in British poetry internationally in the post-war period when compared to other poetries written in English: "American poetry was indisputably the major body of contemporary poetry in English in the 1950s and 1960s" (*Poetry Wars*, 2). The decline of British poetry at the time is generally aligned with another master narrative of decline of Britain as an empire and a nation due to profound economic and social transformations. In "Poetry and the Poetry Business," Blake Morrison further discusses that the decline in post-war British poetry is rooted in serious economic crises in the publishing industry; "any investigation of the state of our poetry should touch on sales figures, publishing trends, and audiences" (97).

Redell Olsen, on the other hand, argues that British poets in the mid-twentieth century came across European modernist trends through the work of American poets, especially due to the circulation of magazines such as *Reality Studios*, *Spectacular Diseases*, and *fragmente,* which "facilitated the ongoing 'transatlantic shuffle' in late Modernist poetry" (48). In the 1970s, British poetry was particularly motivated by Black Mountain Poetry led by Charles Olson, Beat generation poets and the New York School. R. J. Ellis similarly contends that American poetry extensively influenced the modernist trends in British poetry scene from the fifties onwards:

> [I]t is possible to see that the Beats' demand for a reappraisal of the social role of creative writing, the Black Mountain poets' insistence on open form, proprioceptive verse forms to liberate meaning from the constraints of conventional forms, and the subversions of language and syntax erected in different ways by the New York school and the L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E poets can all interact with the modernist practices of Bunting, MacDiarmid, Jones and their progeny (which were in part re-discovered via the impact of US activities in Britain), particularly as these were taken up in the Fifties, to constitute a sustained, versatile and various interrogation of the politics of signification. (89)

American schools of poetry did not only influence the poetic style in Britain, but also brought recognition to poets like Basil Bunting, David Jones and Hugh MacDiarmid through consideration of their work in the North American academia. This struggle might have led to the changes that took place in the Poetry Society, representing establishment poetry in Britain, having Hugh MacDiarmid and Basil Bunting as presidents and Eric Mottram as the editor of the Society's journal, *Poetry Review*. Another contribution to the new forms of poetry was through diverse materials adopted from disciplines and sciences that are somewhat left out of poetic practice; these materials from "geology, geography, etymology, history and the erotic" and many others were marked in

the poetry of "Pound, Zukofsky, Neruda, Trakl, Olson, Pasolini, Vallejo, Rothenberg" (Mottram, "British" 28).

Keith Tuma's *Fishing by Obstinate Isles: Modern and Postmodern British Poetry and American Readers (1998)* is worth considering so as to envisage the reception of contemporary British poetry by American readers, as the title of the book suggests. In his Introduction, Tuma shows a real sympathy for British modernist poetics, with efforts to revitalize and give voice to new and long-neglected British modernist poets in contemporary American poetry scene, along with complaints that "In the United States, British poetry is dead. It is as dead as Philip Larkin … It is as dead as the syllabus in those few and increasingly in fewer college classrooms where recent British poetry is taught" (1). Tuma dispenses the blame upon several institutions of poetry: poets, anthologists, academic literary study which has long neglected fresh critical methods, the attitude of the British themselves and American insularity per se. The exact "death" of British poetry in the United States, for Tuma, took place when the British Poetry Revival officially came to an end with the eviction of experimental poets like Eric Mottram and Bob Cobbing from the Poetry Society, who formerly worked together with American experimentalists and late modernists (6-7).

This American influence on British poetry is thought to be one of the reasons why the institutions of poetry then in Britain resisted modernist poetics and new poetry. Eric Mottram, though acknowledging the cooperative studies with transatlantic poets, finds the establishment critics in the 1960s "chauvinistic" in their attempts to label new poetics as American impositions ("British" 28). The conservative vein in the Poetry Society was very much disturbed by the alleged dominance of transatlantic influences taking over the traditions in British poetry. The British scene did not take this influence for granted and, as it was formerly declared by anthologies like Al Alvarez's, this influence had a notorious presence in poetic history of the twentieth century; even T. S. Eliot did not establish himself as a truly British poet, for Al Alvarez, as

"the experimental techniques of Eliot and the rest never really took on in England because they were an essentially American concern: attempts to forge a distinctively American language for poetry" (17).

In addition to this account of American modernist poetics taking over British poetry from the sixties onwards, Drew Milne proposes another micro-narrative of European modernist influences with the fleeing artists, poets and theorists from continental Europe during and after the Second World War. Drew Milne's account of major influences in post-war British modernism starts with reference to Kurt Schwitters and his association with British universities, acknowledging the fact that "such connections, like so many other possible genealogies, seem only to have been possible retrospectively and then belatedly" (158). Kurt Schwitters plays a crucial role after his migration to Britain as he brought his avant-garde techniques and launched a Dada project called *Merz* in 1947 (157) and many poets including Peter Reading and Maggie O'Sullivan confess that they are indebted to the innovations of Schwitters. While the American models were considered formally more "liberal," the avant-garde trends coming from continental Europe were more "politically radical" due to their socialism.

Drawing on the formal radical experimentation and attack on signification, Ellis writes, "the politics centring on the lapses between signifier and signified and referent is both political and a space that the dominant ideology, or rather ideologies, seek to fill: radicalism is the remaining constituent" (94). Their radicalism might be ensued by the way some of experimental poetries are circulated and facilitated through technological ways such as publishing online, enabling their poetry to be disseminated through more open field ways. The circulation of experimental poems as projects by open field or digital means is in parallel to their open-ended form and processual tactics used by the poets.

An important aspect that critics of contemporary poetry often argue is the difficulty of experimental poetries and the ways in which they interact with contemporary literary theories. The discussion of difficulty is often tied to the experiences and practices of reading modernist poems. The difficulty does not only stem from the intellectual background of the reader but also from the style and theoretical background of this kind of poetry. Moreover, the visual encounter between the poem and the reader produces a moment of belatedness that makes the latter ask whether it indeed is a poem. Experimental poetic procedures have henceforth involved "reimagining [new] readerships" (Middleton, "Imagined" 136) with new reading habits, forcing one's mind to question the capacity of language and poetics to depict the everyday life and critique the ways in which poetry is habitually produced. Difficulty might be one way of experiencing these formally radical poems. Conventional poetry makes the reader feel safer as it marks "stable subject-positions and relations with the world (and with the society) into a reader's body;" whereas the difficulty and uncanny experience of reading innovative poetries would usually posit a deterritorializing effect on the reader (Clay 79). Described as an autonomous work of art, such poetry "leav[es] its sensational inscriptions in the body of the reader as it passes through her, leaving her a briefly live connection with the world before she is territorialized by the conservative forces that envelope her at almost every living moment" (181). Clearly readers' expectations from the kind of poetry that represents an outside reality through a very accessible language are somewhat challenged by non-representationalist modes of experimental writing.

Experimental poets show an awareness of the most debated concepts of continental theory and philosophy, especially poststructuralist modes of reading and writing, concepts of subjectivity, the way language is perceived as poetic material, and poetry as a text. Most of the poems of experimental vein speak from a theoretical position, and they also speak back to theory itself.

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Stephen Ross argues that theory and modernist writing unsurprisingly cross-breed one another: "[m]odernist writing thinks theoretically and theory writes modernistically; they are not simply interestingly coincidental phenomena, but mutually sustaining aspects of the same project" (2). Apart from formal and linguistic innovation, theoretically informed concepts and procedures in their poetry result in suspicion and prejudice by critics who favour more traditional forms of poetry. This is one of the major reasons why such poetry was found unaccommodating in British establishment poetry, as Peter Middleton also puts it in "Who am I to Speak?", this "new, floating variousness is said to be too burdened with theoretical discourse to be truly poetic" and poets are "too political" or "too much aesthetic extremists" (108). It is often alleged that foregrounding of theory in experimental poetries makes it more difficult and less accessible for the readers; therefore, it can only be read, understood or interpreted by an élite group of critics and writers who are similarly learned in continental philosophy and theory. Such an accusation has been previously levied against modernist poetry whose aesthetic practitioners were thought to belong to an élite academic group of writers.

Another risk may include the experience of the critic who writes about the formal innovations; as Drew Milne argues, "respective formal strategies [might be] so self-evident as to make interpretation redundant, or so radical as to be too indeterminate or too daunting for existing models of criticism to discuss" (166). This struggle actually includes multiple orientations as the writerly nature of experimental poems resists habitual ways of reading poetry; therefore, critics of such poetry might feel more liberated than ever in interpreting and producing multiple readings of these poems.

Lastly, while conventional poetry with the poet's assumed presence through the stable and distinct poetic voice locates the poetic utterance in a particular temporal and spatial paradigm, experimental poetries play with those assumptions about locational values with floating images of space and time

references. Peter Barry calls these assumptions "stable chronotopes" while describing the time-space reconfiguration in experimental poetries as "unstable chronotopes" (*Poetry War*, 138). In experimental poetries, Barry further argues,

> [t]he projected locale of a poem is not usually a single event in a singular place in the realist sense, but a 'meta-space/time intersection', which may be a hybrid of the real, the imagined, the remembered, the possible, constituting the playgrounds of the 'deconstructed subject', that is, the speaker who is not a singular 'I', but may combine 'you' and 'us', or animate or inanimate. […] Another word for it is 'polyphonic subjectivity', which is Felix Guattari's term for the situation in which there is no stable 'I' in the poem, but a shifting across 'I', 'we', 'you' positions, or else a series of utterances emanating from a variety of sources … (138)

These sources drawn from both animate and inanimate worlds, poetic and non-poetic means, also change the way poetic space on the written page is perceived and analysed by the onlooker/reader. Space-time multiplication is not only theoretically envisioned in the poems, but it is also politically working against the modes of representationalist thinking and reading experimental poetries.

This chapter aimed to place this study within the broader context of Contemporary British Poetry by focusing on both dominant and alternative narratives about the development of alternative poetries in Britain especially in the second half of the twentieth century. In doing so, it further aimed to limit the scope of the study to formally and linguistically innovative poetries written after the late 1980s to the present. The chapter was particularly interested in clarifying the terminological debates around contemporary British poetry, reviewing the characteristics of experimental poetries and contextualizing the debate by referring to the institutions of poetry such as publishing industry, anthologies and poetry societies rather than the societal changes in that period.

CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

> [I]t is not the other which is another I, but the I which is an other, a fractured I. (Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* 261)

> To think is to voyage. (Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* 482)

There is a growing scholarship on the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in various disciplines and their contribution to how literature is interpreted and critiqued. This study maintains that Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical, literary and aesthetic propositions and writings provide us with a wide array of material that re-orients and makes accessible the readings of theoretically oriented innovative poetries in Britain. Therefore, this chapter is interested in Deleuze and Guattari not only as philosophers against rationalist paradigms, but also as literary critics who constantly refer to the work of writers like Kafka, Beckett, Artaud, Proust, Herman Melville, Sacher-Masoch, and "over seventy-five writers" alluded in *A Thousand Plateaus*, bearing in mind that these philosophers do not "directly offer a systematic 'theory' of literature" (Bogue, *Deleuze* 1, 2). Deleuze and Guattari draw concepts from various disciplines, ranging from botanics, zoology, and geography to arts, literature, architecture and cybernetics. Assembling material from a variety of sources has been their distinctive style and mode of writing in both their solo and co-authored works. They blend already existing concepts with newly invented ones, appealing to diverse readers with their "ex-centric vocabulary that unites all the eco-bio-zoo-

geo-meteoro-logical terms of their open and ever-expanding conceptual playing-field" (Chisholm par.2). This particular style has been an example of what this thesis takes up as a critical way of looking at contemporary poetry, that is, nomad thought and poetics.

The theoretical framework of the study pivots around Deleuze and Guattarian concepts of nomadism and nomadic subjectivity, smooth/striated spaces and affect by particularly focusing on the ways in which this study can develop its arguments on related concepts of space, body and subjectivity and offer a Deleuze and Guattarian reading of contemporary poetry. By drawing on these concepts and exploring their implications in a study as such, the theoretical framework largely aims to analyse the possibilities and "encounters" of what might be termed "nomadic" poetry (as famously termed by Pierre Joris) in the following chapters, and discover rhizomatic connections between arts, philosophy, and literary theory. The theoretical framework I advance in this chapter does not aim to diminish the poems to simple philosophical discussions; on the contrary, I aim to open poetry to productive dialogue with other worlds of possible interpretation.

3.1. "An Orphan line of thought:" Nomadology

The notion of nomadism was instrumentally treated in the work of Deleuze and Guattari, and other theorists and critics influenced by and writing about their oeuvre, such as European feminist Rosi Braidotti, Brian Massumi, and poet-critic Pierre Joris. Deleuze and Guattari develop the notion of nomad thought in their collaborative work, *A Thousand Plateaus*, which is a sequel to *Anti-Oedipus*, both subtitled as *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. The style and form of the second volume of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, made up of different plateaus and without adopting a traditional book form, offers a good example of a smooth space of nomad thinking, which is similarly argued by

Brian Massumi that *A Thousand Plateaus* is "a sustained, constructive experiment in schizophrenic, or 'nomad' thought" (*User's* 4).

Deleuze and Guattari's "Treatise of Nomadology" introduces the concept of nomadology as the "war machine," a term derived from Georges Dumézil's readings of Indo-European mythology. The political system Dumézil describes depends on the dominance of two sovereign subjects: "the magician-king" and "the jurist-priest." There emerges a warrior figure outside of these two types of governance who commits three basic sins "against the king, against the priest, against the laws originating in the State" (354). State structure tries to appropriate the war machine by forcing it into an organized whole while the war machine resists this appropriation by acts of "betrayal and questioning of authority." The war machine thus embodies two basic characteristics: the first, it is "exterior to the State apparatus," and the second, it is "the invention of the nomads" (380). Nomad thought functions like the war machine which might be thought as an alternative to any repressive socio-political structure. Acting against the operations of control and domination, "an ideological, scientific, or artistic movement can be a potential war machine," creating lines of flight and nomadic trajectory of thought (423).

Nomad thought fights against the prevalence of "state philosophy" equated by Deleuze and Guattari with the representationalist mode of thinking which descends from Platonic philosophy onwards. Such thinking works together with the apparatuses of the state to maintain authority and order established by the presumed hierarchies; and within this system, "each mind [is] an analogously organized mini-State morally unified in the supermind of the State" (Massumi, *User's* 4). As Massumi further argues, state philosophy has a twofold function in producing the thinking subject and the concepts to be produced by this subject on the grounds of faithfulness to its apparatuses: "The subject, its concepts, and the 'external' objects to which the concepts are applied have a shared, internal essence: the self-resemblance at the basis of

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identity" (4). What Deleuze argues as nomad thought is against this "arborescent model" of thinking and its establishing a hierarchy between things. Rather than sameness and constancy, nomad thought moves on planes of difference and exteriority:

> 'Nomad thought' does not lodge itself in the edifice of an ordered interiority; it moves freely in an element of exteriority. It does not repose on identity; it rides difference. It does not respect the artificial division between the three domains of representation, subject, concept, and being; it replaces restrictive analogy with a conductivity that knows no bounds. The concepts it creates do not merely reflect the eternal form of a legislating subject, but are defined by a communicable force in relation to which their subject, to the extent that they can be said to have one, is only secondary. Rather than reflecting the world, they are immersed in a changing state of things. (Massumi, *User's* 5)

Deleuze and Guattari were not the first discoverers of such thinking. In his essay entitled "Nomad Thought," as originally published "Pensée nomade" in 1970, Deleuze contends that Marx, Freud and Nietzsche have been important figures at the dawn of the new century; however, unlike the first two philosophers, it is Nietzsche who is truly seen as "the dawn of *counterculture*" by Deleuze. Nietzsche could disrupt all the codes of the Western bourgeois subject by "transmit[ting] it to a new body, to invent a body that can receive it and spill it forth" (142) and by basing his philosophical thinking and writing on the "outside" motivated by the "movement, the framed line, [that] comes from without, that it does not begin within the limits of the frame. It beg[ins] beneath or beside the frame, and traverses the frame" (144-5). Brian Massumi likewise follows the line of thinkers who might be considered the precursors of nomad thought in different times of philosophical thinking, such as Spinoza's "ethics," Nietzsche's "gay science," Artaud's "crowned anarchy," Blanchot's "space of literature," and Foucault's "outside thought" (Foreword xiii). These "orphan line of thinkers" do not have a systematic line of thought that all share;

however, what makes them nomad thinkers is their opposition to the striated realm of State philosophy. As opposed to the systematic and sedentary structure of sovereign state discourse that governs all the relations, nomad thought presents "a type of thought that is intrinsically subaltern, experimental, and uncertain but in a non-negative sense" (Deuchars).

Five main themes of Deleuze and Guattari's nomad thought are outlined by Daniel Smith in the introduction of *Essays Critical and Clinical* as "the destruction of the world, the dissolution of the subject, the dis-integration of the body, the 'minorization' of politics, and the 'stuttering' of language" (xxiv). Following this outline, the rest of the chapter is organized by taking the discussion from how nomadic subjectivity provides us with alternatives to the rational and unitary sense of self, how corporeal aesthetics of nomad thought disrupt the binary oppositions between mind/body, and how the concept of space is revised with concepts of smooth/striated spaces. As a final point, the chapter aims to discover how Deleuze and Guattari's aesthetic-ethical writings in *What is Philosophy?* motivate a politics and minorization of writing which might be called nomadic poetics.

3.2. Deleuze and Guattari's war machine: Nomadic Subjectivity

Discussions of self and subjectivity have been one of the central questions of continental philosophy and experimental poetries alike. Before discussing how nomadic articulations of subjectivity operate, it is important to note how this study makes the distinction between the uses of "self" and "subjectivity," preferring to use the latter while analyzing the poems. The notion of unitary self, comprehending the world around her/himself and truthfully representing this material world through poetic medium has been inherited through the Romantic lyric subject in English poetry. However, modernist and experimental poetries problematize the primacy of the lyric expression either by revisioning the role of the lyric subject or completely

rejecting the authentic and unified speaking voice in their poetry. This reaction to the lyric subject has actually been an outcome of theories of subjectivity in continental philosophy and aesthetic movements in general:

> 'the self' suggest[s] rational, coherent, autonomous beings fully present to themselves and in control of their actions, thoughts and meanings, the terms 'subjectivity' and 'the subject' suggest less powerful, more tentative beings who are subject to forces not entirely within their control or comprehension. These forces are both external—historical, economic and cultural—and internal—bodily energies or drives, their psychic representations, unconscious fantasies and repressed thoughts. (Cranny-Francis et al 42)

Deleuze and Guattari's theory of subjectivity revolves around two major critiques of previous models of subjectivity: Cartesian cogito and Freudian psychoanalysis. Their emphasis on the nomadic subjectivity first aims to dethrone the rational, coherent and observing self of Cartesian philosophy:

> The Cogito, consciousness, the "I think" is the subject of enunciation that reflects its own use and conceives of itself following a line of deterritorialization represented by methodical doubt. The subject of the statement is the union of the soul and the body, or feeling, guaranteed in a complex way by the cogito, and performs the necessary reterritorializations. The cogito is a proceeding that must always be recommenced, haunted by the possibility of betrayal, a deceitful God, and an evil Genius. (*Thousand* 128)

The body, for Deleuze and Guattari, does not have a secondary status when compared to the mind. They mobilize the body from its deprived position in the mind/body dualism by their vitalist approach to life forms, the plane of immanence. Deleuze and Guattari offer a non-teleological ontology here against the ongoing tyranny of the unitary conception of self as borrowed from Cartesian cogito. There is a return to the body as a locus of production, flourishing of subjectivity by overturning the assumptions of Cartesian dichotomy between mind and body. As Braidotti defines the nomadic subject, it

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is "a collective assemblage, a relay-point for a web of complex relations that displace the centrality of ego-indexed notions of identity" ("Intensive" 46). While the subject's consciousness has been thought as the primary source of one's identity in classical philosophy, feminist theorists put emphasis on body as a surface upon which all emotional, societal, political or material forces are inscribed; in other words, body becomes an important source for the figurations of subjectivity.

Secondly, Deleuze and Guattari critique the formation of subject in Freudian psychoanalysis through Oedipalization and the envisioning of subject who is entrapped within the workings of the unconscious. Deleuze and Guattari problematize the concepts of Freudian psychoanalysis in the plateau "One or Several Wolves?": "Freud discover[s] the greatest art of the unconscious, this art of molecular multiplicities, than we find him tirelessly at work bringing back molar unities, reverting to his familiar themes of the father, the penis, the vagina, Castration with a capital C" (1). Then, Jacques Lacan reinterprets this oedipal triangulation focusing on the function of language and the paternal metaphor—the Symbolic order—in the socialization of the infant with language acquisition. Since both formations of subjectivity depend on the emphasis on lack and unfulfilled desire to compensate that lack, Deleuze and Guattari try to discard this oedipal triangle by figuring subjectivity as composing of fluidities, becomings, and lines of flight, stripped of the envisioning of lack.

Their starting point is a departure from the psychoanalytic logic of drives as they base their mode of thinking on a bio-psychological notion of becoming and fluidity of conceptual boundaries. For them, a systematic analysis of the historicization of mind and body, passion and reason dissolves due to the interaction of imagination, emotion and intellect. They put the emphasis on subject's being in relation to the world. Thus, they challenge the linguistic models of subjectification as in poststructuralist Lacan and problematize the significance of desire, lack and social practice. Rather than the linguistically

organized subjectivity against the backdrop of repressed desire and linguistic castration, they try to rediscover the expressive subjectivity, corporeality or what expressive psychoanalysis aims to put into a linguistic/discursive ground. Their line of thinking advances from the category of discursively situated subject towards corporeality and worldliness of being.

Nomad's vision is one of the schizophrenic whose experience of time, space and everyday life is governed by chaos and flows of desire. Rather than the discourses of repression and lack, subjectivity is an outcome of production and contacts between things on a plane of immanence. Appropriating the Freudian model of operations of the unconscious and parodying psychoanalysis, they offer schizoanalysis as a mode of reinterpretation of the oedipal conflict. Rather than describing the unconscious as a repressed realm of the subject "built upon a stable and knowable quantity of lack," schizoanalysis takes it "as the production of the new and dynamic" (Mansfield 143, 142). The unconscious is seen as an assemblage of various desiring machines that "seek out endlessly new, plural and contradictory possibilities of interconnection, expansion and production" (142). Desire is no more restricted to the repressions, fantasies and the unconscious of the individual. Deleuze and Guattari reinstate the analysis of desire within a socio-political context especially by understanding the forces of capitalist modes of production upon the way desiring machines operate in capitalist societies of contemporary times.

Focusing on corporeal and material aspects of subjectivity, they do not locate desire in an originary lack but discover the creative and affirmative realms of it. As Elizabeth Grosz also argues, such an interpretation of desire becomes important for feminist research as it reconfigures other previous discourses which build their argument on absence: "Desire does not take for itself a particular object whose attainment it requires; rather, it aims at nothing above its own proliferation or self-expansion. It assembles things out of singularities and breaks things, assemblages, down into their singularities. It

moves; it does" (*Volatile* 165). Rosi Braidotti extensively stresses the importance of body and embodiment in figurations of female subject in her work, and, from a poststructuralist feminist perspective body has been analysed as "an interface, a threshold, a field of intersecting material and symbolic forces" and "a cultural construction that capitalizes on energies of a heterogeneous, discontinuous and unconscious nature" ("Feminist" 206).

Additionally, Deleuze and Guattari's nomadic subject has similarities with the Foucauldian conception of subjectivity in terms of discovering the discursive roots of subjectivity: "The subject [for Foucault] is not something that exists in advance, but is produced through operations of discourses" (Cranny-Francis et al 48). Foucault elaborates on the operations of power that work invisibly through the body of the subjects who are acted upon by societal structures and operations of power in that particular society, which Deleuze and Guattari might call the arborescent model of social order. Very similar to Foucault's articulation of subjectivity among societal forces and paradigms of power, Deleuze and Guattari focus on the subject's encounters with the world around and its social sphere. They identify two basic steps for the subject to metastasize within these encounters with an exteriority:

> First of all, there must be a moment of de-individualization, an escape to some degree from the limits of the individual. Secondly, there must be the constitution of new ways of being in the world, new ways of thinking and feeling, new ways of being a subject. In fact, both movements are given by Deleuze and Guattari a single name: becoming. On the other hand, becoming is a movement on the pre-individual level, the level of what constitutes us: all the movements, connections, pieces of our world that are patched together to form a subject. These becomings ultimately concern new ways of being in the world. (Roffe 43)

The type of subjectivity mentioned here revises identity politics which is based on sameness while the processes of becoming ride on difference and constant movement. Likewise, Elizabeth Grosz outlines two different models of subject in

Time Travels: the first one, even including Butler's model of performativity, still succumbs to the models of subject aligned with identification and identity-based interpretation, and the second one, instigated by impersonal forces, is based on acts and 'politics of imperceptibility.' As opposed to the identity politics, the second model embraces the co-existence of "living and nonliving, macroscopic and microscopic, above and below the level of the human … to displace the centrality of both consciousness and the unconscious" (190).

Nomadism or nomadic subjectivity is based on a new philosophical thinking that rejects the anthropomorphic assumptions of Enlightenment ideology. The major preoccupation of modernity project has been related to the configuration and representation of the subject around the reason-rationality axis. Nomadism is critical of the ways in which Western philosophy essentializes the notions of reason and rationalism. It aims to start transdisciplinary connections with numerous other discourses, which can be seen as a stylistic and political choice made by the philosophers and theorists to "nomadize" different categories and set of relations in Western philosophical thought. Rosi Braidotti reads these attempts as a philosophical undertaking or activity which "dislodge[s] them from their implicit attachment to the humanistic vision concerning the autonomous, liberal individual so as to open them towards other modes of thinking about the structures of the self and the interrelation to others" ("Feminist" 196). The nomadic subject challenges the predominant representations of the self that has been produced since the Enlightenment and distorts the prescribed boundaries by considering the "bodily roots of subjectivity" (Ponzanesi 215). The thinking and observing subject of the Enlightenment ideology is at the centre of knowledge of the world around and producer of a systematic way of representation. On the contrary, the embodied nomadic subject challenges these claims of the knowing subject, stable sense of space and dominant modes of representation.

The analysis of the image of the nomad is not formulated as a subject that exists in its own materiality or as a real person belonging to a wandering tribe or any itinerant migrant subject. As Braidotti formulates in *Nomadic Subject*, the image of nomad will be treated more as a metaphor, thinking of the body of nomad passing through all different, but connected spaces of becoming, negotiating an indefinite number of subject positions. The nomad depends on the acts of "becoming," becoming multiple with movement, becoming incomprehensible at certain points of time:

> Becomings take place when a body connects to another body and in doing so, begins to perceive, move, think and feel in new ways. Deleuze and Guattari propose a series of political becomings which include: becoming-woman (to disrupt the dominant male form subjectivity), becoming-animal (to disrupt humanism), becoming-molecular (to disrupt the organization of the body), and becoming-imperceptible (to disrupt the idea of the self). (Hickey-Moody and Malins 6)

Becomings do not aim at destroying all structural components the subject relies upon; on the contrary, it offers a simultaneous existence of all forms within that multiplicity that actualize a becoming. This process is not a simple combination between things that exist in their own right; it brings about transformation without imitation and disruption of the oneness as suggested by a stable plane of existence. Becoming is not to attain the exact "form" of the thing that one turns into—what Deleuze further names "identification, imitation, [or] Mimesis;" however, it is rather drawing closer to the "zone of proximity, indiscernibility, or undifferentiation where one can no longer be distinguished from *a* woman, *an* animal, or *a* molecule" ("Literature" 225-6). Nomadic configurations are characterized by two discursive constructs: the multiple and the other. This is a different kind of subjectivity which is "outward-bound and based on complex relations with a multiplicity of others, including non-human others" (Braidotti, "Affirming" par.1).

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Daniel W. Smith, the translator of Deleuze's *Essays Critical and Clinical*, explains that the notion of becoming is more than having static selves that fit an identificatory category; however, it "refers to an objective zone of indistinction or indiscernibility that always exists between any two multiplicities, a zone that immediately precedes their respective natural differentiation" (xxx). Rather than maintaining a unitary self, the nomadic subject thus inhabits these "indistinct" zones of thresholds and liminal positions. In their writings about literature and aesthetics, Deleuze and Guattari argue that the literary machine works in such ways to produce becomings and flows. Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* includes one of the best examples of becoming—becoming-animal—even Deleuze and Guattari claim, "*Moby-Dick* in its entirety is one of the greatest masterpieces of becoming" (*Thousand* 243). While Captain Ahab pursues the whale, Moby Dick, he is inevitably caught by the "alliance" with the whale and identifies oneself with the whale altogether like Kafka's Gregor Samsa in *The Metamorphosis*. The individual, in this case, Captain Ahab is "anomalous," inhabiting the threshold or the borderline, which "makes it easier for us to understand the various positions it occupies in relation to the pack or the multiplicity it borders, and the various positions occupied by a fascinated Self (*Moi*)" (*Thousand* 245). Captain Ahab, or Gregor Samsa, leaves the territory of the human, the 'sedentary' space of identity as Deleuze would describe it, to merge with the terrain of the animal; and the whole story revolves around such intensities of becoming. A line of becoming is not essentially concerned with the points that unite it to make a new whole. None of the points that produce a becoming is considered the origin or telos of the becoming. "A line of becoming has only a middle," argue Deleuze and Guattari, it is the smooth space of movement between points, marked as a borderline or an in-between zone of contact between possible worlds (*Thousand* 293). One recurrent example of this reproductive process of becoming is wasp's becoming-orchid and orchid's becoming-wasp. The pollination of orchid is not a unidirectional process; both

wasp and orchid are caught within the process of re-de-territorialization by functioning effectively in this reproductive system: "The orchid deterritorializes by … a tracing of a wasp; … [t]he wasp is nevertheless deterritorialized, becoming a piece in the orchid's reproductive apparatus. But it reterritorializes the orchid by transporting its pollen. Wasp and orchid, as heterogeneous elements, form a rhizome" (*Thousand* 10).

Braidotti views the 'politics of location' as an affirmative approach regarding the issue of subjectivity and argues that it depends on complex power relations. She stresses the importance of alternative 'figurations' of subjectivity, such as nomadic, cyborg, the "inappropriate(d) other" ("Feminist" 198-9). The nomadic subject, for Braidotti, moves between different linguistic and cultural terrains, and, is always thus polyglot in nature:

> The polyglot as nomad in between languages banks on the affective level as his/her resting point; s/he knows how to trust traces and resist settling into one, sovereign vision of identity. The nomad's identity is a map where s/he has already been; she can always reconstruct it a posteriori, as a set of steps in an itinerary. (*Nomadic* 14)

The nomadic subject thinks through the body which is caught in complex transformations. The nomad embodies an "intense desire to go on trespassing, transgressing" the borders between the prescribed territories (36). Therefore, nomadic bodies are highly performative and conscious of the territories which they trespass without claiming rights over those spaces of encounter. It is this sense of fluidity and performativity that provides sites of empowerment and agency for the nomadic subject. Its polyglot nature resists easy categorizations; and signifying practices of self-representation are marked by ruptures and fragmentations. Rosi Braidotti opens her book, *Nomadic Subjects*, with reference to her personal life as an intellectual who eventually turns into a nomad due to her multicultural background. The act of "turning" into another category gives a liberatory space of difference and dissonance for Braidotti in

her discussions of nomadic subjectivity in general. The image of a nomad, wandering, being on the move all the time between places, languages, cultures, and people, is a very potent metaphor of contemporary human being's existential status especially considering the immigrant groups' state of displacement. In Braidotti's case such an "existential condition" evolves into "a style of thinking" and of course of writing (*Nomadic* 1). Likewise, this stylistic practice effects the experimental nature of her work, just so as that of Deleuze and Guattari. Rosi Braidotti stresses that, though the actual state of nomadism sets a pattern for her theorization, it does not thoroughly explain what is meant by nomadic figurations of subjectivity:

> Though the image of "nomadic subjects" is inspired by the experience of peoples or cultures that are literally nomadic, the nomadism in question here refers to the kind of critical consciousness that resists settling into socially coded modes of thought and behavior. Not all nomads are world travelers (sic.); some of the greatest trips can take place without physically moving from one's habitat. It is the subversion of set conventions that defines the nomadic state, not the literal act of traveling (sic.). (5)

Nomad thought, by distorting the preset hierarchies in any society, allows an alternative realm of thinking where poetry opens itself up to new spatial practices, configurations of subjectivity, and follows the movements of the body to dislocate what belongs to the sedentariness in that particular society and social milieu. Embodiment or the emphasis on body is an important aspect of Deleuze and Guattari's conceptualization of the nomadic body and subjectivity. Embodiment, following a Foucauldian argument, refers to the functioning of the body in producing social discourses through its use of language and discourse. Body itself becomes a discursive construct that gives form to the poems analysed in the study. Deleuze and Guattari's conception of body is closely connected to their ontology of becoming and multiplicity as it is understood in terms of its relation with other bodies, "both human and nonhuman, animate

and inanimate, linking organs and biological processes to material objects and social practices while refusing to subordinate the body to a unity or a homogeneity of the kind provided by the body's subordination to consciousness or to biological organization" (Grosz, *Volatile* 165). While bodies are arranged by identificatory markers such as gender, religion, ethnicity, nationality and so forth in state philosophy, nomad thought rethinks through all these categories to envision a subject to proliferate with multiplicity and becoming.

The bodies are seen as 'machinic assemblages,' as Deleuze and Guattari would term it, composed of various forces, transformations, energies that operate to produce a 'non-unitary' vision of subjectivity. An assemblage rejects a hierarchical relation between its components, dethroning the human element from its privileged position by visioning the human in relation with animals, plants, and inanimate objects which all have equal ontological orientation. Deleuze and Guattari borrow the term "Bodies without Organs (BwOs)" from Antonin Artaud's radio play "To Have Done with the Judgment of God" to envision bodies as desiring machines or sites of becoming. BwOs act on a "surface of speeds and intensities" rather than having a deeper psychical organization as oedipal configuration and State philosophy would require; therefore, BwOs offer an alternative to the organization and stratification of bodies in a particular milieu (Grosz, *Volatile* 169-70).

The figure of the nomad reimagines landscapes and urbanscapes as s/he passes through them, reverses cartographic expectations and is caught up within transpositions. The nomad as "a symbolic category" thus facilitates an envisioning of subjectivity which "cross[es] the boundaries of hegemonic discourses, and of imposed categories of identity formation" (Ponzanesi 207). The performance of subjectivity, the textual play of sound, text and visual collages, restlessness of language and the "asignifying rupture" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand* 9) evoke a sense of perpetual wandering, as also a sign of constant deferral and excess of nomadism. One way of looking at nomadic

articulations in poetry might be focusing on the formal dynamism, tracing the trope of movement on the textual surface of the poems and encountering the practices of linguistic experimentation. The idea of movement is tightly related to the conceptual undertaking of the figure of the nomad as wandering in certain spatial patterns during their time of travel, spaces that intersect with various cultural, ecological and social locations, and returning back to the place of departure, which might be roughly called home. Lawrence Krader describes this type of movement as follows:

> Nomads are those people who have a fixed round of movement, whether seasonal, annual, or multi-annual; they characteristically have a definite endpoint to their movements over the surface of the earth, and a point of return. Thus, nomadism is a cyclical or rhythmic movement. There are, by way of contrast, non-cyclical or non-periodic movements, such as migrations, which are total displacements of habitat, exemplified in the movement of settlers from their homes in the Old World to the New. (499)

Caren Kaplan, on the other hand, is critical of the Euro-American models of "displacement" or deterritorialization due to their homogenising tendencies towards difference and for perpetuating discourses of colonialism. This critique is largely connected with her discussion on how the idea of travel is theorized as being ingrained in colonial discourse in Western historical and literary thought. The liberating features of these poststructuralist propositions are simply seen as romantic, thus, not realistic or down-to-earth (3). By way of contrast, the theoretical locus of the poststructuralist "nomad thought" not only saves the Western subject from the rigid categorizations of oedipal psychoanalytical triangle but also destabilizes the very assumptions about the historical situatedness of the discourses of mobility and displacement.

Moreover, Deleuze and Guattari's concept of geophilosophy also supports such a conception of subjectivity which is reborn outside the dichotomies of human and non-human. Looking through their work one can get

a glimpse of a new and posthuman understanding of earth formulated through their geophilosophy. It provides a critique of anthropomorphic worldview which essentializes human beings as the ultimate owners of the space surrounding them. Deleuze's geophilosophy and Guattari's radical ecology might help us read experimental poetries by focusing on how such poetries share the same suspicion over anthropocentric representations of nature, landscape and urbanism in a post-industrial and capitalistic world. In *The Three Ecologies*, Félix Guattari proposes a revisionist ecosophy which is possible through an aesthetic and philosophical paradigm rather than a scientific one. These three ecological mechanisms include social ecosophy, mental ecosophy and conception of subjectivity itself. He envisions a new understanding or figuration of the self in relation to its surrounding, what remains outside of it, and particularly draws attention to the non-human plane of subjectivity. The actualization of this ecosophy depends on "a multifaceted movement, deploying agencies [instances] and dispositives that will simultaneously analyse and produce subjectivity" (68). This aesthetic and ethical programme proposed by Guattari requires the articulation of a "nascent subjectivity," a "constantly mutating socius," and an "environment in the process of being reinvented" (68). Guattari tries to produce alternative discursive formations for the ecological crises that the world is facing at the moment. Such an ethical revisioning of the subject thus tries to bridge the gap between the soul and nature which have been drawn away from one another by Cartesian vision of body as belonging to the natural world, whereas the element of consciousness, the mind, has been devised to have no place in it at all. The mind has been thought not only superior to the body but also as the sole source of knowledge over the natural world, making nature secondary to human existence (Grosz, *Volatile* 6). The new vision of subjectivity offered by Guattari is, therefore, highly critical of anthropocentric foundations of knowledge and self.

As the final point, the concept of the "fold" is critical in understanding the emergence of subjectivity and description of the nomad. Borrowed from the terminology of Baroque architecture, the "fold" might be adapted into this study in order to talk about the ways to reflect upon the "un/folding of the other" within formal and linguistic experimentation, and to "encounter" the potentials for non-human (or not necessarily human) forms of subjectivity, playing with a number of corporeal and spatial assumptions about selfhood and what is considered to be human(ist). Deleuze writes about the connection of the foldings with the outside which produces new insides: "The outside is not a fixed limit but a moving matter animated by peristaltic movements, folds and foldings that together make up an inside: they are not something other than the outside, but precisely the inside of the outside" (*Foucault* 96-7). While the senses of the reader are automatized by the representationalist mode of writing, innovative poetries provide an unfolding of the other, as Jon Clay argues, because "the encounter touches on otherness, on that which is the other than a subject and potentially other than human" (93). Encounter can be read as a point or instance of contact between the reader and the text, that belated moment of hesitation, confusion and unrehearsed delivery. At this point of contact, both entities—whether textual or corporeal—are involved in a process of unfolding, wandering in the thresholds of their bodily, spatial and temporal limitations. Encountering poems of experimental type is like entering into the surfaces of texts with an indefinite number of runways and exits. Clay argues that innovative poems are encountered "as a block of sensations," and "transformations [are] wrought by the bodily actualization through performance of an innovative poem" (141, 93). This performative nature of the poems provides a plane of opening for the reader where it allows them to fuse into the poem and become part of many of the assemblages these poems work through, and finds "smooth" spaces of exteriority where transformations can take place.

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3.3. Smooth and Striated Spaces

In *Space, Time and Perversion*, Elizabeth Grosz argues that bodies should be reconsidered by taking into account the spatial and temporal dimensions they exist in. The notion of stable identity is related to how the subject is situated in an arranged space and time and her/his capacity to produce representations of these spatio-temporal relations (90). None of these notions—subject, space and time—exist in their own right, but, are expressed through the principle of relationality. In opposition to the Cartesian conception of space as absolute and geometrically fixed, emptied out of its social significance and just seen as a container of such complex relations, space itself is activated through the subject's relations with objects, events, other bodies within this exteriority: "space does not become comprehensible to the subject by its being the space of movement; rather, it becomes space through movement, and as such, it acquires specific properties from the subject's constitutive functioning in it" (92).

Deleuze and Guattari employ the terms "smooth" and "striated" space to designate two different types of societies that are different in societal organization and functioning of the State philosophy. The bodies that are governed within both systems are in direct opposition to one another in terms of the practices they have to obey or deterritorialize. Nomad space is productive as it moves beyond the known territories and identificatory locations of the self. Smooth spaces offer points of escape from the rigid, grid-like organization of the striated societies. However, commenting on Deleuzian "smooth" spaces as spaces of absolute freedom might sound unrealistic and might be one of the most idealistic parts of their theorization of such societies. This thesis is particularly interested in those moments and spaces of escape in the poetry of Peter Reading and Maggie O'Sullivan, as those "lines of flight" help us exemplify the processes of becoming in their poetic discourse. The space of experimental poetries can be considered smooth as it depends on

"continuous variation, continuous development of form" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand* 478).

In his Foreword to *A Thousand Plateaus*, Brian Massumi defines nomad thought as moving outside the "striated" spaces of state and its ideologies. Movement in striated spaces are governed by gravitational pull, regulation and disciplining. However, smooth spaces are not "horizontally" organized; they move towards every possible direction as also conveyed by their analogy of the rhizome in the same book (xiii). What matters to the subjects in the smooth space is to follow a trajectory, the path, the trail rather than aiming to arrive at a point in this grid-like structure:

> In striated space, lines or trajectories tend to be subordinated to points: one goes from one point to another. In the smooth, it is the opposite: the points are subordinated to the trajectory. This was already the case among the nomads for the clothes-tent-space vector of the outside. The dwelling is subordinated to the journey; inside space conforms to outside space: tent, igloo, boat. (Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand* 478)

Considering the life of desert nomads, Deleuze and Guattari characterize the smooth space as spaces of affect that depend on "intensities, wind and noise, forces, and sonorous and tactile qualities;" however, striated spaces are arranged by measurable qualities which are mostly contingent upon visual and optical potentials (479). Deleuze and Guattari's smooth space revises the notions of space going down from Plato's view of space as a container of human actions and events and Euclid's limitation of space to its geometric representation. They characterize Euclidian space as a striated space as it depends on visual coordinates. Contrasted with the Euclidian space, smooth spaces "do not meet the visual condition of being observable from a point in space external to them; an example of this is the system of sounds, or even of colors" (*Thousand* 371). When urban spaces are taken into account, city is seen as an example of striated spaces. Deleuze and Guattari say, "the city is the

striated space *par excellence*" (481). Cityscapes also produce smooth spaces and urban nomads that operate against the striation of urban organization. Those smooth spaces within striated structure of cities are mostly localized attempts of voluntary or involuntary revolutions such as counter-cultures.

Deleuze and Guattari contrast the concept of rhizome with arborescence—both borrowed from botanical terminology—in order to elaborate on the notions of smooth and striated spaces. The famous metaphor used for arborescent system is the metaphor of tree. This metaphor is recurrent in Western thought; as Mansfield explains, not only tree itself but tree-related vocabulary is also widely recycled: "Outside of religion, metaphors of root, trunk, branch and fruit dominate our descriptions of everything from the structural theories of linguistics to the design of economic models and international telephone systems" (140). Tree as a model for arborecent system characterizes any organization based on hierarchy and defined positions within chain of command. If we are to explore the metaphor of tree, we will see a rather hierarchical structure emanating from a single root, with a unifying body, and branches that can grow out of this body with fruit, leaves and flowers on it. This highly tight system of growth stands for "imitating the multiple on the basis of a centered or segmented higher unity" or as "centres of significance and subjectification, central automata like organized memories" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand* 16). One arborescent thought system for Deleuze and Guattari is the oedipal configuration of Freud: "Freud's case studies consistently force the individual unconscious into the straitjacket of Oedipal theory, blocking off any outlets and alternatives. The unconscious is to be traced back to its origins, not projected forward into its possibilities" (Mansfield 142).

A rhizome, on the other hand, works against the notions of origin and telos and also hierarchies produced by the tree model. Deleuze and Guattari explain some of the principles of rhizomes in detail in *A Thousand Plateaus*. First two principles, "connection and heterogeneity," are related to how rhizomes

reject orderly structure and work through establishing connections between different systems of thinking. Those principles are exemplified through the function of rhizomes in linguistic systems. As opposed to the arborescent linguistic models such as Chomsky's, Deleuze and Guattari argue that "there is no language in itself, nor are there any linguistic universals, only a throng of dialects, patois, slangs, and specialized languages" because "a rhizome ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles" (7). The treatment of language in experimental poetries might be taken as rhizomatic as the poets decentre the prevalence of any language by discovering its relations with different registers and use it as material to dissect its connections with non-standardized ways of writing. Another feature of rhizome is "multiplicity:" "there are no points or positions in a rhizome, such as those found in a structure, tree, or root. There are only lines" (8). Multiplicities also affect the way language functions and its semantic reservoir: the word no more corresponds to a thing, problematizing the link between the signifier and the signified. That brings forth another principle of rhizome, "asignifying rupture:" "against the oversignifying breaks separating structures or cutting across a single structure. A rhizome may be broken, shattered at a given spot, but it will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines" (9). Rhizome brings into play different linguistic registers, signifying structures in a language or society, and disrupts the hierarchical system of representation that is based on the safe connection between the signifier and the signified.

Bodies living in or through a particular spatial paradigm, whether in a landscape, a room, or city, are supposed to be contained by the borders and hierarchies of that particular spatial organization. As opposed to such striation, Deleuzian space is conceptualized as "folded and animate because everything can be framed in perpetual movement […] [t]he fabric of space is open-ended rather than encoding" (Thrift 97). Smooth spaces enable numerous

deterritorializations—whether linguistic, musical, literary or cultural. Deterritorialization includes the abandonment of a space of familiarity and sense of belonging. Those sites of familiarity are mostly grid-like structures that organize people in an expected manner by the state philosophy and turn the space into "a place." These terms not only complicate the geographical ideas of mapping and cartographies but also offer alternative theoretical positions against commonplace discourses about identity politics, literature and aesthetics.

3.4. Text becoming tent: Affect, Sensation and Experimental Poetries

For Deleuze and Guattari, philosophy works through creating and thinking through concepts; however, the material for art and literature are affects and percepts. Although their working mechanisms are different, no visible hierarchy can be found between those fields of thinking. Colombat argues that anyone studying Deleuze and Guattari's concepts should adopt them within the framework of their study as the concepts take new forms when they are applied to new and different contexts: "Each reader-operator who wants to work with these concepts must redefine them within his or her own field of study, while they already present themselves as being in constant metamorphosis" (11). Affect is clearly one of these terms which requires further contextualization and appropriation in this study.

Patricia Ticineto Clough identifies a recent "affective turn" in social sciences and humanities as a novel critical lens to be employed by interdisciplinary studies. Affective turn implies an undertaking from emotions and feelings, the psychological register, to a more political and ethical register by retrieving the body from the degraded leg of the dichotomies of the Enlightenment ideology. "Affective turn" widely discussed over the past decade in philosophy, geography and social sciences mostly has underpinnings in the philosophical writings of Spinoza, Bergson, Deleuze, Guattari, and Brian

Massumi. Once a specific field in psychology as related to emotions and feelings that individuals communicate, affect studies now extend over different interdisciplinary modes, theories and negotiations. Brian Massumi presumes that affect is critical in "understanding our information-and image-based late-capitalist culture, in which so-called master narratives are perceived to have foundered" ("Autonomy" 88). Affective turn might be taken as a critique of the linguistic turn, of epistemological frames which take the subject as autonomous and self-contained. The main agenda of affect studies is to relocate the critical attention from language and discourse to the Real, from body to matter. This attempt also brings forth an ontological turn to redefine the notion of agency to be found in constructionist epistemological models. Such attempts facilitate a close collaboration between disciplines whose methodologies and subjects of study are fundamentally distinct from each other, chiefly humanities and natural sciences (Koivunen 9). The apparent reason for such an interdisciplinary approach, for Clough, is that affect studies are in collaboration with technologies and sciences that engender affective bodily formations beyond the human centred limitation by offering "a new configuration of bodies, technology, and matter" (2).

Although the definition of affect is various and controversial in recent scholarly work, this part of the chapter will try to come up with a working definition of not only affect, but also its related and mostly interchangeable terms like emotions and feelings borrowed from psychology and explain why this study prefers using 'affect' as a methodological point of reference. Charles Altieri defines affects as "immediate modes of sensual responsiveness to the world characterized by an accompanying imaginative dimension" (2). In his definition and study of affects, Altieri seeks to restrain the cognitive and moral dimensions affects depend on. For Altieri, feelings are "spatially organized" and they can be found in "metaphoric possibilities." Although he argues for the return of the emotions in poetry, affects, as he describes are discovered in the

borders and relational terrains: "These feelings are based upon how we experience the presence of boundaries and the force of the relational fields that these boundaries activate" (241). Theresa Brennan, on the other hand, focuses on the cognitive aspects of feelings and affects and their relation with the processes of thinking: "feelings are sensory states produced by thought, while interruptive thoughts are produced by affect" (116). Emotion, on the contrary, is detached from thought as a source; they are more automatic, not contingent upon processes of thought (Ahmed 5). Rei Terada describes these concepts in terms of their corporeal and psychological aspects; while emotion is largely related to the psychology of the subject, affect has more of corporeal existence, and feeling requires both aspects (4). Terada further argues that since poststructuralist theory has announced the death of the subject, affect studies proposes a turn from personal emotions to impersonal or pre-personal affects following the example of Deleuze and Guattari (110). Feminist critics also find the discussions of affect constructive especially in theorising the embodied female subject. Not revolving around the discussions of the death of the subject in poststructuralism or critical arguments about linguistic and discursive orientation of subjectivity, affect studies provides a shift of critical attention from "representation to the real, from body to matter, from cultures to nature, from identity to difference, from psychic to social" (Koivunen 9).

While emotions and feelings are easily materialized by language, affects are usually inexpressible, forcing the limits of language to express affective states. Kristeva describes "semiotic chora" in *Revolutions in Poetic Language* as an "essentially mobile and extremely provisional articulation constituted by movements and their ephemeral stases" (25); affective states of becoming in the same way are sensational and negotiated through pre-linguistic and non-verbal signifying structures. Brian Massumi's *Parables for the Virtual* is revelatory in many senses of the word, particularly in posing questions about the nature of the body and how it is closely related with the ways in which it

feels and moves, and does both at the same time. The uniqueness of the body, both literally and metaphorically, can only be grasped with its ability to push its material presence to limits and create an affective realm with the act of movement. Despite these attempts to find differences between these terms, affect studies interchangeably use affect with feeling and emotion depending on the field it is explored. In Deleuzian terminology, affect is usually used as synonymous with becoming and intensity. This study, following Deleuze-Guattarian interpretation, uses "affect" as "shiftings of bodily and mental relations produced by material encounters—com[ing] loose from the ties of the Cartesian subject and drift through the poetry" (Haines 109).

Turning to affect for critical insight maintains the debates around the Cartesian dualism about the primacy of the mind over the body, thus, reason over senses. This dualism not only hierarchizes human beings among other living beings to be the rulers of the world through their reason and intellect, but also reiterates the same debates on the inferiority of the body to the capacities of what the mind can do. However, if we deconstructively read what Descartes' essentialization of the mind over the body suggests, as Erin Manning argues, "the senses emerge as slippery concepts that complicate the pre-imposed discreteness of the body. The body, these texts seem to say, is always in excess of our understanding" (xiv). Deleuze and Guattari consult the work of Baruch Spinoza in their writings about affects to discover the capacities of the body to act, to affect and be affected. As Michael Hardt discusses, Spinoza developed the theory of affects by drawing the mind and the body to closer interaction: "the mind's power to think and its developments are … parallel to the body's power to act … the mind's power to think corresponds to its receptivity to external ideas; and the body's power to act corresponds to its sensitivity to other bodies" (ix). Spinozist argument of the bodily nature of affect underlines the principle of exteriority, meeting of the affected body with an affecting body or organism, other bodily formations which are not necessarily human.

Another important source of reference for Deleuze and Guattari's writing on affect is Henri Bergson, especially his theories of virtuality and movement. Bergson views the body as "an aggregate of the material world," namely, the recipient of movement from extensions of the body and simultaneously replying back to those movements (19). He engages with the problem of perception by focusing on a system of images that surrounds a body interacting with those images when its senses are ready to receive them, therefore, executing the movement of the body entirely or partially. Body becomes the "privileged image" in this process because it has the agency to choose among possible reactions it might produce and it "occupies the center; by it all the others are conditioned; at each of its movements everything changes, as though by a turn of a kaleidoscope" (25). The body is then given the capacity to move other images and also being moved by them and so always acts as the centre of action. As perception is based on the actions of the body or "molecular movements," it is unable to produce representations of the material world: "the movements of matter are very clear, regarded as images, and that there is no need to look in movement for anything more than what we see in it" (23). This intervention of non-representational status of affects also helps us offer a distinction between affect and sensations. While sensations are localized within a particular body—organic or inorganic—affects are produced through the "molecular movements" of the body and its capacities to interact with the exteriority, a number of possible worlds. Similarly, Bergson's comparison of the virtual and real actions is expressed through the distinction between the sensations and perceptions. While sensations are considered the 'real' actions of bodies, perceptions are seen as the 'virtual' ones. Our perception of a distant object—"an object separated from our body by an interval"—produces a virtual action; on the other hand, if the gap between the body and object is almost nil—the object to be perceived coincides with our body—the virtual action turns into a real one (57). Building on Bergson's conceptualization of

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perception, Deleuze and Guattari express the importance of movement in producing the imperceptible: "Perception can grasp movement only as the displacement of a moving body or the development of a form. Movements, becomings, in other words, pure relations of speed and slowness, pure affects, are below and above the threshold of perception" (*Thousand* 280-1). Here, Bergson, Deleuze and Guattari are particularly talking about what Erin Manning calls, a focus on "a *sensing body in movement*," (xviii). The body is intricately tied up with a complex capacity of sensing. While sensations are activated through the improvisatory performance of the body, the sensings of the body can be identified, as Erin Manning argues, "in layers, in textures, in rhythms and juxtapositions that defy strict organization into a semiotic system" (xiv).

In the last chapter of *What is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari put forth an aesthetic discussion on the qualities of a work of art and argue that a work of art is a "*bloc of sensations*" comprising "*affects and percepts*" independent of its producer:

> Percepts are no longer perceptions; they are independent of a state of those who experience them. Affects are no longer feelings or affections; they go beyond the strength of those who undergo them. Sensations, percepts, and affects are beings whose validity lies in themselves and exceeds any lived. They could be said to exist in the absence of man because man, as he is caught in stone, on the canvas, or by words, is himself a compound of percepts and affects. The work of art is a being of sensation and nothing else: it exists in itself. (164)

Besides stressing the autonomy of the work of art, Deleuze and Guattari maintain that there is no need for human subjectivity for affects and percepts to emerge or exist; they are mostly pre-personal. Yet, affects involve a notion of body that is affected upon or that affects, and a certain context or emplacement of this movement. Even though the self has an illusion of lived experience of percepts and affects, it is impossible to link affects and percepts to a particular human being: affects are already there before the human subject

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experiences them. Affects and percepts cut through the intensities of the human body to merge with what belongs to the non-human realm.

After discussing the differences between science, philosophy and art, Deleuze and Guattari contend that art, composed of "*bloc of sensations*," deterritorializes what seems to be the dominant practice of a particular historical period and society in which it emerges. They offer a new understanding of art and imagination as a bodily awareness. The body becomes the locus of thinking and aesthetic practice. The materials of aesthetic production may vary from sounds, colours to stone; all these raw materials create the language of affect like the style of a writer or a poet becomes the source of 'blocs of sensation' in literature: "The writer uses words, but by creating a syntax that makes them pass into sensation that makes the standard language stammer, tremble, cry, or even sing: this is the style … The writer twists language, makes it vibrate, seizes hold of it, and rends it" (*What is Philosophy?* 176). The kind of art or literature of affective kind is disruptive in politics and revisionist in its aesthetic productions. The literary machine in Deleuze and Guattari's writing functions through certain deterritorializing aesthetic paradigms and the stylistic features of a work of literature foreground certain stages of linguistic experimentalism:

> What we have reached with the end of this argument is a concept of style, Deleuze's concept of style, where doxa is subverted by taking language to its limits, towards silence or towards images, through stuttering, rolling and pitching. There is a Deleuzian literary gradient of language which moves from meaning or doxa to style through the stages (each associated with a representative of Deleuze's literary canon) of disequilibrium, continuous variation, vibration, minorisation, stuttering (the vital centre of the gradient), repetition, systematic digression, the sinuous line of syntax and rhythm. (Lecercle 347)

This style of "stuttering" is particularly important in analyzing experimental poetries this study focuses on. Experimental poets' act of writing is a kind of

stuttering, foregrounding language's inability to construct a viable replica of the world we are living in—thus, giving way to non-representational type of poetics. However, one of the pitfalls of following a Deleuzian poetics might be reiterating the same structures of stylistic autonomy these "blocks of sensation" might create, as their aesthetic propositions draw on capacities of what one can do with artistic form and mechanics of language as the primary material in poetry. Deleuze's argument of minor literature in *Kafka: Towards Minor Literature* might enable an understanding of how language functions in experimental writing. As Deleuze and Guattari point out in their analysis of Kafka's work, in order to analyze minor literature, one need not necessarily look for a minor language; quite the reverse, one should pay attention to how a writer deterritorializes dominant use of language: "A minor literature doesn't come from a minor language; it is rather that which a minority constructs within a major language. But the first characteristic of minor literature in any case is that in it language is affected with a high coefficient of deterritorialization" (16). Braidotti's analysis of Virginia Woolf's fiction in "Intensive Genre and the Demise of Gender" focuses on such a process of nomadic becoming or 'minorization' through "moments of flowing awareness" which connect the subject with the exteriority. Intensive moments of affective charge, Braidotti claims, are produced by different forces of composition like "music, colour, sound, light, speed, temperature and intensity," affecting the embodied female subject through "onrush of data." Woolf's intensive style is activated by an assemblage of affective elements such as "the shade of the light at dusk or the curve of the wind just before the rain" and minor usages of language (46).

Meanwhile, the notion of percept is also important in understanding the spatio-temporal functioning of pre-personal affects and sensations in the analysis of literature or art. Emplacement of a specific affect is foregrounded through the conception of "percept." When affects are exposed in a text, they do not specifically belong to an individual fictional character. Likewise, percepts

do not refer to how a specific character observes a particular landscape. While ocean becomes the pure percept in *Moby Dick*, the town is the percept in Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*:

> Characters can only exist, and the author can only create them, because they do not perceive but have passed into the landscape and are themselves part of the compound of sensations. Ahab really does have perceptions of the sea, but only because he has entered into a relationship with Moby Dick that makes him a becoming-whale and forms a compound of sensations that no longer needs anyone: ocean. It is Mrs. Dalloway who perceives the town-but because she has passed into the town like "a knife through everything" and becomes imperceptible herself. (Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* 169)

Deleuze and Guattari see the landscape not as a container for characters and events to take place, however, it becomes a zone of contemplation and becoming: "We are not in the world, we become with the world; we become by contemplating it" (169). This process of becoming blurs the distinctions of the human, non-human, plant or animal, not simply mixing them but creating new zones of imperceptibility and playing with the originary states of molecular becomings.

Deleuze and Guattari do not focus on the meaning of art but rather on the mechanisms of it. Meaning-based interpretation looks for a stable system of signification; however, concentration on how a work of art, a novel and a poem work requires a foregrounding of style and stylistic practices, opening art and literature to endless possible encounters and sensations. A great writer, Deleuze and Guattari claim, "is above all an artist who invents unknown or unrecognized affects and brings them to light as the becoming of his characters" (*What is Philosophy?* 174). The reading of individual poems in this study thus aims at examining how poetry works through its resources rather than how and what it means. Deleuze and Guattari's writing not only provides the methodological tools to analyse the poems, but it also points towards the

ways in which we can "think the unthinkable." Although Deleuze and Guattari do not offer a systematic model for analysing works of literature, they usually make it clear that the reader should try "to think with the writer about the process and logic of the text's becoming" (Bogue, "Minor" 112). The reader is expected to experience how the language 'stutters,' in other words, how the writer "make[s] the language take flight, [and] send[s] it racing along a witch's line, ceaselessly placing it in a state of disequilibrium, making it bifurcate and vary in each of its terms, following an incessant modulation" (Deleuze, *Essays* 109).

Pierre Joris's *A Nomad Poetics* sets an example of a critical and experimental model of reading poetry within a Deleuze-Guattarian framework. Joris shows that the encounter between the reader and the poem is of utmost importance; and as the poem emerges, the reader also undergoes certain processes of becoming and is affected upon by the sensations poems foster. Joris describes this moment of encounter with bodily reactions of the reader that is consciously or unconsciously disposed of:

> The lines move freely & reader cranes her neck, twist (sic.) herself around in order to follow the contour of the lines of writing, then steps back to grasp a figure, moves in again to read— & while reading can no longer "see" the organized, striated space of the figural volumes which themselves dissolve into lines-of-flight. This constant destabilization of view-point, this continuous eye-& body-act of de- & re-territorializing the spaces of the drawing keep the viewer from ever being able to find that fictional single static point, that center outside the painting/ drawing that would organize a fixed, rectilinear, thus hierarchical world & gaze, as was the aim of Renaissance perspective. (42)

The text becomes a tent and the reader experiences the joys of nomadism. In terms of the experiment with language, Deleuze and Guattari's celebration of the chaotic and stuttering as an aesthetic style may bring us to "the kind of writing where the poet writes her own language as if it were a foreign tongue"

(Lecercle 348). In their discussions of minor literature, Deleuze and Guattari find 'continuous variation' as the characteristic of minor works of literature, whose language works to deterritorialize and experiment with regimes of signs. In reference to Deleuzian vocabulary, Pierre Joris defines nomadic writing as the "practice of the outside" (29). Such a practice requires the discovery of minor usages within the dominant language or crossings-over between different languages. In other words, language itself becomes the very material of a poet, or *noet* as Joris invents the term nomad poet, and the reader alike:

> A nomad poetics will cross languages, not just translate, but write in all or any of them. If Pound, Joyce & others have shown the way, it is essential now to push this matter further, again, not as "collage" but as a material flux of language matter, moving in & out of semantic & non-semantic spaces, moving around & through the features accreting as poem… a poetry that takes into account not only the manifold of languages & locations but also of selves each one of us is constantly becoming. The nomadic poem as ongoing & open-ended chart of turbulent fluxes the dispersive nature of our realities make inevitable. (38, 44)

At the limits of language and experimentation, a complex evocation of affects and percepts interfuse, bringing together many possible worlds of human, plants, animals and spatio-temporal registers. The nomadic subjectivity acts upon a smooth space of articulation—whether in the densities of the inner city against the striated structure of the urban space, and manifestations of spiritual spaces and landscapes, or the production of the spaces of memory and trauma. Deleuze and Guattari imagine the human "in terms of the many and mobile relationships, interconnections and assemblages which orient its surface outwards, towards the world and the instabilities and contingencies that constitute it" (Mansfield 147). Nomad poetics as an "ongoing & open-ended chart" might be a territory where all these relationships and connections are played out.

As I proposed at the onset of the introductory chapter, this study aims to reflect on the ways in which the experimental nature of Peter Reading and Maggie O'Sullivan's poetry can produce such nomadic poetics by examining the concepts of nomadic subjects, the contestation of smooth textual spaces, and discovering the ontological attempts at producing multiple becomings (becoming-animal, becoming-woman, becoming-other, becoming-minotarian and imperceptible). The formal choices made in their poetry, as argued by the theoretical background of the study, have in common with the very notions of body, space and subjectivity in Deleuze and Guattarian framework. This chapter serves as a repository of terms and concepts used in Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy and in their analyses of literary works. It does not aim to offer conclusive remarks or linear figuration in the organization of the concepts dealt with; it should be taken more as thinking through the concepts that will make a literary discussion and theoretical dialogue possible with the poems in the following chapters.

CHAPTER IV

NOMADIC TRAJECTORY AND FORMAL EXPERIMENTATION IN PETER READING'S *PERDUTA GENTE* (1989) AND *EVAGATORY* (1992)

> Perilous trek, unarmed, unaccompanied:
> ….
> Only a troubled idyll now possible,
> pastoral picnic under an ozone hole
> (Reading, *Evagatory* Poem 12)
>
> bodies are bankrupt, the main Expedition has
> left us behind it.
> (Reading, *Perduta Gente* Poem 17)

This chapter aims to explore the processes of becoming in Peter Reading's *Perduta Gente* and *Evagatory* against the backdrop of theoretical discussions on nomad[14] (smooth) spaces, trans-corporeal investigation of space and formal experimentation as a nomadic strategy. These poetry collections from his mature[15] period are mostly considered as turning points in Reading's entire oeuvre in terms of formal innovation and received wider attention than his previous works. After a brief discussion of Peter Reading's poetic career and general qualities of his oeuvre, the poems will be analysed through two intersecting planes of investigation.

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[14] Nomad space is interchangeably used with smooth space in Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* in opposition to the striated or sedentary space: "Smooth space and striated space—nomad space and sedentary space—the space in which the war machine develops and the space instituted by the State apparatus—are not of the same nature" (474); "Smooth or nomad space lies between two striated spaces" (384); also please see pages 381, 415, 430, 494.

[15] According to David Kennedy's classification in *New Relations*, Reading's work from *Diplopic* (1983) onwards reflects "mature Reading" (135).

First of all, the chapter reflects on the ways in which Peter Reading's *Perduta Gente* and *Evagatory* manifest nomad thought and follow a nomadic trajectory both in terms of form and subject matter[16]. The nomadic trajectory is formally and thematically reflected by the portrayal of the urban space and natural landscape as a locus for conflicting forces of smoothness and striation and through the rambling nomadic subject that makes transgression possible with constant re- or de-territorializations. It is possible to discover such affective intensities of movement—either by evagation or fighting the realm of state apparatuses[17]—by focusing on the spatial entanglements between human and non-human forces, be it objects, buildings, waste, excrement or animals. In accordance with such an investigation, the poems in *Perduta Gente* and *Evagatory* foreground a trans-corporeal understanding of subjectivity, the envisioning of a nomadic subject which requires the consideration of "material, bio-cultural and symbolic forces" in its making (Braidotti, *Transpositions* 37).

The second part of this chapter deals with the experimental nature of Reading's work by concentrating on his textual and visual collages and on how his particular formal choices produce a "stammering" text. The processes of becoming will be explored by investigating both the poems and other unpoetic materials as assemblages which underline the materiality of language and

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[16] It would be misleading to claim that Peter Reading's entire ouvre reflects the same nomadic trajectory this study aims to explore. However, it is possible to analyse some of his earlier volumes, such as *Fiction* (1979), *Diplopic* (1983), *C* (1984), *Stet* (1986) and *Final Demands* (1988) in terms of linguistic and formal experimentation. Moreover, the works mentioned above and the volumes published after 2000, such as *[Untitled]* (2001), *Faunal* (2002) and *-273,15* (2005) can be analysed by focusing on the rhetoric of environmental decline, the extinction of species and forging of a transcorporeal consciousness.

[17] Deleuze and Guattari seem to have adopted Louis Althusser's concept of "State Apparatuses" (both repressive and ideological) to explain their concept of war machine against State power. For Althusser, the reproduction in any capitalist society is retained through its dependence on Repressive State Apparatuses such as "the government, administration, army, police, courts and prisons," and on Ideological State Apparatuses, such as schools, religion, family, sports, press, and political parties, to maintain its ideological principles (75, 76). Similarly, Deleuze and Guattari appropriate the concept to fit in their argument of the emergence of "a war machine" within a structured, segmented society which is governed by "state apparatuses," which clearly regulates the "organizations of power" (*Thousand* 68).

challenge generic distinctions. Very much like Deleuze and Guattari's plateaus in *A Thousand Plateaus*, it is possible to read Reading's poems and collage work in *Perduta Gente* and *Evagatory* as "plateaus," which are meant to be read "in any order and … can be related to any other plateau … [the elements of which] are not subjected to an external plan of organisation" (Lorraine, "Plateau" 208). The lack of pagination in both collections, in addition, points to Peter Reading's preoccupation with poetry as an open form of composition, providing his readers with the space to make connection between different registers, narratives, and textual references.

4.1. Peter Reading's Poetry

Born in Liverpool in 1946 and educated as a painter at the Liverpool College of Art, Peter Reading was among the most inventive and unusual poets in the contemporary poetry scene in Britain. Peter Reading has an uncommon biography for a person who is renowned as a poet. After pursuing a short-lived career in painting, he decided to become a poet, taught for a short period of time, and later moved to Shropshire to work at a feed mill farm as a weighbridge operator. This working-class employment became a more than twenty-year service for economic means and an act of self-exile from academic and literary circles, though poetry remained a life-time interest for Reading. In his later career, Reading began to feel financially more secure after receiving the Lannan foundation awards. He did not earn much from poetry, especially in his early career, yet he was committed to writing extensively and published a poetry collection almost every year, with a total of twenty-six books of poetry in all. His earlier training in painting, particularly "the early cubists and abstract expressionists," together with the shocking "'combines' and 'readimades' of Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns and Jim Dine," had a great effect on the way he experimented with his visual poems and incorporated unpoetic material in his poetry (Martin, Introduction 20).

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He received several prestigious literary honours including the Cholmondeley Award for Poetry in 1978, the Dylan Thomas Award in 1983, and the Whitbread Prize for Poetry in 1986, and finally life-time support and patronage came along with the Lannan Foundation Award in 1990 before the publication of *Evagatory*. Reading reached a wider audience with the support of the Lannan Foundation, and the award they presented to Reading, as a "promising and relatively unknown artist," suggests the innovative and avant-garde aspect of his work, since the Foundation declares that it aims "to foster serious criticism and diversity of discussion in contemporary art, and to offer new, experimental and provocative art to a wider audience throughout the country" (Muchnic). During his residency in Marfan, South Texas, he wrote his twenty-first book, *Marfan* (2000) and died shortly after the publication of *Vendange Tardive* (2010), his last book.

Starting with *For the Municipality's Elderly* in 1974, Peter Reading has continued to revisit his older work in the collections that have followed. Featuring a novelistic and journalistic style, Reading's earlier work, such as *The Prison Cell & Barrel Mystery* (1976), *Tom o' Bedlam's Beauties* (1981) and *Going On* (1985), engages with characters and a range of social issues regarding England's loss of its might as a world power. Robert Potts suggests that "Reading's books throughout the 1970s and 1980s contained individual characters, and interconnecting tragicomic dramas, establishing a Dickensian social commentary (often satirical) that could nest within his other perspectives, and work in tension with them" ("Peter Reading" 263). From around the 1990s onwards, Reading's poetry gains an experimental quality unmatched by his previous work, although he keeps referring back to his earlier collections with repetitions, referencing, and recycling in collage pieces. *Perduta Gente* (1989) and *Evagatory* (1992) mark this transitional period in his poetry from his focus on social issues to more experimental use of the page space. The theme of decline is recurrent in his poetry as Reading himself declares in

"Going, Going: A View from Contemporary England:" "I see change and decay in all around—in microcosmic England, at least" (33). In accordance with his preoccupation with decline and decay, Reading explores taboos, unpleasant and anti-aesthetic themes such as death *([Untitled]*, 2001); environmental decay and disasters (*Faunal* (2002), *-273,15* (2005)); terminal illnesses such as cancer (*C*, 1984); urban atrocities (*Ukulele Music*, 1985); nuclear contamination (*Perduta Gente*, 1989); the extinction of species, the existential plight of homo sapiens (*Eschatological*, 1996). These diverse thematic concerns appear repeatedly in his work, sometimes unexpectedly, and then overlap with his complex eschatological view on modern times.

Peter Reading is particularly known as an outsider among contemporary poets and it is hard to categorize his poetry given the wide range of thematic concerns and experimental gestures his poetry manifests. Tom Paulin declares Peter Reading "the unofficial laureate of a decaying nation," reflecting on the situation in "Junk Britain" (204); and Duncan Bush calls him one of the "preternaturally-grizzled master-poets" (64). Peter Reading's name has been at the centre of controversial debates over what is good or bad taste in contemporary poetry. Martin Booth, for instance, accuses Peter Reading of repeating the same type of poetry in his first five books, writing cleverly without producing good poetry (160). There are conflicting views about the quality and subject matter of his poetry. "Provocative" (Wheatley 64), "outrageous" (Marowski and Matuz 352), "teasing" (Jenkins, "Peter Reading" 475), "pessimistic" (Paulin 207), "ludic and deadly serious" (Kennedy 136), "shocking" (Bush 64, Murgatroyd 142) and "nasty" (Ewart 2; Marowski and Matuz 352; Boyle 74) are among the adjectives used while criticizing Peter Reading's work, which reflects the fact that his poetry has been both praised by many— particularly in the work of Isabel Martin, Anthony Thwaite and Sean O'Brian— and reviled by another camp of readers and critics. Dragosei asserts that "no other contemporary British poet has caused so much scandal and indignation as

Peter Reading has with his poems" (104). In his interview with Peter Reading, Alan Jenkins reports that the editors of the *Times Literary Supplement* received "gifts of excreta" when one of Peter Reading's poems was published in *TLS* (7). As a risposte to such scandalous reactions, there are many instances in Reading's poems of the poet-figure self-reflexively mocking the denigrating comments on his work. Despite such criticisms, Reading is totally comfortable with incorporating troubling materials and subject matter in his poetry, as his oft-quoted response from Jenkins' interview shows: "If you want art to be like Ovaltine then clearly some artists are not for you; but art has always struck me most when it was to do with coping with things, often hard things, things that are difficult to take" (7). Peter Reading is a pessimist and misanthropist[18]; he openly acknowledges that he is a horrid man, a committed nihilist[19] and a poet of unpleasant things.

4.2. Smooth Spaces and Subjectivity in *Perduta Gente* and *Evagatory*

Peter Reading tells the story of the dispossessed and lost people of cityscapes—mainly London—in *Perduta Gente* (1989), underlining a suspicion of a capitalistic division of space which has brought about the destruction of entire planet. The poems wander between different urban locations inhabited by rough sleepers and vagrants, and with a cinematic movement, explore various

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[18] In his short commentary on the current state of life and poetry in Britain, Peter Reading underlines major motivations in his poetry: "There are four points implicit here which have a bearing on my theme: a congenital English pessimism (maybe something to do with our economy?, our climate?); an English tendency to self-denigrate; the actual English experience of loss of Empire; and, arising from this last, all the connotations suggested by such a fall as had been delineated by Gibbon as early as 1776. .... Add to this a measure of misanthropy and the sort of depressive moroseness already outlined" ("Going" 33-4).

[19] Again, in his interview with Alan Jenkins and Isabel Martin respectively, Peter Reading comments on the attacks on his poetry, particularly those comments which devalue his poetry for its nihilism and pessimism: "Certainly there's a large element of nihilism about me … And there's nothing wrong with nihilism. Again, with Beckett—the terms applied to him, nihilism, pessimism: these are terms like sentimentality or morbidity, contrived by the people who want Ovaltine instead of art" (8); "What am I saying apart from the fact that things are shitty and that nothing can be done about it? That's a very nihilistic attitude and I'm a nihilist... What can I say beyond that?" (*Reading* 227)

dwellings that disrupt the order of the cityscape, such as cardboard shelters, waste land, pavements inhabited by dossers, derries, underpasses, spikes and bivvy sacks.[20] Reading interweaves textual performances of homelessness and dispossession with an elegiac rhetoric of waste, disaster and disease, and contemplates human suffering with a focus on the disorderly and threatening street life which produces "war machines"[21] as opposed to the "sedentary" spaces contained by the state apparatuses.

Perduta Gente explores societal and global issues such as homelessness, ecological decline, the nuclear threat, the decline of the nation and of the species in general through innovative and experimental formal choices. As Neil Roberts argues in Narrative and Voice in Postwar Poetry, in Reading's Perduta Gente "poetic styles are interspersed with literary citations and/or pastiches" (181). Reading's text, in this respect, is self-referential, and the strategies he uses foreground the materiality of language, all the while questioning the authenticity of the poetic material available to the poet. Reading borrows the title of the book from Dante's Inferno, Canto III, in which Virgil and Dante stand at the "Gates of Hell," and the poem starts with a warning they see at the entrance:

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[20] Starting from the first poem, it is possible to see these alternative means of dwelling in the cityscape. Some examples are as follows: "…hag gippo arrived and/camped on the waste ground" (Poem 3); "Mucky Preece lives in a pigsty beside the / derelict L barn" (Poem 4); "savvy dis noosepaper see?/ sonly bed we gotter nigh" (Poem 6); "Often at dusk in the birchwood beyond the/ gates of the city" (Poem 12); "here in the crypt of St Botolph's feels like a fallout-shelter" (Poem 43); "on the waste ground at the back of the factory/ there's a crone scumbag/ that kips in a big cardboard box,/ etiolated and chrushed" (Poem 54).

[21] Deleuze and Guattari explains that the 'war machine' is the instrument of the nomadic subject, through which s/he escapes the control of the State. For them, some works of literature function like 'war machines:' "A book exists only through the outside and on the outside. A book itself is a little machine; what is the relation (also measurable) of this literary machine to a war machine, love machine, revolutionary machine, etc.—and an abstract machine that sweeps them along? We have been criticized for overquoting literary authors. But when one writes, the only question is which other machine the literary machine can be plugged into, must be plugged into in order to work. […] The war machine-book against the State apparatus-book" (Thousand 4, 6).

THROUGH ME YOU ENTER INTO THE CITY OF WOES,
THROUGH ME YOU ENTER INTO ETERNAL PAIN,
THROUGH ME YOU ENTER THE POPULATION OF LOSS[22].

JUSTICE MOVED MY HIGH MAKER, IN POWER DIVINE,
WISDOM SUPREME, LOVE PRIMAL. NO THINGS WERE
BEFORE ME NOT ETERNAL; ETERNAL I REMAIN.

ABANDON ALL HOPE, YOU WHO ENTER HERE.
These words I saw inscribed in some dark color
Over a portal …. (19)

Similarly, Reading guides the reader through "different circles of Hell" and into the hidden pits of London, as Virgil accompanied Dante more than 600 years ago through the circles of hell (Martin, *Reading* 193). The 'lost people' of Reading's *Perduta Gente* are of nomadic character as a result of being excluded from the dominant system of representation, as well as, of their bodies producing smooth spaces of resistance within the hellish social spaces.

Apart from the Dante allusions italicized throughout the book, Reading employs other intertextual plays such as Biblical pastiches of *Isaiah* and *Lamentations* in the 26th poem[23] ("How doeth the citie sit solitarie that/was full of people" and "Woe vnto them that decree/vnrighteous decrees" and of the Anglo-Saxon elegiac tradition in the 14th poem which mimicks the opening of *Beowulf* ("Hwaet! / Haggard, the youthful and handsome whom I/loved in my nonage"). Moreover, the accounts of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster and the final transformation of the cityscape into a Dantesque hell cause the reader to question the very escapism inflicted upon the modern subject by repeating the warning Virgil gives when entering each circle: "*Let us not speak of them, merely observe/and silently pass by*" (Poem 29, emphasis in original).

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[22] In this translation of *The Inferno* by Robert Pinsky, "Perduta gente" has been translated as "population of loss" on the third line of Canto III: "per me si va tra la perduta gente" (18).

[23] As Reading prefers to keep both *Perduta Gente* and *Evagatory* unpaginated to be read from whatever plateau his readers choose, I enumerate each work on a single page as a poem rather than citing them through the tyranny of pagination, to which Reading would certainly object.

The opening poem of *Perduta Gente* presents a juxtaposition of two different spaces: the Festival Hall as the sedentary place of an official Sibelius concert and the "Under"world wrapped in old newspapers—the residence of the dipsos and homeless, "insulate ranks of expendables, eyesores, /winos, unworthies" (Poem 1). Deleuze and Guattari contend that two types of spaces—smooth and striated—are not clearly demarcated in the social sphere and both spaces transform each other: "nomad space and sedentary space— the space in which the war machine develops and the space instituted by the State apparatus. … [S]mooth space is constantly being translated, transversed into a striated space; striated space is constantly being reversed, returned to a smooth space" (*Thousand* 474). The war-machine developed in the smooth spaces is in contact with the "outside" and "comes from outside," "hurling itself on to an already-developed State which did not include it" (141); therefore, it makes becoming-other possible. While the striated space stands for the authoritative, strictly ruled and organized spaces that govern and discipline the bodies, the smooth spaces offer a fracture within this dominant system of reproduction and governance—a fracture that allows for the schizophrenic, marginalized, trans-corporeal and non-human states of becoming.

For Deleuze and Guattari, whereas cities are great examples of striation, they hold the potential to produce spaces of contestation that work against disciplining urban organization. Urban smooth spaces are not necessarily global but might be formed at a micro-level:

> Now not only the sea, desert, steppe, and air are the sites of a contest between the smooth and the striated, but the earth itself … Must we not say the same of the city itself? In contrast to the sea, the city is the striated space *par excellence*; … the city is the force of striation that reimparts smooth space, puts it back into operation everywhere, on earth and in the other elements, outside but also inside itself. The smooth spaces arising from the city are not only those of worldwide organization, but also of a counterattack combining the smooth and the holey

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and turning back against the town: *sprawling, temporary, shifting shantytowns of nomads and cave dwellers, scrap metal and fabric, patchwork, to which the striations of money, work, or housing are no longer even relevant.* (*Thousand* 481, emphasis in original)

The first poem of *Perduta Gente* opens with a tension between those spaces, in which two different concerts are taking place at the same time. As Peter Barry writes about this poem in *Contemporary Poetry and the City*, "both concerts are here and now, the musical masterpiece with its Romantic transcendence and the subterranean nightmare in which people are treated with less care than material goods, like animals at best" (85-6). The spaces in which these concerts take place are clearly demarcated by the italicized "*Under*:"

> South Bank: Sibelius 5's
> incontrovertible end –
> five exhalations, bray of expiry,
> absolute silence…
>
> *Under* the Festival Hall is a foetid
> tenebrous concert
> strobed by blue ambulance light.
> PVC/newspapers/rags
> insulate ranks of expandables, eyesores,
> winos, unworthies,
> one of which (stiff in its cardboard Electrolux
> box stencilled **FRAGILE,**
> **STOW THIS WAY UP, USE NO HOOKS**)
> officers lug to the tumbril,
> exhaling, like ostlers, its scents:
> (Poem 1)

While the Festival Hall becomes one of the striated spaces of order resonating with the Sibelian symphony, the underground is highly chaotic, gloomy and stinking, providing alternative places of becoming for those who are excluded by the system, "lugged" by the officers to the "tumbril" (Poem 1). The striated spaces of the cityscape require its inhabitants to identify with the common rules and notions of being and to comply with its limits and order. However, those

inhabiting the smooth spaces do not have any identificatory relationship with the spaces around them; in contrast, their visibility becomes a threat to the dominant modes of living in the cityscape. The inhabitants of the "*Under*" are not liable to "the striations of money, work, or housing" and do not "follow [the same] trails or customary routes" as the rest of the society; their nomadic path is different from "the sedentary road," which "*parcel[s] out a closed space to people*, assigning each person a share and regulating the communication between shares" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand* 380, emphasis in original). The immobile voyage of the homeless in *Perduta Gente* spreads over "*an open space*, one that is indefinite and noncommunicating" (380).

The smooth spaces in the first poem and the rest of the book are evoked by the intense use of vocabulary and word choices which invest olfactory and auditory senses, bypassing the rationalized state of visual description and paratactic coordination. The kinaesthetic movements of bodies producing "acentered, rhizomatic multiplicities" work against the "optic space" of capture:

> It seems to us that the Smooth is both the object of a close vision par excellence and the element of a haptic space (which may be as much visual or auditory as tactile). … It is a space of contact, of small tactile or manual actions of contact, rather than a visual space like Euclid's striated space. … [It is] a field without conduits or channels. A field, a heterogeneous smooth space, is wedded to a very particular type of multiplicity: nonmetric, acentered, rhizomatic multiplicities … They do not meet the visual condition of being observable from a point in space external to them; an example of this is the system of sounds, or even of colors, as opposed to Euclidean space. (Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand* 493, 371)

Sean O'Brian similarly suggests that "metaphor and the visual and loco-descriptive components" are replaced by "the auditory and to some extent the tactile sense" in Reading's work (127). In these poems, the social space that is rigidly coordinated by the State is mostly transformed and smoothed by constant reference to olfactory, auditory and tactile sensory experiences which

create an affective space, a crack or a "holey" space, a form of going spatially underground and of finding ways to cope with the surveillance mechanisms of the state. Building cardboard cities at the heart of London might be one way of having holes, 'holey' spaces, where smooth and striated spaces are simultaneously at play.

In the second concert, taking place under the Festival Hall, different sensations are experienced compared to the first one: the stinking place is filled with waste "PVC/newspapers/rags," both "tenebrous"—dark and gloomy—and alarmingly flashed out by the "ambulance light" and invaded by police officers as the representatives of the state apparatus. The inhabitants of the underground are described as abject or monstrous to look at, disturbing the appearance of the striated spaces of civic order. The officers, the invaders of such smooth spaces of visual and olfactory transgression, "stow" these bodies like refrigerators with the Electrolux cardboard boxes. The "underpass" is described as a space without boundaries, a space of chaos and flow[24], which is juxtaposed with the Festival Hall's stringent presence:

> squit,
>
> honk,
>
> piss,
>
> meths,
>
> distress. (Poem 1)

As Sibelius's final five notes strike, the words chosen to describe the atmosphere form a mélange of sounds, smells and anguishing tones and effects that move the reader with the notes of stress, and then as "absolute silence"

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[24] The concept of flow has been used in relation with the concept of affect: the impact of human and non-human bodies affecting or being affected by one another. Such contacts are seen as flows and movements between bodies. Please see Deleuze and Guattari's 9th Chapter, "1933: Micropolitics and Segmentarity," in *A Thousand Plateaus* for a more detailed explanation of 'the quantum flow.'

falls, the reader is relieved at the end of this de-territorialized symphony of human misery. Sibelius's fifth symphony is visually and orally evoked by the repetition of these five bars several times in the text. His music, in a way, is juxtaposed with various unhomely sounds such as honks, sirens, the sounds of the inner city, de-territorializing sounds of dialects and other uninformed urban noises.

Along with the underpass, other smooth spaces such as "lairs" on the beach (poem 8), "the waste ground" (Poem 3), and "clefts of the dunes" (poem 8), "beyond the gates of the city" (poem 12) and "dosshouses, derries, spikes" (poem 21) are discovered through their affective qualities, having movement, speed and slowness, "continuous variations of power [*puissance*] that pass from one state to another" (Deleuze, *Essays* 139):

> Gente Perduta, wino-unworties,
> knackered-up dipsos,
> swilling rosato-and-meths-
> we snooped a look in their lairs
>
> while they were beachcombing: *still-viscid meths-puke*,
> *faeces*, a mattress,
> cardboard, an old plywood door,
> wedged in the clefts of the dunes.
>
> Sweet from the pines *wafts* a *resinous fragrance*
> pungent with sea *smells*
> (molluses, *salinity*, kelp);
> regular *clank of a bell*
>
> tolls from a wreck-buoy, swung by the reflux;
> wardens in green jeeps,
> dapperly uniformed, plump
> skedaddlers of squatters and tramps,
> (Poem 8, emphasis added)

Not only the bodies but also the dwellings of the dossers are intoxicated by the smells of "puke," "urine," "faeces," and methamphetamine odours, mixing with

the piercing "sea smells" and other aromas, such as "resinous fragrance." The smells of vomiting, urine, excrement and various alcoholic drinks and the disturbing sounds of a "megaphone rasping," bells clanking and horns beeping are typical markers of smooth spaces in *Perduta Gente*. These spaces operate through unlawful occupation and transformation into abject spaces. The "dapperly uniformed" wardens intrude into the unruly spaces of these "knackered-up dipsos" through the "regular clank of a bell" and "a yellow and black JCB" which "scrunches shacks into a skip" (Poem 8). The confrontation with the state officials happens in a repeated pattern of containment and transgression taking place several times in the collection:

> Snarl of a JCB, cordon of Old Bill,
> megaphone rasping
> into a 3 a.m. squat
>
> Sleep-fuddled dissolutes, still dressing cold dis-
> consulate bratlings,
> struggle with carrier-bags.
>
> One of the Council Bailiffs is sporting a
> **Have a Nice Day** badge
> fixed on the yellow hard hat.
> (Poem 11, emphasis in original)

Smooth spaces are surrounded by violent images of the state power. JCBs, uniformed officers and people who "*merely observe and silently pass by*" (Poem 29) become intruders into smooth spaces. Although these metonymic extensions of the state ('Old Bill,' 'JCB,' 'wardens in green jeeps,' 'Council Bailiffs') try to take control of these smooth spaces by raids, the 'dissolutes' and 'bratlings' proliferate elsewhere in the cityscape and their struggle is characterized by f(l)ight: both fighting the state forces and escaping from the identificatory markers of the society. The state, as the opponent of the nomad, works hard to control these uncontainable bodies of rough sleepers who escape the disciplinary power of the state and stand for "the undisciplined—rioting,

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revolution, guerrilla warfare—for all the forces that resist the fortress of state discipline" (Cresswell 50).

Given that nomad spaces are not always idealized sanctuaries for "liberatory"[25] acts, the struggles between the homeless and state apparatuses in the poems can be read as interstitial moments for creating alternative means of becoming, transformation and transgression (*Thousand* 500). Reading's homeless and dossers are nomadic, not in the sense that they are mobile, but in the sense that they occupy the spot and disturb the social space by their presence. The third poem of the volume, for instance, gives place to a "hag gippo" who lives "on the waste ground:"

> Then she gave up and just left it a gaping
> black fenestration
> through which we chucked bits of scrap,
> rubbish, a dog turd, a brick.
>
> But when she skedaddled, a stain,
> delineating where she'd been,
> etiolated and crushed,
> blighted that place, and remained. (Poem 3)

As Deleuze and Parnet discuss in *Dialogues*, "flights can happen on the spot, in motionless travel" and the space occupied is "no less mental and corporeal than physical in movement" (37-8). Peter Reading's lost people, in this case a "hag gippo" in the third poem, occupy the stratified cityspaces by creating smooth spaces through their abject corporeal existence. They are fixed on a spot and visible, yet they "blend in with the environment," as Symons notes, "[t]his way in which they go unnoticed is, as such, exactly what keeps them from ever disappearing at all" (par. 2).

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[25] Deleuze and Guattari here argue that even though smooth spaces do not always free one from the confines of the state power, they offer possibilities of fight and deterritorialization: "Even the most striated city gives rise to smooth spaces: to live in the city as a nomad, or as a cave dweller. Movements, speed and slowness, are sometimes enough to reconstruct a smooth space. Of course, smooth spaces are not in themselves liberatory. But the struggle is changed or displaced in them, and life reconstitutes its stakes, confronts new obstacles, invents new paces, switches adversaries. Never believe that a smooth space will suffice to save us" (*Thousand* 500).

Reading's juxtaposition of smooth and sedentary spaces offers a critique of capitalist notions of production and consumption, along with the appropriation of bodies in a capitalist mode of life through abstract machines of work, housing, and proper education. In other words, as Felix Guattari discusses in *Schizoanalytic Cartographies*, these machines produce docile bodies submitted to "modern systems of 'gentle' alienation and exploitation" (45). The unseen controlling mechanisms of the capitalist system also regulate bodies in a particular way. Deleuze and Guattari argue that "[t]he factors that make State war total war are closely connected to capitalism: it has to do with the investment of constant capital in equipment, industry, and the war economy, and the investment of variable capital in the population in its physical and mental aspects" (*Thousand* 421). The homeless and winos in the poems are outside the chain of global capitalism and its signifying system, disrupting the capitalist legacy of docile bodies of reproduction. Therefore, it becomes possible to read the lines, "bodies are bankrupt, the main Expedition has left us behind," as alluding to the way in which the bodies of the homeless, the dispossessed or the intoxicated are pushed out of the "physical and mental aspects" of modern life (Poem 17). For instance, Peter Reading's alcos, dipsos, dossers do not conform to the dominant modes of accommodation in the way that the housing market prescribes and do not have jobs to support the economic system, or any proper outlook to represent the masses walking by them. Zygmant Bauman underlines the fact that "the ability to consume is central to one's place in society;" the dipsos and winos in Reading's poems fail as consumers and become "defective, faulty, deficient, inadequate consumers" (38). The homeless are left out of the processes of commodification[26]: while housing, with its compliance with structural institutions, is one of the spaces of

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[26] This discussion is further explored in the second part of this chapter by focusing on the collage pieces from property pages.

"striation," the smooth spaces occupied by the homeless are left outside the "socio-symbolic appropriation" (Marzec, par 30).

Moreover, in *Perduta Gente*, the reader is invited to witness the misery inflicted upon not only British society but also other places in the world. In other words, the problem of homelessness, for Reading, is a global issue mainly caused by capitalistic economies. It is possible to explore another example of juxtaposition of smooth and striated spaces in a different geography, a German context:

<div align="center">

Under the concreted cantilevered
haven of arty
spans of *Bibliothek*,
shievering dossers each evening repose in
newspaper bivvies.
…
Scavenging corvine-clawed men
rifle each *Abfalleimer*, greedily
…
swig the sour dregs of the bottle-bank empties,
Tafelwein, *Schaumwein*,
Spätlese, *Steinhäger*, *Schnapps*.
Today I have planted a two-kilo *Schinken*
where they will find it
[hooray for the secular saint].
(Poem 24)

</div>

In this second "Under" poem, while the library stands solid with its "concreted cantilevered" presence, the dossers lie on "newspaper bivvies" 'under' it, which is comparable with the Festival Hall and the underpass of the first poem. The bodies described in this poem are intoxicated by several alcoholic drinks of German origin. Reading's use of German words which are mostly the names of alcoholic drinks both marks the context they are used in and creates a defamiliarising effect. "[T]he drugged bod[ies]" of the poem are similar to "the experimental schizo" who "wag[es] its own active internal struggle against the organs, at the price of catatonia" (*Thousand* 150). The bodies of the homeless, alcoholic, radioactive, drugged or catatonic bodies, such as those in the poem

above grow into examples of "Bodies without Organs" (BwOs)[27], emptied of their functions as predefined and organized by the state apparatuses. These bodies—or trans-corporeal states of becoming—are de-territorialized in the urban space which distributes the role of all individuals in a society according to capitalist modes of living. As these bodies do not play their arranged roles within the larger social system, their presence makes becoming-other possible or becoming in connection with the outside.

Towards the end of the book, the fractured narrative of inner city life is overlaid by the pastiched words, data and references to the replicated documents previously scattered among the poems about nuclear contamination and the way that bodies—human and non-human—are contaminated with radiation. It is clear that, on the final page, Reading "become[s] less and less tolerant of words" (Deleuze, *Essays* 174):
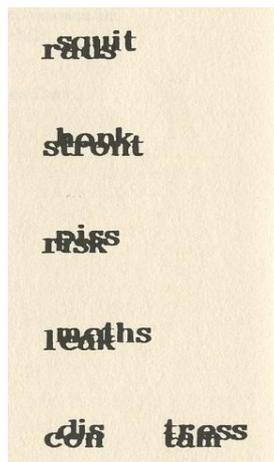
Figure 4.1. Poem 56, *Perduta Gente*

The last bars of Sibelius's fifth symphony, firstly used in the opening poems and scattered over the text in several other instances, give a circular frame to *Perduta Gente* at the end of the volume. With the diplopic image of one-syllable words and word units, the lines break like atomic particles into their

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[27] Deleuze and Guattari borrow the term 'Bodies without Organs' from Antonin Artaud's work. BWOs suggest a new understanding of body and subjectivity by engaging with the concept of becoming. For a further discussion of the concept, please see pages 67-68 of the theoretical section.

constituents. Reading makes "the Earth scream with his pain machine" (*Thousand* 4) through disturbing sounds ('honks'), accumulation of waste and threatening radioactivity ("stront," "leak," "con   tam"), sickening smells ('meths,' 'piss') and worsening "dis tress." Peter Reading's nomadic vision of using language as a material is repeated once more, as the poem is technically composed of words disseminated throughout the text and brought together as a completely new possibility of line/word arrangement.

In *Perduta Gente*, Peter Reading invites the reader to the different levels of the hellish inner city, and in *Evagatory*, he deploys a subverted travel trope, a "guideless, directionless, lightless" wandering through various landscapes (Poem 19) and an "unarmed, unaccompanied" nomadic subject (Poem 22) whose "drifting" does not come to a halt until s/he abandons the terrestrial space (Poem 40). At the time Peter Reading was writing *Evagatory*, Peter Potts conducted an interview with him at his Shropshire country house. Peter Reading, as Potts reports, did not have enough energy to finish a new collection and *Evagatory* might have been his last one ("Interview"). Peter Reading at the time suffered from a short period of writer's block and depression. The collection was eventually published in February of 1992, soon after Peter Reading was fired from his job at the animal feed mill for refusing to wear uniforms at work.

The poems of the first half of the book which go through different geographical settings are followed by a total disintegration of the text through visual and typographical tactics towards the end. The word 'evagatory' does not exist in dictionaries and, most probably, Reading plays with the Latinate word 'evagation' to neologize an adjective-like-noun to stand for his trope of mobility. "Evagation" has an ambivalent function considering its two definitions by *OED*: "[t]he action of wandering away, or departing from a specified locality" and "[w]andering of the mind, thoughts, spirit, etc." Both of these definitions

underline the thematic and formal manifestations of wandering and drifting the volume openly undertakes.

Reading's primary inspiration seems to emanate from the perilous journeys that Odysseus undertakes ("Surely Odysseus roamed these blithe isles," Poem 7), mixing modern urban and rural landscapes with fragmented "translationese" from the Old English poems "The Wanderer" and "The Seafarer."[28] Rebecca Ann Barr, in this regard, argues that these intertexual references to oral literary traditions are "designed to illustrate an historical trajectory of linguistic depreciation and to shock the reader by its avowal of the futility of poetic utterance," through which Peter Reading is able to produce "an existentialist counter-tradition" (257). Through the trope of wandering and "vicious voyage" (Poem 20), Peter Reading revisits similar thematic concerns such as decline of the species, environmental deterioration, a critique of capitalistic societies in different contexts as well as the decline of British society[29]. The act of evagation is foregrounded by the cinematic movement between "a series of virtual spaces that combine only to break away from each other" (Haines 109). The first poem opens in a harbour in Sydney with the

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[28] "whisper of scented soft-breathed translationese:
  Mine is a sea-borne sorrowful history,
       winters of toil through tempests, foam frosts,
       fearing the future's vicious voyage,
       lashing of iced brine, hurled hail, waves' trash,
  longing for land and cuckoo's sad call of spring," (Poem 20)
  Cf. Ezra Pound's translation of "Seafarer" on Poetry Foundation website:
     "List how I, care-wretched, on ice-cold sea,
      Weathered the winter, wretched outcast
      Deprived of my kinsmen;
      Hung with hard ice-flakes, where hail-scur flew,
      There I heard naught save the harsh sea
      And ice-cold wave, at whiles the swan cries,
      …
      Nor any whit else save the wave's slash,
      …
      Cuckoo calleth with gloomy crying"

[29] "the Thames, the old prides,
    end of an era, nation, notion,
    Albion urban, devenustated" (Poem 14)

description of the landscape as space of various intensities and moves through the ocean/seascape to discover several other landscapes and cityscapes which are different from each other. What the nomadic subject discovers in almost all these settings is 'faunal extinction' and environmental decline:

> Doyle's on the harbour, dusk, pulse of warning light,
> octopus, crayfish, chill gold dry semillon's
> bouquet of ripe grapes/pollen; plum-mauve
> […]
> a.m., a carcinogenic sunrise,
> **(15% of population. . .),**
> shrieking, an iridescence of lorikeets
> raucous from palms and blossoming eucalypts;
> Sydney, *The Age* screwed up in a trash-bucket. (Poem 1)

The opening poem evokes a post-pastoral setting with a Rothko painting in "plum-mauve" colours providing an "afterglow on which silent/slow-flapping fruit-bats' transient silhouettes." The landscape is set adrift with several trans-corporeal intensities that work together—both animals and plants cross-breed with one another in their territorializations of the landscape, such as the becoming-orchid of wasp and the becoming-wasp of orchid (*Thousand* 10). The human body is deterritorialized by non–human "territorial assemblages." To illustrate, the "bird songs," a characteristic melody repeated by a non-human body to "mark [a] territory," comprise one of the best territorial assemblages for Deleuze and Guattari (*Thousand* 312). The landscapes visited in the poems are, in the same way, territorialized by their non-human inhabitants through "bird songs," scents of plants ("palms and blossoming eucalypts") or its meteorological conditions ("a carcinogenic sunrise," "wind preternatural, pissing acid," Poem 4, "ozone-depleting air," Poem 28), which simultaneously de-territorialize the human subject. In other words, the lexical components which mark the moments of becoming in the poems "operate through corporeality, animality, and vegetality" (*Thousand* 176).

Lorikeets' territory, marked by their "shrieking," "raucous" song, creates a specific "melodic landscape" (*Thousand* 318), which overlaps with the territories of "slow-flapping fruit-bats," "ripe grapes/pollen" and "palms and blossoming eucalypts." Similarly, wylahs in the second poem, "*Calyptorhynchus funereus*," wail "their weird wee-yu wy-la," reactivate human corporeality by being envisioned as the "ghosts of sun-charred hanged cons" (Poem 2). The gulls with a harsh screaming voice (Poem 3), "herring gull" and "kittiwake colony" (Poem 10) and "Bornean horseshoe bats" mark their territory by the "faeces" they leave behind, "sifted by cockroaches" (Poem 14). In these poems, Reading discovers a complex network of relations between human and non-human species; the landscape in this perspective is expanded to "mean the heterogeneous array of features" assembling "milieus, territories, worlds, spaces" (Bonta and Protevi 104) which are given through a trans-corporeal consciousness. Towards the end of the book, the post-pastoral landscapes territorialized by various bird species are totally de-territorialized with the faunal/textual extinction: "sea-level newly pole-augmented,/mutated arthropods, algae, UV" (Poem 36). The territorial marks of the birds are somehow replaced by the "mutated arthopods;" what is left from the non-human species is "the stench of their excrement" (Poem 35). The only survivors of this faunal extinction in Peter Reading's *Evagatory*, in the same way, are the transformed insects ("mutated arthropods"), spiders and cockroaches and "algae," replacing all that belongs to the human and other animals.

Deleuze and Guattari argue that "[e]very voyage is intensive, and occurs in relation to thresholds of intensity between which it evolves or that it crosses" (*Thousand* 5). Mary Bryden similarly contends in *Gilles Deleuze: Travels in Literature* that the 'evagation' works "along a continuum, with variations in speed and intensity" and "with the schizo-flow, tracing out new directions with their own bodies" (6, 68). The nomadic subject in *Evagatory,* likewise, 'crosses' through several named and unnamed places 'by intensity,'—with ranging

speeds—and is simultaneously de- and re-territorialized by the 'thresholds' of unique flora, fauna, social systems, 'vectors' of landscape and weather systems. The 'directionless' journey of *Evagatory* starts from Sydney[30] in the first poem and moves through Tazmania and Australia[31], places in former Yugoslavia[32], England[33], Malaysia[34], "Edge of the Baltic" (Poem 20), "Niagara,"[35] "Franco-Italian border" (Poem 29). The subject tries to find a familiar territory by wandering, to re-territorialize in the act of pacing; however, it is even more de-territorialized by "drifting, 290,000/years beyond launch-pad, in towards Sirius" (Poem 40) and struggling in the "Province of hyperborean bleakness,/Cranium" (Poem 22). The subject leaves a known territory, de-territorialized from his/her customary path, only to re-territorialize in a new space. The references to non-human species in particular spaces visited in the poems reveal the irresistible desire to territorialize through material forces. Reading gives the names of these species with their Latinate terminological descriptions, which produces a defamiliarizing effect in the poems. Moreover, as in *Perduta Gente*, the rhetoric of waste in *Evagatory*—both human waste such as "shit" and "urine" and waste objects such as plastic bottles and newspaper—of "faunal extinction" and of a "pastoral picnic under ozone hole" (poem 14) create an affective landscape where bodies operate through excess, as desiring-machines, rather than stratification. Apart from the human subject's engagement with the landscape

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[30] "Doyle's on the harbour… Sydney, *The Age* screwed up in a trash bucket" (Poem 1)

[31] "Nubeena, Wedge Bay,/Oakwood, Port Arthur, Highcroft, Stormlea," (Poem 2); "Pipe Clay Lagoon, wet silver ellipse of sand" (Poem 4); "Cape Grim recording ozone-depleting air" (Poem 28).

[32] "Down from the sleet-clad mountains into/Mostar, fecundity (pulsing UV" (Poem 6); "Midnight, an open window in Trebinje" (Poem 6); "Café Dalmacija, Adriatic" (Poem 7).

[33] "Came to an island farctate with feculence/chip-papers, Diet-pepsi cans clattering" (Poem 9); "dapper sartorial English elder" (Poem 11); "England, *The Time* screwed up in a trash-bucket" (Poem 14).

[34] "Forest, Sarawak, limestone outcrop/caverns of roosting Bornean horseshoe bats" (Poem 19).

[35] "cast iron scrolls of parapet frozen like/ ammonite whorls in waxed ice matrix" (Poem 29).

as a deterritorializing force in the poems, the nomadic subject explores these settings through objects, which "gives way to … [a] writing that parodies or mimics found-objects, artefacts mediated by personae, the text often incomplete and illegible" (Barr 258). The human species share the same apocalyptic end with the fauna and flora of the visited landscapes; "arthropod aberration" (Poem 14), the deviation of insects and other linked forms, "faunal extinction" (Poem 14), "Avian botulism" (Poem 10) and "mutated arthropods, algae" (Poem 36) are all caught up in the same extermination of pattern with "posterity," "devenustated" with "the Thames, the old prides, / end of an era, nation, notion, / Albion urban" (Poem 14). All in all, the wandering subject foregrounds the forces between different material aspects, rethinking the earth through "toxic consciousness" (Deitering 196).

Despite repeated evagations between different points or locations, the nomadic subject of *Evagatory* does not have a distinct order or route between them and evagates without having a destination in mind. This idea is also apparent in the use of various discourses, such as ornithological, botanical and meteorological scientific language, in exploring the landscape beyond the reach of the human subject. Moreover, as the coastal references in the poems above make clear, the evagation takes place over the ocean; the silences and missing parts between the poems, taking their start from the description of a particular coastal landscape, reveal an imagined voyage over oceans. Along with steppe and desert, oceans are taken as smooth spaces for Deleuze and Guattari (*Thousand* 479). The coastlines pronounced in the poems then become spaces of striation, all the while opposed by the ocean-space "as [the] portion of the earth's surface least amenable to time-space compression" (Steinberg 168). In *Evagatory*, the seascape that non-verbally exists between the points of capture (coastline, cities, islands, 'edges' of seascape) makes absolute speed and passage—"a vector of deterritorialization" (*Thousand* 222)—possible and holds

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a middle position between certain identificatory markers of the surfaces of earth.

Peter Reading's nomadic style is enriched by uses of these different registers and discourses from different literary and non-literaray materials. He experiments with different forms of textuality by mixing poetry with letters[36] (Poem 3), prose pieces in fragments about "a dreadful, bloody, civil inresurrection among the/poor mad islanders" (Poem 15)[37], a patois verse[38] given with its "translationese" in two columns (Poem 17), a list of proverbs in which gods are mocked as the descendants of ducks (Poem 25)[39] and an old

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[36] The third poem is a letter written by an ex-convict named Wil Westwood, who is imagined to live in the mid 19th century in the Convict Ruins, before his execution. It reveals the type of violence among the ex-convicts and how they lose their humanity in prison: "I was wonce humayne / drove tew desparayshun / by crewelty of prizzin." The animals share the same fate, "vitriolic" violence, on "Mafcarenhas Iflande" in the eighth poem. Around two hundred blue pigeons are "plucked" from the trees like fruit by "pull[ing] their necks;" grey paraquets are "cetched" and killed for squealing; similarly, penguins, "geefe" and turtles "above four hundred" are exterminated with great pleasure. Wil Westwood's farewell letter reveals the type of violence among the ex-convicts and how they lose their humanity in prison: "I was wonce humayne/drove tew desparayshun/by crewelty of prizzin" (Poem 3). The animals share the same fate, "vitriolic" violence, on "Mafcarenhas Iflande" in the eighth poem. Around two hundred blue pigeons are "plucked" from the trees like fruit by "pull[ing] their necks;" grey paraquets are "cetched" and killed for squealing; similarly, penguins, "geefe" and turtles "above four hundred" are exterminated with great pleasure (Poem 8).

[37] This prose document, most probably an invented one, starting in the middle of the narration and having no clear conclusion, tells about "a dreadful, bloody, civil insurrection among the poor mad islanders" which takes place due to an "absurdity of mayhem"—the government decides to hold the automobiles of these poor islanders "which they had revered above all else, and which had helped boost their weak, inferior egos" (Poem 15). The fragments of this document can be read as a social satire on people's ownership-oriented attitude under a capitalistic regime.

[38] "Gobschighte damapetty,
gobby Fer-dama,
getspeeke baggsy,
getspeeke parly
comma cul, comma
malbicker-bicker,
porky getspeeke?, porky?" (Poem 17)

[39] "Prouerbes xiij. iii
He that infults Our Mallard muft pay for it;
hee that reures falfe pochard and blafphemous
wigeon and fmew knows not Y True Quack
which was reuealed to vs by Our Drake's beak." (Poem 25)

seafaring text[40] (Poem 30). Furthermore, the lexical elements of the poems range from botanics ("*Calyptorhynchus funereus*," "*Larus novaehollandiae*," "l*achrymou*s"), geology ("[cf. the Permian]," "[cf. the Camrian]," "[Holocene]" "stalactitic"), zoology ("Laridae," "arthropod aberration," "crustacean," "*Anas platyrhynchos*," "*Aynthya farina*," "*Mergus albellus*," "*Melanitta fusca*"), medical language ("thyrotoxicosis," "insomnia," "Cranium"), Crotian ("visokokvalitetno," "vinjak," "crno vino"), German words ("*keller*," "gewüürzy glühwein," "wildschwein"), meteorology ("ferruginous fog," "carcinogenic sunrise," "climacteric," "labyrinthine wynds") to Latinate vocabulary ("etiolated," "vitriolated," "farctate with feculence," "Logaoedic," "Quondam Parnassian"). These vocabulary items, many of which are borrowed from scientific terminology, push the poetic discourse to its limits and decenter any claim of unitary poetic voice. The language is minorized and rendered 'imperceptible' by these unpoetic choice of vocabulary. In other words, the way Reading employs language "is the formula that carves out a kind of foreign language within language" (Deleuze, *Essays* 71).

4.3. Experimentation in Peter Reading's Nomadic Poetics

In his *Dialogues* with Parnet, Deleuze characterizes great literature as written in a "sort of foreign language;" for him, the invention of such a foreign language is the basis of style, and such understanding of style is required for "a minoritarian-becoming, not pretending, not playing or imitating the child, the madman, the woman, the animal, the stammerer or the foreigner, but becoming all these, in order to invent new forces or new weapons" (5). Peter Reading's texts "stammer" in Deleuzian sense; he certainly has a distinct style of his own, all the while becoming the "foreigner" in his own language. He not

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[40] "Our craft approaching y[0]fhore,
  many fcores of diuers fowls,
  all clagged in fome fticky tar,
  did flacker away from y[0] land;" (Poem 30)

only revitalizes old patterns in English poetry but also invents "new forces or new weapons" to fight the ordinary and sedentary poetic structures and tools (*Thousand* 4). What makes Peter Reading's poetry nomadic is the way he experiments with various poetic forms—both traditional and post/modern—particularly his textual and visual collages, treatment of found materials and textual fragments. As Rebecca Ann Barr argues, Beckett reads Joyce's texts "as extraction of language;" in the same way, it is possible to read Reading's texts against the backdrop of the notion of extraction, which "constitutes the fragment as alchemical compound of linguistic, visual and embodied forms and helps comprehend Reading's own work both in its manifestation as auto-cento and also as 'not written,' but reconstructed, recovered, revised utterance" (274).

The choice of words from interdisciplinary fields and the "extraordinary" words put to ordinary use underscore the basic style of Reading's writing. This particular style is an example of a becoming-minor of language or making language stutter. In "He Stuttered," Deleuze writes:

> What [the writers] do rather, is invent a minor use of the major language within which they express themselves entirely; they minorize this language … make the language take flight, they send it racing along a witch's line, ceaselessly placing it in a state of disequilibrium, making it bifurcate and vary in each of its terms, following an incessant modulation. This exceeds the possibilities of speech and attains the power of the language, or even of language in its entirety. This means that a great writer is always like a foreigner in the language in which he expresses himself; even if this is his native tongue. (*Essays* 109)

Peter Reading's language-machine "vibrates" or goes beyond the limits of comprehensibility at several moments, poetic language becoming foreign with Latinate vocabulary, meteoro-geo-neuro-anthropo-astro-ornitho-oenological terminology, populating his poems mostly with words (in a "combinatorial" manner and with "compounds") and by syntactically using fewer conjunctions,

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as Martin explains as "asyndetic" form (*Reading* 216)*.* The collage pieces and visual poems create a transgressive politics of page space in Peter Reading's collections. In other words, Reading finds a way to create minor usages of language within the dominant modes of linguistic and poetic practices. Moreover, found materials in his work are not always original. Reading admits that it is more difficult to "invent found material" (Jenkins, "Making" 12), which questions the authenticity and authority of the text to a considerable extent.

The overall structure of Reading's work is "circular and twisted" (Martin, "Rich" 358), "cannibalizing" and "reiterative" (Barr 261, 276), conducted with "viral referencing" (Kennedy 147), a particular kind of "recycling" (Potts, "Repeat") and a skilful "auto-cento" (Martin, *Reading* 219). Deleuze and Guattari maintain that repetition becomes "a *machinic* force that multiplies its effect and pursues an infinite movement" (*Thousand* 498). Through constant repetition and hardly traceable "auto-cento," both texts are caught up in a schizophrenization process. In this process, the subject is "dissolved and passes entirely into the virtual chaosmos of included disjunctions" (Smith xxix). Smith further elaborates on the Deleuzian schizophrenic who "never explain[s] events in the same manner, never invok[es] the same geneology" and "rather than trying to realize a possibility, [remains] within the domain of the possible and attempt[s] to exhaust logically the whole of the possible" (xxix). Exhausting the possibilities by constant repetition and recycling of formerly used material makes the text become imperceptible. Deleuze's definition of exhaustion—"one combines the set of variables of a situation, on the condition that one renounce any order of preference, any organization in relation to a goal, any signification" (*Essay*s 153)"—structurally supports the idea of repetition in Reading's work. Repetition itself becomes a form of stuttering, as Deleuze puts forward: "a proliferation, a bifurcation, a deviation" (55) that is caught up in a process of "continuous variation" (108).

Glyn Maxwell defines "viral referencing" as a form of becoming-other as each page is infected "by random others" (54). Reading's poetry demands the active participation of the reader in decoding the relations between cross-references to become affectively engaged with the extra-verbal materials he employs. This reworking of former ideas, images and lines of poems does not provide a unified narrative but an even more fragmented text; this obsession to repeat leads to textual exhaustion, which is in accordance with Reading's apathetic acceptance that poetry makes nothing change. Rather than coming to a meaningful conclusion, the reader is left with a "schizophrenic promenade" towards the end of both collections (*Thousand* 173).

Several plateaus in Peter Reading's *Perduta Gente* and *Evagatory*, like Deleuze and Guattari's visual-typographic experiments, reveal verbal and pictorial collages and montages. As Glyn Maxwell asserts, both collections are like "a gallery of overlapping, smeared, untitled gouaches, with Reading as the Curator always vanishing round a wall when you need to ask something" (53). These particular experiments work like machinic assemblages in both collections. Uwe Klawitter argues that collage in Reading's work serves different purposes. One of these purposes is to underline the inherent textuality of writing. Collage not only decontextualizes the collaged material but also creates new possibilities for interpretation in *Perduta Gente* and *Evagatory*. In addition, the originality of the found materials is duly questioned through this decontextualization process. Rather than having an ultimate meaning of recontextualizations, what we are left with is the procedural traces from earlier contexts "vitiated by new contextual relations" (Klawitter 194).

Given his training as a visual artist and his mastery over traditional verse forms and experimentalism, Peter Reading skilfully orchestrates the fragments of newspaper clippings, reproduced property pages, official/leaked documents about radioactive contamination and news reports about the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, an ex-soldier's letter to a tabloid paper about homelessness, diary

entries of a poet, prose pieces with incomplete sentences and collages from found texts in *Perduta Gente*. The surface of the book is forced into collision with materials which are not usually considered as poetic. By this way, Reading enables a re-examination of the relation between poetry and ordinary objects and a questioning of poetry's role or capacity in expressing the horrors of daily life through representation.

The absence of page numbers and titles supports the classification of *Perduta Gente* as an artwork in the form of a rhizome rather than a closed book of poetry:

> the rhizome connects any point to any other point … ; it brings into play very different regimes of signs, and even nonsign states …. It has neither beginning nor end, but always a middle (milieu) from which it grows and which it overspills. … The rhizome operates by variation, expansion, conquest, capture, offshoots. Unlike the graphic arts, drawing, or photography, unlike tracings, the rhizome pertains to a map that must be produced, constructed, a map that is always detachable, connectable, reversible, modifiable, and has multiple entryways and exits and its own lines of flight. (*Thousand* 21)

There are many entries and exits in *Perduta Gente*, and the text is caught up in variations, connections and alterations between unlikely materials, both verbal and non-verbal. Reading "makes" the multiple "not by always adding a higher dimension, but rather in the simplest of ways" (*Thousand* 6).

Rebecca Ann Barr maintains that the use of "collage and photographic reproduction of texts" in *Perduta Gente* "compound[s the] documentary effect" Reading aims to achieve (259). The journalistic and documentary discourse overtly dominates the selection of visual materials and collage pieces to support Reading's misanthropic and anti-capitalistic view of society. The poems self-reflexively mimic the jargon of newspapers, particularly the tabloid pages, which ironically become temporary shelter for the dispossessed. The first example comes from Reading's juxtaposition of the places homeless people

inhabit, such as the underground, cardboard boxes and wasteground, and those advertised through the housing market. Although there is a thematic unity in the choice of clippings, there is still variation considering the types of dwellings described. The variety of options provided through cuttings from different ads—London apartments with river views, large homes, old barns, a ruin with no roof or walls, derelict barns—produces a false perception of freedom of choice and enactment of will.

The use of different fonts and font sizes, along with the thresholds of the clipped parts and traces of the photocopying, foreground the materiality of the process of assemblage. While the cartographic descriptions of these properties "function like faces in the [urban] landscape they transform" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand* 172), they also overcode a certain assemblage of power relations that operate through the topographies they offer:

Figure 4.2. Poem 2, *Perduta Gente*

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Figure 4.3. Poem 41, *Perduta Gente*

These newspaper clippings can also be read as a critique of home ownership and commodity-oriented behaviour in contemporary times. With the home ownership ideology behind these clippings, Reading addresses a contemporary problem with the politics of housing, which is also put by Deleuze and Guattari as an "apparatus of capture" along with the operation of stock (*Thousand* 438-9). These clippings and found materials become tools used in the following textual collages which are mingled with other intertextual references. Moreover, the text jumps from one register to another, de-territorializing both "semiotic" and "material components" (*Thousand* 61):

> *Now we arrive at the front of the ruin;*
> *here are the moanings,*
> *shrieks, lamentations and dole,*
> *here is there naught that illumes.*

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Mucky Preece lives in a pigsty beside the
                            derelict L Barn,
                        tetrous, pediculous, skint
                        swilling rough cider and Blue
                    Now lie we sullenly here in the black mire –
                            this hymn they gurgle,
                        being unable to speak.
                        Here they blaspheme Divine Power.
                    Money no object to buyer of L-shaped
                            picturesque old barn
                            seeking the quiet country life
                        (two hundred and twenty-two grand,
                        Property Pages last night—
                        with which Mucky Preece is involved,
                        scraping the squit from his arse). (Poem 4)

The italicized parts are the rewriting of Dante's *Inferno,* Canto 5, where the poet moves from the first to the second circle of hell: "They reach the *ruin*: groaning, tears, laments,/And cursing the power of Heaven" (39). The ruin in the original Dante translation also virally refers to the "ruin at Eastham" in the third clipping; and Mucky Preece's "pigsty" which is next to "derelict L barn" is one of the properties sold in the above property-pages assemblage. "Money is no object to buyers seeking quiet country life" is reworked with a minor variation "**Money no object to buyer of L-shaped/picturesque old barn/seeking the quiet country life,**" which still carries the advertising tone and discourse of the property pages together with echoes of the Dantesque "(hel)l-shaped" (Martin, *Reading* 197). With a twist of black humour, the end of the poem reveals that the clippings of the property pages are taken from the newspaper "with which Mucky Preece is involved,/scraping the squit from his arse." The visual material used is symbolically put under erasure with this final note; it is nothing more than waste matter which can be immediately recycled, reused and thrown away when it completes its mission within the assemblage, yet stays there on the page to be read and seen. This poem lays bare the processes of organizing, of arranging the poetic and the unpoetic material that is available to the poet. The

reader is expected to find the rhizomic relations between these arrangements to understand how and to what ends such poetry functions.

In Reading's case, as with the writing of Kafka, poetry is put "into an immediate relationship with a minority machine, a new collective assemblage of enunciation" (Deleuze and Parnet 122). Several utterances—ornithological, botanical, nautical, demotic, Anglo-Saxon, elegiac in *Evagatory* and those of nuclear physics, meteorological, waste, toxic, journalistic in *Perduta Gente*—are merged with "the most intense machinic formalization, the machinization of states of things and bodies" (71). These bodies—either human or nonhuman— "interpenetrate, mix together, transmit affects to one another" (71). Playing with different registers is at the heart of Deleuze and Guattari's thought on assemblages and body politics. In the case of Peter Reading's poetry, these utterances which compose the assemblages, as Deleuze and Guattari would have imagined it, exist in a non-hierarchical order, as can be understood from the lack of page numbers and mixture of untitled poems, visual pieces and cut-and-paste materials. Moreover, Reading's word-choice reveals several tensions that can be felt in those assemblages. He is generally inclined to use words of "classical derivation" for contemplation while "the literal matter of the universe" is conducted through words of "Anglo-Saxon derivation" (Kennedy 36). The "literal matter of the universe" mostly revolves around the vocabulary used to express the waste rhetoric, the filth of the urban space, the extermination of both human and non-human species. The assemblage of these words lays bare an affective set of practices that decentre the subject as the organizer of things that connect all material forces without anthropocentric consciousness. As stated above, the waste rhetoric used in both collections manifests itself through constant references to urban waste, wastelands, faeces, excrement, puke and recycled cut-and-paste material.

Another line of flight within this rhizomic network of Reading's fragmented narratives is the leaked scientific documents about the dangers of

radioactivity and secret official documents about the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. These texts about nuclear threats are given with an eschatological vision about the future of the planet in general:

Figure 4.4. Poem 22, *Perduta Gente*

Three different sources have been assembled in the first collage piece: a newspaper report about the Chernobyl nuclear accident, in which even the name of Chernobyl is incomplete; a presumably leaked document about the aftermath of the accident particularly concerning its effects on workers and how contamination is poorly handled; and finally, a scientific document employing the discourse of nuclear physics to measure the "radioactive contamination in the air." The second collage piece informs the reader about the content of the leaked document—"SHIPMENT OF RADIOACTIVE MATERIALS" and "RADIATION PROTECTION PROCEDURES:"

Figure 4.5. Poem 27, *Perduta Gente*

The text explains in detail the "probable effects" of radioactive contamination on living beings, which draws a parallel between radioactively contaminated bodies and the intoxicated bodies of the winos by the continuous repetition of nausea, vomiting and fatigue. Seven collage pieces about radioactive contamination and its "health implications," contaminated bodies and environment, an operating manual and accounts of the Chernobyl disaster are scattered throughout the text to support Reading's vision of impending apocalypse and his existential predicament that there is nothing to be done to change this "incontrovertible end:"

> Legions of comatose owners of nothing
> under the concrete
> arches are juddered awake,
> impotent, dolent, bereft

radioactive spent rods,
               bound for reprocessing from the reactors,
                         carried in finned flasks,
          rumble by railway by night through the city
                         hugely unconscious.

                    Nothing can ever be done;
                    things are intractably thus[41]; (Poem 48)

          Palace twerp, propertied yuppie and news-wrapped
                         dosser with doses
          equal in Geiger croaks. Shreds of (marked **Secret**)
                         papers are scuttering
               over the wrecked party-lawn's
               panic-vacated marquee
               and under the Festival Hall
               drift against cheap sleeping-bags,
               cardboard, plonk bottles and stiffs;
                                        rads,
                                        stront,
                                        risk,
                                        leak,
                                        contam
                    (Poem 52, emphases in original)

The text self-reflexively comments on itself: "shreds of (marked **Secret**) / papers are scuttering;" newspaper clippings juxtapose the "Palace twerp" and "propertied yuppie" with the homeless whose only possessions are the property pages and who are "news-wrapped;" and the bodies of winos are as contaminated and toxic as those of radioactivated bodies according to Hans Geiger's scientific explanations referred to in the collage piece above. The final five bars in the first poem of *Perduta Gente* are reiterated with a variation with viral referencing of the words from collaged material: **rads** (radiation absorbed dose, Poem 30 and 53), **stront** (abbreviation of Strontium with atomic number 38, Poem 18); **risk** ("risk estimates" revealed, Poem 53), **leak** (the report says there is a "Low Level leak," Poem 36), **contam** (incomplete and divided into its

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[41] Reference to Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*: "'Nothing can be done,' he replied. 'Things are as they are, and will be brought to their destined issue'" (328).

particles or directly borrowed from the trimmed document, in almost all seven collages). Towards the end of the text, "the contaminated earth fades into a metaphysical no-man's-land, a waste land of the homeless and the naked wretches, Dante's Hell and Beckett's earth" (Martin, *Reading* 205).

Drawing attention to its own materiality, the textual surface becomes a contesting space for ruptures, silences and traces of cut-and-paste materials. The reading process thus becomes an interrogative and nomadic process of simultaneous construction and deconstruction. The collage pieces and visual experiments in both collections resemble Deleuze and Guattari's plateaus which "carry traces of their former emplacement" and which make movement possible in any art work encompassing "an open equilibrium of moving parts each with its own trajectory" (Massumi, Foreword x). These visual and verbal experiments give place to instant de- and re-territorializations, with decomposition of the text altogether.

The skull poems in *Evagatory*, unlike other collage examples in this chapter, enhance both visual and verbal aspects of collage practices. Reading does not use found materials in the skull poems; instead, he works through drawing the boundaries of the skull with pastiched verbal material within its borders or, in one instance, through the words themselves turning into a skull. Along with playing with the verbal and the visual, Reading reiteratively employs previously written lines from the poetic material of the collection to be later used in this experimentation of "text-image hybridisations" all the while fleeing from "the sequentiality of conventional verbal texts" (Klawitter 201).

Beginning with the first skull poem in *Evagatory*, the text is caught up in a schizophrenization process. The cognitive map of the urban space— presumably London or any "Albion urban"—spreads over the absent brain of the skull; focusing on the names of the streets and places, the brain processes the visual input through mapping London at the moment of wandering in its path. The map thus graphically fulfils the function of virtualizing the intensities

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that bodies—not necessarily human—produce over the urban space. Isabel Martin discusses that the skull poems and drawings reveal an "inner emigration," an even more "vicious voyage" (Poem 20) than the corporeal exploration of the spaces; given the map installed into the skull, "[t]he network of streets not only represents the brain's contortions, but is the empty formula for the people who live there" (*Reading* 223). For Deleuze and Guattari, cartography is essential for the wanderings of the nomad and maps are not only maps of geography, but they are "like a BwO intensity map, where the roadblocks designate thresholds and the gas, waves or flows" (*Thousand* 164). The nomad belongs to a territory, Deleuze and Guattari insist, and follows "customary paths" and is never "ignorant of points." However, every path that the nomad follows is between at least two points; the nomad spreads over the smooth spaces within these "customary paths" (*Thousand* 380-1):


Figure 4.6. Poem 13, *Evagatory*

The pictorial representation of the city in the skull has many entries, exits and overlapping points divided by grids, simultaneously coding and decoding the space. The map appears in fragments, and the networks between several streets, avenues, urban spaces are intentionally left incomplete. From the mouth of the skull spills or "pukes" the graphic representation of the metric qualities of elegiac dactyls combined with trochees: as the previous poem puts it, "through uncharted / swamp, to arrive at Lingua Franca, / thence to this Logaoedic Dependency" (Poem 12). The choice of classical meters, which are non-English patterns of verse, is the main reason why Reading's texts stammer. The contemporary problems of the planet are treated only with classical and archaic forms of expression. Besides experimenting with the visual material, Reading is writing in his own language, all the while expressing it through "foreign" forms and patterns. Thus, the text is becoming-minoritarian like that of Kafka's works, which are chracterized as minor literature in Deleuze and Guattari's analysis of his work[42]. Moreover, Reading experiments with these metres not through first-hand knowledge of the classical texts: he adopts these forms from translations of classical texts, his main inspiration being Cotterill's translation of Homer's *Odyssey*. "The Logaoedic dependency" and the prosodic forms adopted from Old English poems, therefore, reiterate "a sign of enfeebled articulation, a compulsive repetition confirming deficiency" (Barr 261).

The "Cranium" is an "uncharted swamp" which tries to find an expression equivalent to it. The poem succeeding the first skull image also illustrates how the "Cranial voice" is talking without control during the nomadic

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[42] Deleuze and Guattari's analysis of Kafka's work in *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature* focuses on how Kafka produces minor literature in his work: "A minor literature doesn't come from a minor language; it is rather that which a minority constructs within a major language. But the first characteristic of minor literature in any case is that in it language is affected with a high coefficient of deterritorialization. In this sense, Kafka marks the impasse that bars access to writing for the Jews of Prague and turns their literature into something impossible—the impossibility of not writing, the impossibility of writing in German, the impossibility of writing otherwise" (16).

subject's wanderings. It is "inadequate" to express what it experiences in an intelligible language; all that is left to the subject is "(translationese from life to lingo)" self-reflexively pointing to the language of the poem as bad translation of life to a foreign language the subject insufficiently produces or is produced by (Poem 14).

The "ur-poem" (Martin 223) of the collection is typed within the skull in an upright position and the reader's active bodily participation is required to comment on how this poem operates:
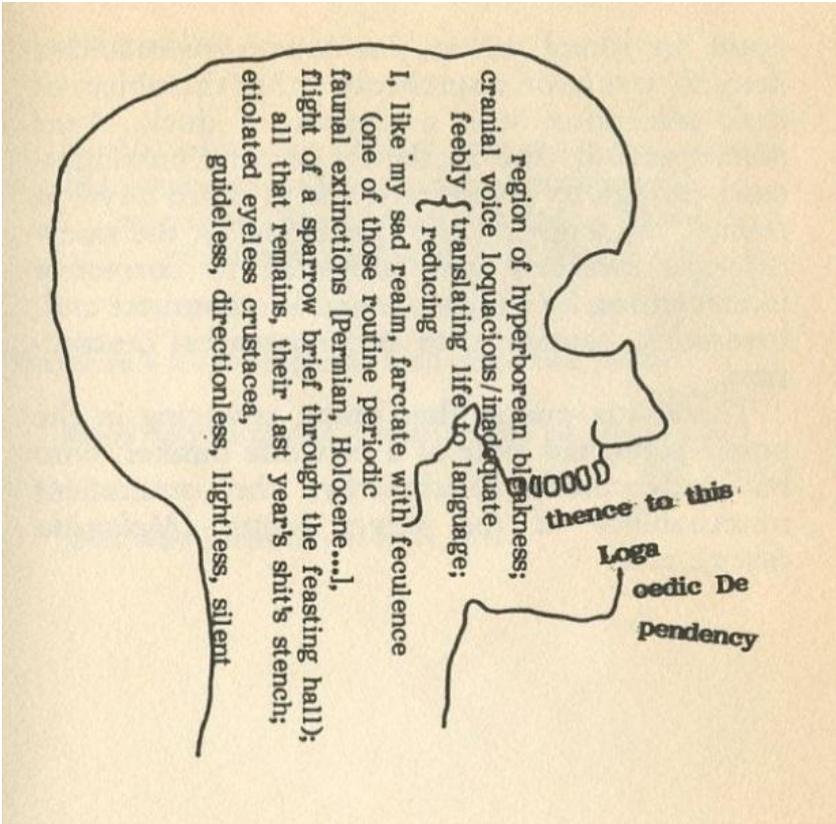
Figure 4.7. Poem 23, *Evagatory*

Pierre Joris's instruction for the readers of nomadic poetry is to "crane [their] neck, twist [themselves] around in order to follow the contour of the lines of writing, then step back to grasp a figure, move in again to read" and the reading process then no longer holds "the organized, striated space of the figural volumes which themselves dissolve into lines-of-flight" (42). In order to follow

the lines of the poem in the skull, the reader needs to stretch their neck to read the poem, and then, reposition their eyes to see what spills from the mouth of the skull, as well as, check again if all the skulls are in the same form or if there is a connection between the framings of these visual poems. This single poem nomadically wanders between different intertextual elements such as the Anglo-Saxon alliterative tradition ("farctate with feculence") and motifs (Bede's sparrow in "flight of a sparrow brief through the feasting hall"), Latinate vocabulary (etiolated, crustacean, hyperborean), mythological reference to the hyperborean people who are thought to live at the North Pole, geological terminology (Permian, Holocene…) and Alcaic verse form. For Deleuze and Guattari, nomadic writing produces a war machine that works against the expectations of a genre and use of language, fabricating a particular style, in which "sentences space themselves out and disperse, or else jostle together and coexist, and in which the letters, the typography begin to dance as the crusade grows more delirious" (*Thousand* 3-4). Reading's rhizomatic use of words and visual materials can be best exemplified by the final skull poem which repeats the "ur-poem" for a third time.

The lines move freely in every direction through innumerable superimpositions to draw the skull with words, lines and the shapes of the letters; thus, every molecule counts to make the visual work. The text becomes more illegible with textual and visual superimpositions; words are still there, but as fragments, repetitions and traces of ink. The reader has been warned beforehand off this "[p]erilous trek … through uncharted / swamp" (Poem 12). With this final skull poem and *Merz*-like collage work at the end of the collection, the text becomes even more unreadable, struggling desperately in the "uncharted swamp," which leads to withdrawal: "fell into silence, like great Sibelius / mute till the end, reflective of soundlessness" (Poem 34).

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Figure 4.8. Poem 32, *Evagatory*

The "ur-poem" of *Evagatory* is reiterated several times and in different forms, all the while producing diverse forms of the poem with small variations and intensities in inventive and sometimes unexpected ways. Peter Reading might be playing with the idea of the original through each alteration and might also be trying to explore possible worlds through repetition. The principle of causality is also played out with the unexpectedly scattering lines of the ur-poem, which also shows the "guideless, directionless, lightless" course of the voyage. "Cranial voice loquacious/inadequate/ (translationese from life to lingo)" is repeated in the second skull poem with a completely new interpretation connecting it with "region of hyperborean bleakness":

> region of hyperborean bleakness;
> cranial voice loquacious/ inadequate
> feebly ⎰ translating life from language;
> ⎱ reducing (Poem 23)

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The rest of the poem spilling from the skull also echoes the words and phrases from earlier poems such as "farctate with feculence," "faunal extinctions," and "all that remains, their last year's shit's stench," which have been somehow stammered several times in several forms until this point in the collection. The same poem is repeated with a minor variation in the 31st poem with the inclusion of the lines "etiolated eyeless crustacean/etiolated aberration." Recycling these words from several places in this and former collections such as *Perduta Gente* shows the processes of decontextualization and recontextualisation simultaneously, as a pattern of linguistic re- and de-territorializations. The final skull poem and the poem next to it duplicate the same lines with totally innovative forms, lines and words crossing over each other, and a line written four times over itself, sometimes putting some words under erasure in the final part of the poem "[thence to this silence, total, Sibelian]" (Poem 33). The poem(s) disseminate(s) into its/their "molecular chains" or multiplicities (Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand* 27) and the text is caught up in the process of becoming-molecular that undermines the powers of generic qualities, linguistic comprehensibility, narrative and formal unity, which can be considered as the molar[43] unities of a poetic creation.

Heather O'Donoghue argues that Reading's poetry foregrounds the materiality of writing and "the fragility of a textual tradition" through "characteristically experimental forms, with poems unfinished, or reworked, sometimes appearing as already fading away on the page, or in tantalizing

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[43] Deleuze and Guattari use the concept of "molar" in relation to the "molecular:" while the former stands for the whole, on the "macro level," the latter refers to the parts that make up the whole, on the "micro" level. Borrowed from the terminology of chemistry, the molar "relate[s] to aggregates of matter and not to either their molecular or atomic properties, or their motion" (Conley 175). Delezue and Guattari extend the use of this chemical vocabulary to comment on the political systems in the contemporary world and in relation to "political bodies:" "Molar entities belong to the State or the civic world. They are well defined, often massive, and are affiliated with a governing apparatus. Their molecular counterparts are micro-entities, politics that transpire in areas where they are rarely perceived: in the perception of affectivity, where beings share ineffable sensations; in the twists and turns of conversation having nothing to do with the state of the world at large" (176).

fragments" (356). This collage piece, in this regard, takes a "directionless" evagation between several materials—poetic and unpoetic:
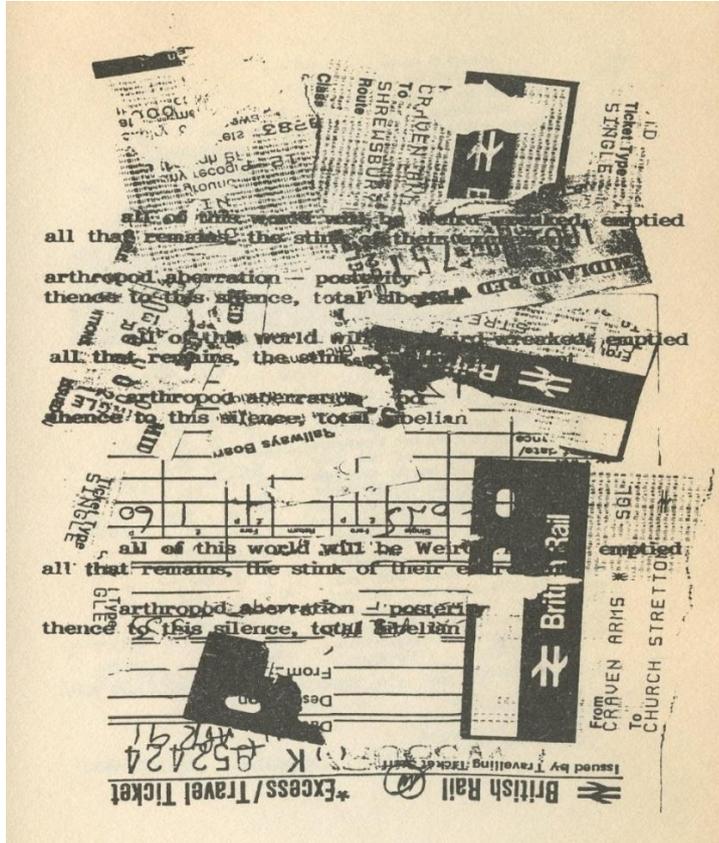
Figure 4.9. Poem 37, *Evagatory*

The text itself is caught up in a process of becoming. Barely seen and read lines from previously quoted poems in *Evagatory* are written on this collage page. Torn British Rail tickets are pasted over each other; accurate information about the departure and arrival points is omitted on some of the tickets. Blotching of the text along with the photocopied texture of the page defy their having any depth and authenticity. The creation process becomes a destructive act at the moment of reproduction, as Uwe Klawitter also comments: "The ripping and blackening indicates that artistic creation involves an aggressive, irreverent appropriation and obscuration of what went before; moreover, that it is highly derivative and reproductive" (200). The layers of the pasted materials multiply

without having an organic whole; the multi-layered page creates a heterogeneous surface of different plateaus that requires the active participation of the reader in this affective artistic creation. Rather than the already "cooked" graphic material of collage, the "combinatory process" gains a lot more importance in order to "subvert normative relations between elements through the concerted and spontaneous displacement of images and words" (Adamowicz 31).
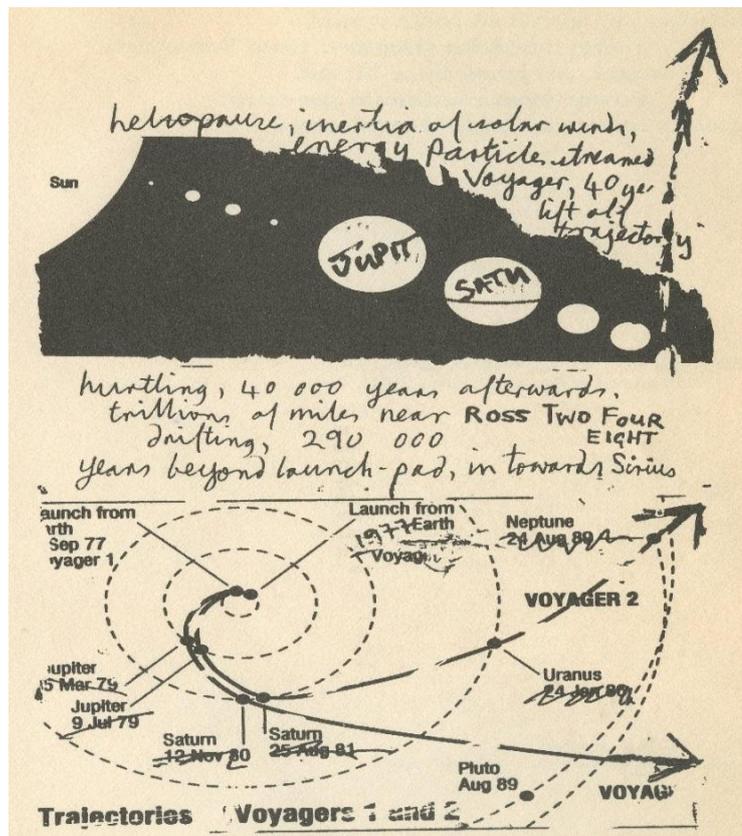
Figure 4.10. Poem 39, *Evagatory*

The apparent scientificity of this collage piece has a powerful effect in creating a line of flight within the trope of evagation prevalent in the collection. The unpoetic material—the drawing of Voyager 1's and 2's movements in outer space given with a timetable, and the cut-and-paste picture of the solar system—is interrupted by crossings-out, scrawls of the writing subject and cross-referenced (adapted) poetic material which has been formerly written as

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poems on previous pages. The trajectory of evagation is further visually evoked by the graphic of Voyager's outer-space mission. The end of the voyage is obscure as the arrow marks go in three different directions, and the dates of stellar arrivals are under erasure; all that is left is a sense of "drifting" and "silence" (Poem 40). Accordingly, towards the end of the book, the text leaves the territory of known earthly spaces and times of becoming and discovers new futures. Employing a pseudo-scientific vocabulary, the texts "open up the territories to new futures" and "extend beyond the existential territories to which they are assigned" (Walkerdine 759). As the two Voyager probes will by no means come back from their predetermined trajectory, there is no return or destination in the nomad subject's evagation—a total disintegration of self within absolute silence:
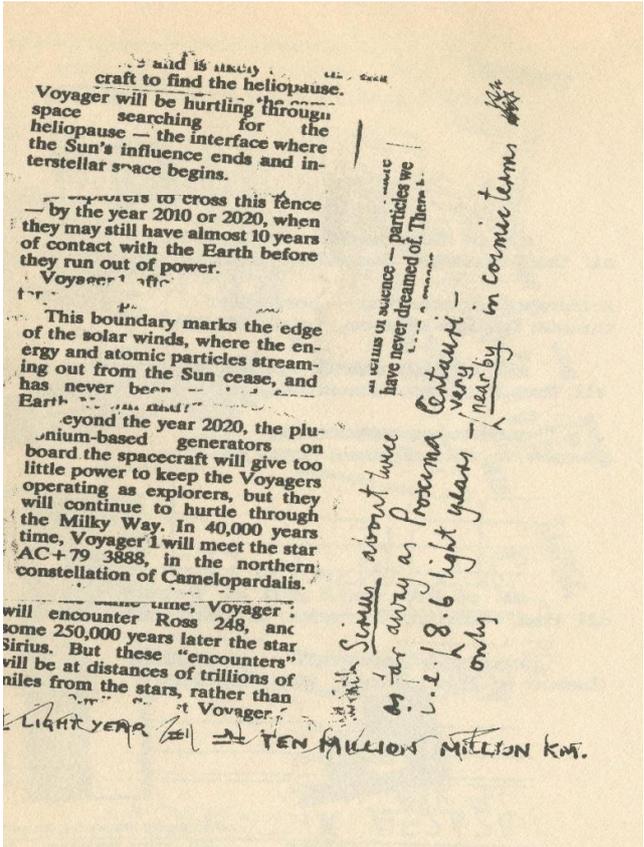
Figure 4.11. Poem 38, *Evagatory*

The keywords in this penultimate collage piece and the cut-and-paste scientific document about Voyager's interstellar mission are recycled once more in the closing poem. These found documents about Voyager can be retrieved from NASA web page[44] after a quick Google search with the keywords of cut-and-paste materials; however, the sources of these documents are not revealed in Reading's texts and their accuracy is questioned with the erasure of some words and the inclusion of notes. Reading likes inventing found materials and commenting on the materials he mixes with his poems. Peter Reading assures that there is no place for beauty in his poetry; as Isabel Martin also points out, the "badly cut-out newspaper article [or document] with annotations scrawled in Reading's hand testifies to the fact that the concern for beauty in form is finished" (225).

Reading treats each cut-and-paste part of the document as "particles," pieces of information about a mission which is not complete, discovering a completely different route in the process of evagation. The closing poem of *Evagatory,* at the end of which "both text and image run out of energy" (Barr 274), becomes a perfect example for textual collage that Reading frequently produces in his collections:

> heliopause, inertia of solar winds,
>   energy particles streamed from Sun cease,
> Voyager, 40 years since lift-off,
>   power from plutonium generator
> greatly reduced, continues trajectory

> hurtling, 40 000 years afterwards,
>   trillions of miles near Ross 248,

By decreasing the font size of the text, the nomadic exploration withdraws, divided by expanding on the textual distance and silences. The textual play takes flight by reprocessing words from two preceding documents and provides a new trajectory by the random wandering of lines such as "heliopause, inertia of solar winds," "Voyager, 40 years since lift-off," and "beyond launch-pad, in towards Sirius" several times in different texts. These texts are clearly not comprehensible to non-scientists and readers of poetry. This particular style of Reading enables the reader to find relations with the outside, the lines of flight in his poetry. The poetic has no place within this vortex of images, purely scientific discourse and found materials: the poetry is becoming-minotarian and the text is becoming a tent, nomadized.

By way of conclusion, this chapter has argued that Reading's poetry is nomadic and rhizomatic, given its formal and thematic concerns. The nomadic trajectory and the manifestations of nomad thinking in *Perduta Gente* and *Evagatory* were analysed through two main thematic and stylistic lenses: firstly, the conceptualization of homelessness through the relational entanglements between smooth and striated spaces, and trans-corporeal engagements of the human and the non-human; and secondly, through the concept of nomadic mobility—the act of evagation—as a discovery of trans-corporeal engagements that ends up with a schizophrenic outburst in both texts. In *Perduta Gente*, Reading's text reflects a tension between the smooth and striated social spaces, in which both human and non-human bodies are exposed to capitalistic modes of production and consumption. Through wandering between different sources—both poetic and unpoetic—the reader witnesses urban horrors echoing different levels of Dante's hell. Several disruptive bodies are discovered within these haptic circles where transgression becomes possible. In *Evagatory*,

the textual and visual experimentation becomes more resourceful, rendering the text a surface of conflicting forces, and lines of flight from the rigid rules of the poetic space.

CHAPTER V

"EAR MY STUTTER:" BECOMINGS, RITUALISTIC SOUNDSCAPES AND LINGUISTIC EXPERIMENTATION IN MAGGIE O'SULLIVAN'S *IN THE HOUSE OF THE SHAMAN* (1993) AND *PALACE OF REPTILES* (2003)

> VERMILLION
> BRONZES:
> (EAR MY STUTTER
> EAR MY (O'Sullivan, *House* 52)
>
> Exploration /
> Experiment –
> EXCLA
> &
> collaboration / incomplete / inexact / <u>ENACTING</u>
> […]
> Challenging / Transpiring / Provoking /
> Engaging with the OUT, the UNDER – the UN – the OTHER –
> THAN, the NON & the LESS –transgression; trespass; disparity;
> subversion: Milton's 'UNTWISTING THE CHAINS THAT TIE'
> (O'Sullivan, *Palace* 65-66)
>
> *Poetry is aversion of conformity* in pursuit of new forms,
> or can be. By form I mean ways of putting things together,
> or stripping them apart, I mean ways of accounting for
> what weighs upon any one of us … By form I mean how
> any one of us interprets what's swirling so often
> incomprehensibly about us, or the stutter with which he
> stutter, (sic.) the warbling tone in which she sing (sic.) off
> and on key. If form averts conformity, then it swings wide
> of this culture's insatiable desire for, yet hatred of,
> assimilation … (Bernstein, *Poetics* 1)

5.1. Maggie O'Sullivan's Poetry

Charles Bernstein opens his seminal work *A Poetics* with the oft-quoted argument above, "*Poetry is aversion of conformity* in pursuit of new forms, or can be," and shows the ways in which a poet can fight with conventionality of form and language use, and produce a stammering text, in other words, "UNTWISTING THE CHAINS THAT TIE" linguistically and formally. For Bernstein, the forms of the past are not enough to grasp the *zeitgeist* of the present. Therefore, the poets should invent[45] at all costs. This sounds like not only a poetic but also a political project which is comparable to Deleuze and Guattari's minor literature. Charles Bernstein and Maggie O'Sullivan are equally absorbed by the idea of the poem as "chant, initiation and incantation," and they discover an enchanted language to go beyond the contemporary poetic practices (Williams, N. 234). Maggie O'Sullivan's poems are stuttering texts, and her interest is mostly in the "OUT,""UNDER," "UN," "OTHER," "NON," "LESS," all that is silenced by stratified systems of representation. She becomes the shamanic healer of the suffering world by opening smooth spaces of signification and curing language at the transformative moment of its emergence. The page becomes a place of wandering on a nomadic tract, as O'Sullivan herself explains it in an interview with Dell Olsen, "[a] place of damage, savagery, pain, silence: also a place of salvage, retrieval and recovery. A place of existence, journeying. A sacred space of undiminishment. Of dream. Of ritual. Of magic." Starting from the front page of her work, her volumes become assemblages of art-work, poetry, musical notes, drawings and appearance of unpoetic material in a magical way.

Maggie O'Sullivan, largely known for her work in the experimental poetry scene in Britain, has been writing and performing poetry for more than

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[45] One of the most frequently used verbs in Bernstein's "Artifice of Absorption" (a chapter of *A Poetics*) is "to invent." Experimental poetries are thus labelled as linguistically innovative and investigative poetries.

three decades. She is a poet of twenty-one published poetry collections to date, the co-editor with Geraldine Monk of the famous *Out of everywhere* anthology (1996) which introduced the work of linguistically-innovative poetries by women poets, a visual artist and a small press publisher. The anthology O'Sullivan and Monk compiled named *Out of everywhere: linguistically innovative poetry from North America and the UK* brought O'Sullivan popularity both in the UK and North America. O'Sullivan and Monk largely include poems by female language poets who have been excluded from other mainstream anthologies—even from anthologies of women poets at the time—and introduce some new North American women poets. In a way, O'Sullivan sets out to defy the conformist and mainstream trends in the poetry industry by including linguistically exploratory poetics which "go[es] beyond the confines of representation and transparency or the ubiquitous realist/confessional reductionist mode" and each of the poets they include "in her own way takes great risks and commits herself to excavating language in all its multiple voices and tongues, known and unknown" (Interview by Andy Brown, 88). The title of her work provides the critics with the name—"linguistically innovative poetry"—to discuss the type of poetry experimental women poets internationally write. Apart from that, this anthology shows Maggie O'Sullivan's motivation in extending the British experimental poetries by collaborating with the North American language poetry society.

Although Maggie O'Sullivan is included among the experimental poets who are still writing today, we should acknowledge the fact that she has been becoming more popular recently, particularly due to her poetry readings, republication of her out-of-print work by Reality Street and a recent companion to her poetry by Salt, a Cambridge-based publishing house giving voice to alternative literary works. Charles Bernstein yet argues that she is "in a main line of poets," a line that includes diverse poets "from Blake to Swinburne, MacDiarmid to Raworth, Carroll to Bergvall, Cowper to Loy, Kwesi Johnson to

Bunting, Rosetti to Fisher" ("Colliderings" 5). That line is composed of one of "anti-representative" poets who rejects "received categories" and finds inventive connections with the "outside" (5). After working for BBC for several years, she left London to live in rural northwest England, Hebden Bridge, which had a great influence on the way she writes poetry and sees the world around her. In the 1970s and 1980s, O'Sullivan's early work was published in a small number of copies in the form of manuals and with facsimiles, mostly in collaboration with Bob Cobbing. From the 1990s onwards, Maggie O'Sullivan's work began to be published by Veer Books, Etruscan Books, Reality Street, and several other small publishers and in independent journals such as *HOW2* and *SIBILA*. These publishers provided O'Sullivan with the space to express herself as she desired, and did not break the integrity of her texts, and "allowed each work its own breath" (Interview by Andy Brown, 89).

Maggie O'Sullivan acknowledges several influences on her poetry and sometimes openly dedicates her poems to these names. Among those influences are poets like Basil Bunting, Bob Cobbing, Bill Griffiths and Charles Bernstein, who are very well-known in the experimental poetry scene; and writers such as James Joyce, Samuel Beckett, Antonin Artaud; and German artists including Joseph Beuys and Kurt Schwitters. Trained in visual arts like Reading, O'Sullivan employs her skills as a visual artist to mix poetry with art. As O'Sullivan writes in her meta-poetic and autobiographical commentary in the final text of *Palace of Reptiles*, "riverrunning (realisations," Kurt Schwitters and Joseph Beuys had a great impact on O'Sullivan's artistic-poetic practices, particularly foregrounding her work as a performance piece:

> In 1984, I began my assemblages or visual constructions —
> (I do not know why they began but they needed to begin) —
> ASSEMBLAGES, after Kurt Schwitters who made superb
> use of the UN — the NON and the LESS — THE UNREGARDED,
> the found, the cast-offs, the dismembered materials.
> In this concern for the retrieval of potentials within material
> his influence and teeming upon how I work is closely akin to

that of Joseph Beuys. (*Palace*[46] 67)

The formal choices O'Sullivan makes and the way she approaches her texts as assemblages that unfold the "other," the unsaid, the disregarded have been largely influenced by Schwitters' concept of *Merz*. Along with the idea of artwork as an assemblage, Maggie O'Sullivan's texts reflect "Schwitters' admission of error and mistake into the creative process" (Sheppard, *Poetry* 235). With this inspiration, O'Sullivan mastered in multi-media assemblages and the practice of using "the found, the cast-offs, the dismembered materials" in her poetry and other art work.

Perhaps the most influential figure in Maggie O'Sullivan's poetry is the German artist Joseph Beuys, who was formerly associated with the avant-garde movement, Fluxus, and later became more immersed with radical ecology in art. O'Sullivan became acquainted with Beuys' artistic practices while she was preparing a documentary about Joseph Beuys in 1988 for the BBC television. After this close contact with Beuys' work and aesthetics, O'Sullivan began to be preoccupied by a new kind of poetics that flees the urban experience with the aim of returning to nature. O'Sullivan comments on how she was influenced by the work of Joseph Beuys in *Palace of Reptiles*:

> In 1988, after having been involved in the transformative
> experience of working on a television film on Beuys,
> I stepped out, away from the city to the moorland
> impress of tongue
> [...]
>
> 'In the House of the Shaman' is borrowed from the
> title of one of Beuys' drawings. In naming my work
> after his I am tributing his work: fluid, changing,
> inviting new material, urging new responses. His urge
> to begin with mistakes, to show fraility . . . is at once
> starfish abdominal nuance   its moorings unsuspected —

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[46] In order to avoid interruptions, the title of O'Sullivan's volumes will be referred to as *House* and *Palace* in parenthetical information.

rescued starlight. (*Palace* 67, 68)

The shamanic procedures, 'kinship with the animals' and the political function of art are among the major subjects that O'Sullivan adopts from Beuys' conception of art. Beuys' figuration of shamanism "as both conceptual and therapeutic[47]" provides O'Sullivan with the means of dealing with pain and suffering inflicted on human beings in the contemporary world (Sheppard, "Talk" 169). O'Sullivan seems to have adopted the ways in which she can "produce an act of transformation" from Kurt Schwitters and "the staging of an act of transformation" from Joseph Beuys (167).

Another acknowledgement she makes in "riverrunning (realisations" is to Jerome Rothenberg, who is an American poet recognised as an avant-garde and performance poet. O'Sullivan pays homage to her trans-Atlantic connections, Charles Bernstein to whom she dedicates "riverrunning (realisations," and Rothenberg, who becomes a "key" figure in her poetic decisions:

> Jerome Rothenberg and the exemplary work he makes wide
> is a key, too in my workings. A richness of difference:
> Disparity: Difficulties: Dismemberment/Reconstitution:
> Sickness: Contradiction: Improvising Upon: INTENT.
> ADJUSTING TEETH / WITHIN WORDS / WOUNDS OF CHANCE /
> CARESSER OF CHAOS LEAPING HABIT — (*Palace* 68)

Apart from those literary and artistic connections, in her interview with Andy Brown, O'Sullivan admits the effect of her retreat to rural England after living in London for a long time and the role of her Irish ancestors:

> Moving out of London. Living beside animals. Frogs.
> Country night skies. Intimacy/Connection with Cats. My
> father who was born and brought up barefoot on an earth
> floor in the stone house his father built, outside of
> Skibbereen, West Cork. A sense of the ancestral self.
> Finnegan's Wake. Irish music, culture. (87)

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[47] The quotation at the beginning of the second part in *In the House of the Shaman* is from Joseph Beuys: "To stress the idea of transformation and of substance. This is precisely what the shaman does in order to bring about change and development: his nature is therapeutic" (28).

It is possible to find references to her Irish ancestors and the silenced status of Irish language itself several times in her work. Although she does not focus entirely on the roots of her family, it officially becomes one of the sources she uses as a poetic material. Her Irish background finds its way through the unsaid and silenced spaces, broken words of Irish origin and Irish lines and phrases used in several poems in *In the House of the Shaman* and *Palace of Reptiles*.

The reading experience of O'Sullivan's poetry turns into a dictionary hunt. Neologisms, broken words and syllables require frequent visits to several dictionaries not only for the non-native readers of her work but also the native speakers of English. It becomes a challenge most of the time to find out the meaning of words, clusters of words, syllables, images that Maggie O'Sullivan's poems make available, knowing that coming up with a meaning or a conclusive remark is not the ultimate aim of her experimental style. The reader is expected to participate in understanding how the complex imagery, references, word-plays and soundscapes work in the poems:

> The multidimensional layering of the text denies the possibility of being reduced to a mere mimetic reproduction of reality as the final destination of independent thoughts. In other words, O'Sullivan is not struggling to give meaning to her thoughts; instead, she is displaying the kinetic process where the visual and verbal negotiates the deferral of meaning. … [S]he hurls a volley of sound images to verbalise the visual aspect, and problematises her discourse. (Mortuza 166)

Maggie O'Sullivan acknowledges the fact that it is sometimes difficult to read her own writing as there is, in her words, "lots of disconnectiveness and disjunctiveness that is kind of working against how I sort of, how sometimes it seems it may be read" (Bernstein interview, "Writing"). Moreover, O'Sullivan describes her experimentations on the page—inclusion of unpoetic materials— as a "radical shifting" concerning the language of poetry and the drawings, collage pieces or poetic materials ("Writing").

This chapter aims to explore the processes of becoming by focusing on the ritualistic soundscapes and formal experimentation in Maggie O'Sullivan's *In the House of the Shaman* and *Palace of Reptiles*. Such a focus aims to understand how the nomadic subjectivity becomes part of the shamanic ritual, during which the landscape turns into a transcorporeal ground where the human and the non-human are unfolded[48] to reveal and put otherness(es) into play. In Maggie O'Sullivan's poetry, sounds are boisterously coming together in an unlikely way; the noises emerge without a specified centre and particularly against the anthropocentrism of the lyric self, which creates "visceral soundscapes" (Emery). Her use of language is endowed with repetitions, syntactical disruptions, or 'lines of flight' and 'stuttering' in Deleuzean sense to underline "becoming-minor or molecular" linguistically, stylistically and politically. The noises of stuttering, agony of producing a word that 'means,' might mean or is completely left obscure, and the unhomely noises of the inhabitants of the house of the shaman and the palace of reptiles produce their own "sonorous landscape" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand* 318).

The theoretical frame of this chapter revisits Daniel Smith's outline of the nomad thought previously detailed in the theoretical argument of this study: "the destruction of the world," "the dissolution of the subject," "the dis-integration of the body," "the 'minorization' of politics," and "the 'stuttering' of language" (xxiv). These subheadings guide the analysis of O'Sullivan's poems in

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[48] Here I refer to Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the fold, a term borrowed from Leibniz and the Baroque. This study uses the concept of the fold in relation with the new envisioning of subjectivity and the othernesses to be discovered in the texts. Simon O'Sullivan's definition in *The Deleuze Dictionary* informs this study about the use of that concept: "Specifically, the concept of the fold allows Deleuze to think creatively about the production of subjectivity, and ultimately about the possibilities for, and production of, non-human forms of subjectivity. In fact, on one level the fold is a critique of typical accounts of subjectivity that presume a simple interiority and exteriority (appearance and essence, or surface and depth). For the fold announces that the inside is nothing more than a fold of the outside … There is a variety of modalities of folds: from the fold of our material selves, our bodies, to the folding of time, or simply memory. Indeed, subjectivity might be understood as precisely a topology of these different kinds of folds" (107) In *Palace of Reptiles*, Maggie O'Sullivan alerts us how she uses the word fold in her writings, "THE FOLD INTRODUCES ANOTHER MOVEMENT, IN CONTRAST TO / THE STRAIGHTFORWARD PILING OF FELT" (68).

discovering the processes of becoming—particularly becoming-animal, becoming-imperceptible, becomings-other-than-human—which are also directly related with the understanding of subjectivity, body-politics and the 'act of transformation' achieved by the shamanistic ritual. Finally, the focus on linguistic and formal experimentations might enable us to explore the politics of "minor" literature and the essential "stuttering" of language in O'Sullivan's poetry.

5.2. Becomings, Ritualistic Soundscapes and Linguistic Experimentation in *In the House of the Shaman* and *Palace of Reptiles*

Maggie O'Sullivan's *In the House of the Shaman* was published by Reality Street Editions in 1993 under the general editorship of Ken Edwards. The collection is organized in three parts entitled as Books, "Another Weather System," "Kinship with Animals" and "Prism and Hearers" respectively. O'Sullivan admits that she borrows the title of the book from one of Joseph Beuys' drawings/paintings with a similar title, but she does not openly tell which one of the paintings she was inspired by. Among Beuys' series of drawings about the shamanistic experience, the titles of two paintings look similar to O'Sullivan's book title: "Trance in the House of Shaman," a drawing dated 1961, which depicts the shamanic ecstasy, and "Houses of the Shaman" (1965), an oil paint and graphite. The Tate caption of the second oil paint writes:

> Shamanism is a recurring theme for Beuys. Although the shaman himself does not feature here, his presence is invoked by the depiction of his houses. It is fitting that Braunkreuz oil paint has been used to paint the houses, as one of the reasons Beuys began to use this specific type of paint was its similarity to the paint used for painting houses in rural areas of Germany. The matt, almost dusty texture of the paint reminds the viewer of the earth and

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our origins. The shaman, too, is a representative of man's primitive past and natural, uncultured personality[49].

Joseph Beuys' thematic engagement with shamanism in different artworks is an attempt to discover a pre-Cartesian self, a self that is unaffected by the mind and the body, nature and culture divisions. Beuys' artistic practices were mainly shaped by ecological concerns and reconnection with the earth; David Adams argues, "[m]uch of his oeuvre attempted to convey forces and energies of the natural world, often grasped at a prelinguistic or presymbolic level, through his personally forged language of forms and substances" (26). In order to reconnect with the "formative energies of the world" Beuys celebrated "the animal kingdom" and plants in his work to rediscover the prelinguistic, instinctual, even spiritual powers (29). All in all, such an ecological vision reflected in his artwork forms the basis of his conceptual employment of shamanism and shamanistic ritual and the role of the artist as a shaman. O'Sullivan's poetry, particularly *In the House of the Shaman*, is profusely influenced by the way Joseph Beuys engages with nature and the shaman figure.

O'Sullivan's *Palace of Reptiles* was published by an Ontario-based publisher, the Gig Press, in 2003, ten years after the publication of *In the House of the Shaman*. As the notes and the acknowledgements of the collection reveal, the texts in *Palace of Reptiles* were produced in three years, from 1992 to 1995, and some of them were published in several poetry magazines and performed as live art performances at poetry readings. The collection is divided into three sections like its precursor without a unifying structure: the first section composed of four short poems, the second section with two poems and a long poem, and the final section with a long poem/text based on a talk O'Sullivan has given; and that text can be taken as O'Sullivan's consideration of

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[49] It is possible to find some of Joseph Beuys's drawings and artwork on online webpage of Tate Museum. The drawings with the shaman as the central figure include "Trance in the House of the Shaman" (1961), "Houses of the Shaman" (1965), "The Shaman's Two Bags" (1977), "Stripes from the House of the Shaman" (1980). Please follow the link for details about Joseph Beuys' artwork: <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/beuys-houses-of-the-shaman-ar00121>

her own poetry and art. The latter thus can be read as a meta-poem that theorizes O'Sullivan's poetic procedures, unfolds information about her influences and self-reflexively talks about the formal and stylistic choices. Some of the texts in both collections have been performed and revised after the reactions of the audience[50]. Therefore, the act of writing/composing her poems is a continuous process of rewriting and restructuring.

O'Sullivan's poetry appeals to the ear as much as to the eye as she notes: "I am using the sight/site of the ear/page as a foundational textu(r)al, sonic, visual bodily dimension to move out from" (Olsen). The visual quality of her poems creates an estranging moment for the onlooker-reader from the title pages[51] onwards until each word unit or letter symbol is vocalized. The vocalization of her poems is at times baffling as the body is expected to participate in the whole event of creative process—both reading as performing and bodily interaction with the verbal event. This interaction is the basis of experimentation in Maggie O'Sullivan's entire poetic career and as an artist of mixed media assemblages. Maggie O'Sullivan claims that "[w]riting is a body-intensive activity;" in other words, for her, the body should be actively involved in the processes of writing, performing and hearing/reading poetry (Bernstein interview, "Writing"). O'Sullivan's poems and visual artworks in *In the House of the Shaman* and *Palace of Reptiles*, accordingly, are closely related to her treatment of body in many diverse ways in her poems: the performative body of the poet; the body of work coming into existence at the moment of the performance; and the trans-corporeal conception of body which requires an understanding the human body in relation to its non-human others.

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[50] In her interview with Scott Thurston, Maggie O'Sullivan notes that the hearers of her poetry have an important role in the composition of her texts: "I've performed pieces and have gone back to the texts after my performance, developing them as a result of the audience's response" (245).

[51] The covers of both books include mixed media assemblages by Maggie O'Sullivan: the first one is called "An Order of Mammal" and the second one is "Bound to be Blue."

In her interview with Dell Olsen, Maggie O'Sullivan further acknowledges that she predominantly "draw[s] upon the earth and the other-than-human—voicing [her] body/bodying [her] voicings" and committing herself to "an eco/ethico politics of the earth."[52] In order to analyse the concept of becoming, particularly becoming-animal, in *In the House of the Shaman* and *Palace of Reptiles*, this chapter focuses on the "zones of proximity"[53] between the human and the non-human inhabitants of the landscape, discovered through the ritualistic practices of the shaman-poet and the procedural techniques employed by O'Sullivan. It is not possible to talk about a unified sense of self in *In the House of the Shaman* and *Palace of Reptiles*; on the contrary, the dynamism of the nomadic subject comes from its contact or 'kinship' with its others and with its environment: animals, plants, the weather system, water, waste and so on. Rosi Braidotti remarks that the patterns of becoming are deconstructive of privileged subject positions such as "(masculine/white/heterosexual/speaking a standard language/property-owning/urbanized), or else, as stepping stones to a complex and open-ended process of de-personalization of the subject" (*Metamorphoses* 119). In the same way, in O'Sullivan's poems, the antropomorhic assumptions about the human subject's domination over its non-human others are put under scrutiny. Moreover, O'Sullivan's experimental use of language aims to question the ways

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[52] In the same interview, O'Sullivan notes that Cecilia Vicuna's work (*Unravelling Words & the Weaving of Water*) is a significant inspiration for her understanding this politics of earth, embodiment and performance, particularly quoating from Vicuna's work: "To feel the earth as one's own skin" (Olsen).

[53] In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari argue that becomings "draw one another into zones of proximity or undecidability" (507). In *Essays Clinical and Critical*, Deleuze again employs the term to stress the idea that becomings always hold the middle position "between" things, beings or states: "To become is not to attain a form (identification, imitation, Mimesis) but to find the zone of proximity, indiscernibiliry, or indifferentiation where one can no longer be distinguished from *a* woman, *an* animal, or *a* molecule—neither imprecise nor general, but unforeseen and nonpreexistent, singularized out of a population rather than determined in a form" (1-2). In *What is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari use the term as "zones of indiscernability" or "undecidability" through which becomings communicate: "they are variations, modulations, intermezzi, singularities of a new infinite order" (158).

in which these privileged subject positions are inherently transmitted through language.

In the poems, the human subject and language are constantly deterriotialized by the presence of its non-human others. Maggie O'Sullivan's project goes beyond simply "imitating" the animal or making analogies between an animal and human-being (*Thousand* 238, 258). Before moving on with the analysis of the poems, it is important to reconsider Deleuze and Guattari's concept of becoming briefly in relation to how Maggie O'Sullivan poetry manifests becoming-animal. Deleuze and Guattari make a distinction between three types of animals. The first one refers to family pets, "Oedipal animals," which are considered the members of the family, emotionally connected within the Oedipal structure within the family. The second type of animals are "state animals" which take place as archetypes in the myths or belief systems of states or any power structure. And finally, "demonic animals, pack or affect animals that form a multiplicity, a becoming, a population, a tale" (Thousand 241). Deleuze and Guattari seem to favour 'demonic animals' as they are not connected with the Oedipal and striated relationships with the state philosophy. These "pack" animals are more resourceful for writers to form assemblages between different molecular entities. In relation with their categorization of animals, Deleuze and Guattari talk about different becoming-animal in the tenth plateau of their *A Thousand Plateaus*; the first one is from the sorcerer's memories, and then those of the theologian are listed. In the case of the theologian, there are two types of becoming-animal: in the first type, "the subject believes him-or herself to be transformed into an animal, pig, ox, or wolf, and the observers believe it too" and in the second type, "the Devil 'assumes' real animal bodies, even transporting the accidents and affects befalling them to other bodies," in other words, the body of the animal is haunted by the Devil (252). In the sorcerer's memories, they argue that the State makes use of animal characteristics—through science and myth—to

divide them into species based on similarity or dissimilarity. Deleuze and Guattari are not interested in evolutionary classifications; what matters to them is that "every animal is a band, a pack:" "That it has pack modes, rather than characteristics, even if further distinctions within these modes are called for. It is at this point that the human being encounters the animal" (*Thousand* 239). After their discussion on these categories of animals and becoming-animal, Deleuze and Guattari particularly focus on the concept of becoming-animal in film studies, art and literature. Gerald Bruns summarizes what Deleuze and Guattari mean by becoming-animal particularly in arts and literature:

> In the terms of art that Deleuze and Guattari characteristically use, becoming-animal is a movement from major (the constant) to minor (the variable); it is a deterritorialization in which a subject no longer occupies a realm of stability and identity but is instead folded imperceptibly into a movement or into an amorphous legion whose mode of existence is nomadic or, alternatively, whose "structure" is rhizomatic rather than arborescent, that is, restless, insomniac, or in flight rather than settled, upright, at one with itself and at peace with others. … It is a movement from molar to molecular combinations, from unity to complexity, that is, from organization to anarchy, which is the mode of being of whatever is uncontainable within an order of things, as in the case of the war machine vis-à-vis the State. (703-4)

All becomings like becoming-animal[54] display movement from "molar" to "molecular," from the stability of their territory to the thresholds of different

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[54] Deleuze and Guattari provide a number of examples of becoming-animal in their *A Thousand Plateaus*. Essentially, their tenth plateau begins with two illustrations Etruscan wolfman myth and an analysis of a film by Daniel Mann in terms of becoming-rat of the protagonist, Willard (232, 233, 234). Other examples of becoming-animal explored in this chapter are Jorge Louis Borges' *A Universal History of Infamy and Manual de zoolog'iafantastica*, Captain Ahab and Moby-Dick, Kafka's becoming-insect in *Metamorphosis* and becoming-rat in "Josephine, the mouse singer," Lawrence's "becoming-tortoise" in his poem "Tortoise Family Connections" (Thousand 241, 243, 244). Even though these patterns show that their theory of becoming is mostly based on their analyses of films, artwork and literary works, it is possible to find non-human becomings—becomings that do not involve human beings—such as the reproductive system of wasp-orchid, wolf clan doubling with swarm of bees, "becoming-wolf- or wasp-

territorial encounters, and from identity to difference, thresholding the other. The processes of becoming are particularly aiming at destabilizing "the metaphysics of the self;" and in the case of becoming-animal, the human subjectivity not only encounters its others "but it also frees the animal from the anthropocentric gaze altogether" (Braidotti, *Metamorphoses* 145). The becomings mainly exist outside the control of the human domain as "nonhuman being *is* becoming—a permanent becoming" whereas for the human subject this "permanent becoming" is an "entry" for becoming-other, having contact with its others (Iveson 39). The human language is organized to categorize its others in an anthropomorphic way, placing the human at the centre of the perception. However, what is central to becoming-animal of human is the decentring of the anthropomorphic representations of the world, particularly the natural world, and dethronement of the human subject from its privileged status. For Deleuze and Guattari, writers are sorcerers; they find ways to discover the multiplicity that animals contain (*Thousand* 240). Such multiplicity can be discovered through "voice and through sound and through a style" becoming-other is realized (Deleuze and Guattari, *Kafka* 7). In other words, the affective qualities of a work of literature—its syntax, use of lexical items, and handling of the poetic material available to the poet—make becomings possible.

As the spatial contours of the nomadic subject in Maggie O'Sullivan's volumes, the house of the shaman and the palace of reptiles distort the boundaries between the inside and the outside. The borders of the house or the palace are indistinct; the dwellings of the human and non-human animals are comingled. In addition, the choice of "House" and "Palace" in the titles of both volumes might be a reference to shamanistic cosmology. The shamanic trajectory is followed between "three cosmic zones": "from earth to the sky or

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butterfly machine" (*Thousand* 238, 31, 37). Apart from these, becoming-women is one of those becomings which do not involve nonhuman proximity.

from earth to the underworld" (Eliade 259). The symbolism of the "World Pillar" or "the Centre of the Earth" connecting the earth to heaven is seen in different shamanic cultures and several architectural structures such as "ziggurat, temple, royal city, palace" are used to support this symbolism (264). There needs to be "an opening" or "a hole"—a "holey" space—in these places considered the hub for the flight to take place: "it is through the same hole that the soul of the shaman in ecstasy can fly up or down in the course of his celestial or infernal journeys" (259) and any "altar, tent, or house makes possible a break-through in plane and hence ascent to the sky" (265). Likewise, O'Sullivan's house and palace, in this respect, can be considered as sites of possible "break-through," of ritualistic/textual transformation and journey. Moreover, although the idea of "World Pillars" has a centralizing function, as what is important is the passage/flight between these "cosmic zones," the spaces experienced are not measurable or optical—not striated—but are perceived by sensations, by the flows of the weather system and eco-system, along with the aural and sonic reception of these flows.

The first section of *In the House of the Shaman*, "Another Weather System," a performance piece about the natural cycle of birth and death, predatory life of animals which is full of violence and passion, introduces this trans-corporeal understanding of landscape. Maggie O'Sullivan's landscape inhabits multiplicities, each of which is "symbiotic" as Deleuze and Guattari would argue, "its becoming ties together animals, plants, microorganisms, mad particles, a whole galaxy. Nor is there a preformed logical order to these heterogeneities" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand* 250). In this respect, both the landscape visited in "Another Weather System" and the page space are smooth spaces that are taken by movement, change, and stretching of poetic conventionalism. The idea of cyclicity of natural life and the weather system is evoked by the opening stanza:

Contorted
                    lure
                    of
                    Circles,

                              fur
                              at
                              beauty.
                              (*House* 9)

In the beginning, we are faced with a complete disorder pronounced by the word "contorted;" and that chaotic atmosphere is not dreadful, on the contrary, it is "luring" and "beautiful." Each of these opening words is used as keywords throughout the text, as they appear several times in different contexts to stress the conflict between chaos and order, which defines the trajectory of nomadic subject. Almost immediately, the noise of bones breaking (*House* 15), "tearing" of "the flesh" (*House* 14), the sounds of gnawing and cracking (*House* 10), along with the screams of toads and cries of hares (*House* 10) take control of the first section of *In the House of the Shaman*. In other words, the landscape screams its unique "acoustic environments" (Braidotti, *Metamorphoses* 153). The sonic qualities of the first section mingles with the affective landscape of intensities of the "weather system," sensory experience of the fauna, with the circulation of sounds, noises, smells and colours. The landscape is neither steady nor unsteady "but *metastable*, presenting 'a plurality of ways of being in the world' that are incompatible yet coexistent" (Smith xxvii). The human language is still at work in the poem; however, it is deterritorialized and molecularized by animal noises:

                              every feather
                              bled inside
                              mesh
                              w/body

                              pale   fritillary   biting,

                              154

Pale Blazes
          Dorsal Breakers
          Gnawed.by/Gnawed.by/Cracked.by/Cracked.by/
          Cracked
          noon key
          Cracked
Dead Horse Bellies
          Dead Syllabary   Dead

FLOAT

murder bullies

POINT THE FINGER

Parrot on a Swing
          in-thru
          eye
hang by feet/Skull & Teeth

Master & Marrionettes

weeply

HARES RAN
TOAD SCREAM (O'Sullivan, *House* 10)

The animal voices dash into the poem by repetitive uses of "Gnawed.by/Gnawed.by/Cracked.by/Cracked.by/." Added to that is the rushing of hares[55] and cries of toads. Violence within natural life and the impulse of survival is accompanied with the silenced sufferings of the frail species (the race between "Master & Marionettes") served as "a bloody diet" (*House* 13). Although "Bellies" in the line "Dead Horse Bellies" is capitalized, it could also be taken as a verb "to belly," becoming engorged by sonority of the previous lines of gnawing, cracking and bullying. When the dead horse enters the textual

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[55] Hare is especially preferred in almost all sections which might be considered as a reference to one of Joseph Beuys' favourite animals in his work along with coyote and horse.

space with its ritualistic sacrifice[56], "syllabary" is dead as well. Considering the dictionary meaning of "syllabary,"—"a collection, set, system, list, or table of syllables"[57]—then a systematic convention of human language is overdone, now being "dead." When the system of syllables is "dead," the text is left with "FLOAT[ING]." Moreover, performative enactment of violence, suffering and healing reveals "a circulation of impersonal affects, an alternate current that disrupts signifying projects as well as subjective feelings" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand* 233). The language of violence takes a physical form with the choice of vocabulary that indicates violence ("pulped," "plunged," "bled," "mesh," "biting," "stabbing"), slashing of syllables and alliterative sound structure. Such a language creates the "impersonal affects" Deleuze and Guattari talk about, which simultaneously defines the 'nonstyle'[58] of Maggie O'Sullivan.

The section's title implies that we are going to witness a system we are not familiar with, a system that introduces new othernesses. Lawrence Upton comments that the weather system might refer to "any all-encompassing power system" and in O'Sullivan's "another weather system, we may find ourselves at sea when we thought we were on land." The nomadic subject of the poem leaves the familiar territory and discovers "another" weather system and landscape, and interacts with the outside—the other, going beyond the

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[56] Please see Mircea Eliade's *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, page 182, for the ritualistic sacrifice of horses in shamanic cultures.

[57] "syllabary, n." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, September 2015. Web. 21 October 2015.

[58] Deleuze takes up the discussion of 'nonstyle' in relation to 'style' in his essay, "He Stuttered," in which he argues that a writer's style exists outside her/his autorial self and is created by 'affects' and particular materials available to the writer, artist or musician. In the case of Maggie O'Sullvan's poetry, O'Sullivan's particular 'nonstyle' comprises the experimental use of language: "Style—the foreign language within language—is made up of these two operations; or should we instead speak with Proust of a nonstyle, that is, of 'the elements of a style to come which do not yet exist'? Style is the economy of language. To make one's language stutter, face to face, or face to back, and at the same time to push language as a whole to its limit, to its outside, to its silence—this would be like the *boom* and the *crash*. […] Style becomes nonstyle, and one's language lets an unknown foreign language escape from it, so that one can reach the limits of language itself and become something other than a writer, conquering fragmented visions that pass through the words of a poet, the colors of a painter, or the sounds of a musician" (*Essays* 113).

identificatory borders. This trajectory creates smooth spaces of movement, speed and slowness, where "[t]he dwelling is subordinated to the journey; inside space conforms to outside space: tent, igloo, boat" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand* 478). It is "another" weather system, through which the speaking subject affectively[59] experiences a world of sensation rather than a world organized through striation[60]. The speaking subject undertakes the processes of becoming at the cost of becoming-imperceptible, similar to the procedures in Virginia Woolf's *Waves*, "sound, heat, and liquid waves bypass the human and thus connect to larger forces" (Braidotti, *Metamorphoses* 127). This weather system embodies the animal and plant life—therefore mainly the vocabulary of zoology, botanics, biology and chemistry become the major sources of inspiration for the shaman-poet. The weather is characterized by acid rains with sulphurous contents (*House* 13) and cadmium (*House* 14), possibly implying the contamination of the natural landscape. The season is known as the "BLOOD MONTH," when there is almost no hope for healing or any soothing ("hills / unhealed") (House 12, 13):

rain, dear birth

eatness

uninterruptedly,

[…]

Secondaries & Paler

Sulphur Parallels,

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[59] Please see Chapter 3.4. pages between 79-80 for details regarding the idea of "molecular movements" of the body.

[60] Deleuze and Guattari uses "striated" spaces as opposed to the concept of smooth spaces. The striated spaces belong to the operations of "State;" therefore, there are "metric," "gridded," "measured," "disciplining" and controlled by the state apparatus (*Thousand* 363). In the context of this study, striation is also used in opposition to the concept of movement. Please see page 71 of theory section for a more detailed explanation of striation and smoothness.

[...]

    fragment selves
        in cadmium hands

* cries*

HUNGER
hooking the bill   tearing the flesh   lining the text (*House* 13-14)

When hunger takes hold of the scene, the "killing" comes "on the/ same/ BREATH," and the bill is hooked like eating at a diner. "Lining the text," its becoming on the page, is hurting; the body of work is coming into existence like the fight taking place in the natural world. Starting with rain, the year is "drawn white" with "NORTH BLACK WINTERING" (*House* 15). The cyclical trajectory followed by the speaker involves "nervous pathways," in which "alignment"— any chance of ending chaos—is belated, "pro LONGED" (*House* 16). When the day light arrives, chaos ends and life is "aligned" again and the night is "softened" (*House* 16). Taking the shamanic aspect of performance into consideration, the cyclical pattern of birth and death voiced in the texts might be likened to "the drama of death and resurrection" during the shamanic rituals (Eliade 159-160). The early phases of the poem can be taken as an enactment of the rituals of death, "disfigurement" or "disgorg[ing]" of the self—or emptying the shamanic body of its human qualities (*House* 20). Then, the language of becoming-animal following the "disfigurement" of the subject is unfolded:

    the feet
    hobbling
    to the letter

       sound in the tree in

          deed
          draw

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the condition
                    of my quarters
                              *
                    Horse it with a Bird
                              *
                    Bee it with a Dog
                              *
          Wolf
          pattering
          tabor
          this
          appeared
          act
          i
          this
          locate
          space
                              *
          (*House* 21)

The speaking subject is stressed with the "broken speechway" and follows a trajectory to articulate or perform again; its voyage is towards the "letter" although the movement is not steady or slowed down ("the feet/hobbling/to the letter"). The nomadic subject occupies a middle position between the urge to articulate at the moment of interacting with the material/non-human world and the molar forces of human language. There is a strange "symbiosis of bodies" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand* 89) in the lines divided by asterisks: becoming-bird of horse and becoming-horse of bird; becoming-bee of a dog and becoming-dog of a bee. Not only their bodies but also their territories are dislocated, given that all those animals are known for marking their territories. The lines starting with "Wolf/pattering" reminds us of the picture of pattering of wolfs on the snow in the second plateau, "One or Several Wolves" in *A Thousand Plateaus*; wolf steps make holes on the snowy land, yet the wolf patter(n)s are still there (26). The subject/ or the performing body is "joining the pack" of wolves and "hold to the multiplicity"; therefore, the performing

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body both affects and is affected by this pack, de-territorialized and re-territorialized in a new way (26).

Some sort of healing is sought for towards the end of "Another Weather System": "a different/stage of/grief sows its Blood" (*House* 24). At this stage, the therapy is initiated by finding a "sort" and "sound" for the "Kept & the Unburst" and "letting go/then—" (*House* 25). Flowers have a therapeutic effect; the valley-bottoms should be ripped "for flower/ holed stones" and "Again sing/for primrose measure" (25). Primroses are first to blossom in spring and one should relentlessly sing for a seasonal change— for primroses. Yet, there is no likelihood for that to happen soon. The poem ends with a ritualistic withdrawal of the shaman's body from the non-human body of the helping spirit:

> Black
> it were
> Brains Out
>
>   as if
>   the Hawk
>   noised
>   it is
>
>   that
>   this
>
>   these
>   Enter.
>   (*House* 26)

The shaman's ecstatic journey is conveyed through the transformed body of him/her and through guardian spirits in the shape of animals. The shamans also imitate the sounds of those animals. The reason why I choose to interpret this section as shamanistic drama of withdrawal is the use of "Brains Out/as if/the Hawk/noised." The hawk is "noised" in performance; the shamanic body is becoming-hawk by sounding its noises. The others ("that/ this/ these") enter

the performance. Robert Sheppard remarks that Maggie O'Sullivan's preoccupation with the 'kinship with animals' "implies making the poem a part of organic nature, which is only possible through sound, articulated through the living body of the poet" (*Poetry* 242). Again, the possession of the shaman's body by the animal spirits might offer a framework to discover the becoming-animal in the poems. The presence of the animals as voices and noises in the text disrupts how human language works through creating dualistic relationship between the human and its non-human others.

The passage between different elemental and atmospheric qualities of this weather system produces smooth spaces of resistance and survival. Moreover, on textual level, O'Sullivan tries to discover the possibilities "[t]o stress the idea of transformation and of substance" through this meteorological imagery (*House* 28). Water, for instance, is the dominating element in the second book of *In the House of the Shaman*, "Kinship with Animals," and the watery landscape supports the fluidity between crossings ("of mutability,") volatile and transparent nature of linguistic processes. The second poem, "Equities Water," starts in the middle of something like jumping out of water, "as if to . Spayfer Noisy Stuff" (*House* 30). So as to say "as if," there has to be a quality to be talked about or a comparison to make. That comparison is missing from the start and "to ." is not connected to a proper verb, but divided with a period from a neologism "Spayfer." This neologism might refer to a combination of "spay" and "-fer," as spay is related to aquatic terminology and "-fer" might refer to the derivative to make "spayfer" a strange compound. Otherwise, it might also be a combination of "spay" and "transfer." The *OED* defines "spay" as a "channel, drain, or small stream, especially one carrying off overflow or surplus water" and together with "-fer" it might mean "carrying water through a channel." In the context of the poem, "Spayfer Noisy Stuff" is an invitation to make the poem noisy with the flows of water, which is somehow paraphrased in the fourth line: "Let the Water Go   Loud" (*House* 30)**.**

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The soundscape of the poems is created through not only animal noises but also other components of the landscape such as water and natural phenomenon. Linguistic experimentation in the poem revolves around the words as molecules, simultaneously embodying and reflecting the energy of water molecules that makes the text "Go Loud." The text becomes noisy through these molecular becomings.

"Naming" also starts with the water imagery: "Water/ they unlidder" (*House* 32). It would not be far-fecthed to argue that Maggie O'Sullivan's preoccupation with water in these poems in relation to her emphasis on the weather system has a lot to do with her aim to discover the energy of the natural world through its material aspects. The weather system metaphorically stands for the system of human language as a "molar property" constituted by "a body of water or air composed of a large population of molecules;" and the linguistic components, the words, are energized through "the molecules' kinetic energy, the energy they have by virtue of their movement" (DeLanda 165). From the first line onwards, it is possible to see this energy of linguistic experimentation which is also accompanied by the postponement of the signified. Who or what "unlidders" water/text is not named yet. The non-standard use of "unlidder" as a verb suggests an opening and uncovering that initiates a performance. The surface of both the text and water is "unliddered" by the "hurtling" of the birds with great speed, with the entering of "suffixes—Dots. Dashes. Scraping fowls/ Unescorted" simultaneously. Then, enters the "DRAGON" (possibly dragonfly as they usually populate marshy areas) with its swift flight and loud buzzing sound "plum-BURR/ plum-BURR/ plum-BURR." The dragonfly scene is followed by an invitation or an invocation with the intention to draw other bodies in that ritualistic drama of "naming:"

> Be come.
> Be spoke.
> Be eared.
> (*House* 32)

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"Be come," might suggest coming into existence, the arrival of the be-ing with all its dynamism; "Be spoke," a strange combination of present and past tense, is an invitation for vocalization, singing or making the utterance audible; and finally "Be eared," the vocalization must draw the attention of the ears (be noisy), and the articulation of sounds are as important as how they are heard or processed by ears. The text turns back to its watery setting with the next line: "Teal. Nor into/is drumming." The small water-fowl is struggling on the surface of the water, with its "squeal/ Driven to Summit." Then comes the gushing of blood with the text becoming a battleground ("battlegivens") with beheadings ("decapitate."), "wounds" and "blood-fine-hatching" "laid" on the rivers. And finally comes the long-waited "naming" after a bloody delivery and "hatching" of words: "this is called/fish" (*House* 32). The "they" of the opening line is discovered to be "fish;" and other attempts of naming are not realised and "fish" be/comes by virtue of its difference from other signifiers (not dragonfly, not teal, but fish). "The poem enacts the primacy of evocation over 'naming'," Robert Sheppard argues, "of the role of a linguistically transformative exuberance, of the preference for the pleasure of the riddle's processes to the comfort of its solution" (*Poetry* 239).

"Of Mutability" is the longest poem of "Kinship with Animals," and the poem opens with a quotation from Ezra Pound's *Canto LVII*: "seeking the transmutation/ of metals/ seeking a word to make/ change" (*House* 35). The title and the superscription of the poem show that it will be about the processes of transformation, that alchemy created by words—language. Along with "Equities Waters" and "Naming," "Of Mutability" illustrates the "recognition of the entanglement of material … forces in the making of the subject" (Braidotti, *Transpositions* 37). The same theme is also conducted through the ritualistic space of the shamanic performance which makes becomings possible. The shamanistic flight of the text is enabled through the

"flutters" of the first line and throbbing drum. The night is turning to the morning ("night/morning"); the night is black, deadly and venomous ("Looks Within/ Looks Around/ Bone Black With Waded Venoms"). Mircea Eliade discusses the importance of animals and "natural phenomena" as major "sources of shamanic powers:" "Almost all animals can become spirits, as can a large number of objects—anything that has any relation to death (e.g. graves, bones, teeth, etc.) and any natural phenomenon (blue sky, east, west, etc.)" (104). The objects of death as discussed by Eliade are all over the place in O'Sullivan's *In the House of the Shaman* and *Palace of Reptiles*. Particularly, in "Of Mutability," bones, claws, teeth, skull, wings are plentiful. In this poem, like most of her texts in both collections, O'Sullivan puts "everything on a plane of exteriority," and thus, the type of writing in this poem can be taken as "a broken chain of affects and variable speeds, with accelerations and transformations, always in a relation with the outside" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand* 9). The watery surface again becomes a threshold of such "accelerations" and slowness:

> skin of WATERY-
> SCALDERY-
> AXE-ACCELERATIONS-UTTERBLUE-OX
> …
> Mainly Water, Water whilst animal   water, was water w/the arched
> back of an angry numbering (*House* 35)

The following lines unfold the "angry numbering" and show the "lodges of shifting," becoming-animal, then followed by a shamanic trance:

> Mice-things
> Hawk-heard
> Wash fox
> Track out   to&fro   Lodges of shifting skuld cut words,
> droving
> droving   the breath drinks/both faces   the skin
> pre.tending Bird begun, painting-in ab, AB-Sing Water
> plumage the face the face the face lamey milks   joint by

> joint white risen to full poppy   *tapty tapty tapy*
> *tapty tapty*   (*House* 36)
>
> feet-way on the face
> face of the body/ how quickly, steps had been,
> how many times   (House 39)
>
> the meaning of bodies cut the hand at work the face   many
> days
> i have
> eaten (*House* 39)

The "breath" of the performance captures faces and skin; then begins the shaman's initiatory ritual to turn into a bird by his/her bird-like movements and birdy noises, "pre.tending Bird begun, painting-in ab, AB-Sing Water/ plumage the face." The insistence on taking hold of the face through "plumage" is a strange becoming. With a little digression from poetry, it might be useful to discuss Deleuze and Guattari's concept of "faciality" briefly. They argue that the face is "a surface… a map ... inhuman" and facialization is a "machinic operation that draws the entire body across the holey surface, and in which the role of the face is not as a model or image, but as an overcoding of all of the decoded parts" (*Thousand* 170). This commentary on face and faciality might help us explore the textual insistence on the face several times in the poem. Plumaging the face of the shaman is more than imitating the face of the bird; it reinforces the idea of becoming-animal of human through the dismantling of the human faciality and "overcoding" all transformed parts of the body by animal body-parts. Returning to their formula, only when the human faciality is properly dismantled, "true becomings … get out of the black holes" (*Thousand* 171).

The text is working through an ecstatic moment when the body of the shaman crosses the threshold and has animistic encounters:

> (who/who/who)
>
> (one who shoes/one who cures/one who heals/one who)

repairs/repeats/clearness of the counting beyond the breath
as if in the same breath double-purr to cold-me-things

SWANSOAK SOILSLOOK   SALVELIGHT   SKY-I

susuk. soosa. sunsar. sisumar. hiho.
(*House* 36)

The lines starting with "who" and description of the qualities of a shaman makes his/her presence obvious in the text. In fact, the poet and the shaman are intermingled in their roles to "cure/ heal," "repair," "repeat … as if in the same breath." The capitalised line seems to contribute to the "sonorous soundscape" created in this section with the alliterative use of the "s"s. The final line here creates an esoteric atmosphere through the vocalization of occult words whose meanings are not available in dictionaries. It might also refer to the secret language spoken by the shaman to have contact with the spirits. Only after a google search is it possible to find the meaning of "susuk"[61] which is related to alternative belief systems, "charm needles" in Malay culture mostly used as a talisman. Other trans-corporeal engagements can be found as the "wandering" of the text continues with the "coming of rain" (*House* 36):

they are one to the body

FIRST BITTERN.   BARK, FIELDFARE.   RAG-A-HAND,
MOOR-DOUBLE HARE-TWISTING

            rib, gravel-ears, Dog
Shielded are the axes   blue   vomiting voltages
tilled.me.this.i.then
                    tilled.me.bloodshot.wander. (*House* 37)

Bittern, fieldfare, hare, dog and the shaman's body are sharing the same landscape and these non-human bodies enter into the human body and discard its impenetrability. "tilled.me.this.i.then" can thus be read as the porosity of

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[61] "susuk." Wikipedia.org. 2014. Wikimedia 22 Oct. 2015. <http://encyclopedia.thefreediction ary.com/susuk>

bodies, their "mutability," here by tilling, extending its limits. "[A]fter singing times" is given within quotation marks as if marking a new beginning and an entrance (*House* 38). A seasonal change is at hand in a few lines:

> … Early Spring
> That Came   summering   copple blunts, clyst
> seedless Bomba dampling traces of human bit/
> a Dock
> growing to
> Begin. (*House* 38)

The fauna of the landscape also joins these transcorporeal and performative songs. The capitalized word "Dock," "coarse weedy herbs with thickened rootstock … a popular antidote for nettle-stings,"[62] comes into being on the page, right now, bodying forth its presence among "traces of human bit."

"Now to the Ears" in *Palace of Reptiles*, very much like "Of Mutability," alerts us to the engagement of several bodies as "crossings" under the effect of the weather system. These passages between the human and non-human forces, as Jon Clay argues, "[are] no imitation of the animal, but rather a conjunction with the non-human and non-conceptual that is productive of a becoming-animal written into the texture of the poem" (151). The moments of becoming-animal, in other words, are inherent in the way human language—as the primary material of the poet—is molecularized through "voicings," line breaks, strategic uses of periods ("be.al.di.di," "till.toll.tongue.me.sour"), slashes ("w/the Brink," "w/HARE's") and dashes ("GROWLERS—" "Hardly the edge of it—"), capitalized words and neologisms ("OUTLERED," "Shimmish"). The poem is vocalized "on the shape/ of storm novembers" and the words are "BORN" on the page following the dancing rituals of the shamans (*Palace* 27):

<div align="center">

Now to the Ears

Having Journeyed the Place of the
GIVERS

</div>

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[62] "dock, n.1." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, September 2015. Web. 23 October 2015.

there is here

flicker.fleur.de.feather.fly.VOICINGS

on the shape
of storm novembers —

Double-bright & grief-iced

Rowan's
baited w/HARE's

Amphibia

Crossings —
(*Palace* 27)

At the "Place of the GIVERS" past and present are intermingled, "there is here."
In the fifth line, the idea of flight taken by the shaman to make becoming-
animal possible is revisited through the experimentation with the letter "f" and
the words divided by periods to give the effect of dismemberment. The
meanings of each word also make the combination incompetent. "Flicker," a
drinking-glass, together with "fleur," flower in French, "de" possibly a reference
to "of" in French, and again "feather" alluding to the use of feather imagery in
her collections and "fly," the flight of the shaman. The flight is enabled by the
play with sounds and the ultimate aim seems to be "VOICINGS." Then comes
the interplay between the non-human forces that inhabit the "Place of the
GIVERS." "Rowan's/ baited w/HARE's/ Amphibia" can be read three ways:
Rowan's baited hare with "'s" as a possessive; rowan is baited with hare's
amphibia; and finally, rowan has baited hare's amphibia. "Crossings" between
plants and animals and between animals themselves in that predacious cycle
are materialized by that linguistic play—one is after another; one is in need of
another. The poem continues with the "Contrarian Dances" between the
inhabitants of the landscape:

Wastes
&
Flask
Fla Fla
&
i

wailed, wailed to the Peer of Liver Dance—
the Daints Choke

flicker—
sacrificial—

Crush Fo—
till.toll.tongue.me.sour
madders
[…]

Ones
w/the Brink
Engouled
Skull   Brain
Boned Out
Mind Broke

be.al.di.di.
chats & thrushes
caca
configurations
(*Palace* 28)

Contrarian Dances

Shut/Air/Narrow/Bandages?
Should/Air/Even/Tombs?
(*Palace* 29)

Eight eyes are waiting for their fate "in the land white way towards the leaf deans" and these are the "Poor Ones:" the crow, the raven, the dog and the blackbird. Maggie O'Sullivan uses another neologism to describe their situation: "OUTLERED" and another UN- word "UNSHIELDEDNESS." Peter Middleton

argues that the shape of the poem as the text reveals is informed by the seasonal characteristics: "the landscape of a wintry closing down, a dying back of plants and animals, the cries and loudness of landscape unmuffled by foliage, and symbolics of a season that tests our belief in renewal and continuity" ("Ear" 120). Before the "sob" is heard, the blackbird's breath is "wasted" among the sounds of bones-breaking ("Snipe scream on the Bone"). The reference to the bones in this section ("Skull ... Boned out", "Snipe scream on the Bone") might refer to the shamanistic belief in the possibility of "rebirth from the bones." Mircea Eliade describes several rituals, in which bones are used for resurrection. In most of the shamanistic cultures, Eliade concludes, "the animal's bone symbolizes the mystery of life in continual regeneration and hence includes in itself, if only virtually, everything that pertains to the past and future of life" (160, 165). The last two lines ask the same question: Is any healing possible or will death preside over the page space? ("Bandages or Tombs"). The poem comes to an end by five short, telegrammatic lines:

<div align="center">

sob —
tick (ticca) —
told.te.me.

Don't Only Dance

Shimmish?
(*Palace* 30)

</div>

"[T]ick (ticca)" might be related to the ticking of the clock, the passage of time of the performance. The word "ticca" looks like a neologism, but the *OED* provides us with a definition of it, "engaged on contract, hired.[63]" Given the definition of "(ticca)" and the sound of a ticking clock ("tick"), I will attempt at reading this part of the poem as the bodies "engaged" or "hired" for the dance ritual are brought to the end of the performance and time is paid out. The final two lines might support this argument as the voice orders "Don't Only Dance"

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[63] "ticca, n." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, September 2015. Web. 17 October 2015.

to the "shimmish." The standard usage of the word "shimmish" is "shimmy" which means to dance. The word might be drawing attention to the quick movements of the dance and also to the verb "shimmer" which means to "shine brightly" and to "drift.[64]" The transformative movements (speeds) of the dance are sensed through the radiant colour effects and the sense of drifting before finalizing the poem. The trance moment created by dance ritual might be healing considering the poem's "register of language for extremes of human suffering"[65] (Middleton, "Ear" 118).

The opening poem of *Palace of Reptiles,* "Birth Palette," in the same way revisits the natural cycle of birth and death, the viciousness of the natural world and "thronged[66]" weather system. Starting with "Birth Palette," the other seven poems show an important characteristic of O'Sullivan's poetry: "its fascination with word association and sonic incantation in preference to the linear chronology of a narrative" (Williams, N. 221). The focus on the performative qualities of these poems is particularly relevant to the argument of this study because this reaction against "linearity" and totalizing narration provides the ground for the nomadic subject to emerge and to have contact with its others. As argued by Rosi Braidotti in *The Posthuman*, this "non-unitary subject proposes an enlarged sense of inter-connection between self and others, including the non-human or 'earth' others" (149). Although the "birth" in the title gives a sense of beginning or origin, it is clear that O'Sullivan does not have such an agenda to look for the roots in her poetry. She is fascinated by that

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[64] Please see both definitions of shimmer. "shimmer, v.1." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, September 2015. Web. 17 October 2015.

[65] Although Peter Middleton provides a different reading of that part of "Now to the Ears," it is important to draw attention to his comment on the poem in general: "Their excess diacritical presence marks an emotion that has already been signalled by the content of certain words (grief, wastes, wailed, choke, sacrificial, skull, boned, bandages, tombs, torched, scream) which either express intense loss, mortality, or danger, and belong to a register of language for extremes of human suffering" ("Ear" 118).

[66] The adjective is used in "riverrunning (realisations," *Palace of Reptiles*: "Entanglement/ with vegetations, thronged weathers, puppy-web we agreed/ animals" (64).

natural cycle of birth and death; however, she draws attention to the cyclicity of it rather than its originary feature. Therefore, narrative linearity is abandoned for the sake of the breathing performance of the poem. The reference to the "palette" multiplies the role of the poet/performer. The poems should not only be read as vocal and visual performances but also colours of the palette should be used or the aura should be created with a painter's acuity. The first stanza introduces a beautiful sound poetry, whose technique and formal inventiveness makes it one of the most striking examples of O'Sullivan's molecular-ization of language, a kind of becoming-other of human language through connections with the non-human sphere:

> Lizard air lichens ivy driven urchin's pry to a pounce.
> Scribbled terrestrial traor, the paw actions tainy blee
> scoa, blue scog. In eat, gashed harmonica stresses to
> skull icon, jigged but shower, Crushtative bundles,
> Doe, Owl, the Hare mantled in a planetary pivot.
> Vulture-Jar, dragonfly & waterbeetle are we,
> each veil of the glide species. (*Palace* 11)

In the first stanza, syntactic distortion is accompanied by different coinages ("traor","tainy", "Chrustative"), obscure words ("scoa") and combinatorial use of some words ("Chrustative bundles", "terrestrial traor"). "Lizard air" is embracing not only the body of the "ivy driven urchin" but also dominates the whole scenery and landscape by its threatening presence. Although the meaning of the neologism "traor" is obscure, it suggests an atmosphere of violence or "terror" when considered together with "pounce," "gashed," and "Chrustative." In *OED*, the search results of "traor" offer two possibilities: "cruor"[67] which is defined as the "coagulated blood;" and "error,"[68]—when its two different meanings are considered—"a devious or winding course" and "the state of erring." Moreover, Nerys Williams interprets "traor" as "tracer"

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[67] "cruor, n." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, September 2015. Web. 13 Sep. 2015.

[68] "error, n." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, September 2015. Web. 13 Sep. 2015.

that will suggest "the movement of retreading (sic.), reviewing and unearthing which this section builds up" (225). The use of the adjective terrestrial also provides a sense of locale, place, "traor" which is populated by non-human dwellers. Another sign of the presence of predators is the movement of "paw[s]." In the line "the paw actions tainy blee," actions can be taken as both a word and a verb: if it is taken as a word, then syntactically we are supposed to read a sentence just made up of words, with a molecularized syntax that looks embryonic, in the sense of emerging, and polysemic. The obscure word "tainy" might refer to "tiny" (taken as an alternative pronunciation of tiny) and "taint,"[69] referring to "stain," "flaw" and "knock or blow"—considering the ferocious entanglements of animal life. The first alternative is a more sound interpretation since the following words "blee" looks like the strange voicing of the word blue, and "scoa" or "scog." In other words, it is likely to voice "tainy blee scoa" as a "tiny blue scog" repeated, appropriated once more after the comma (or perhaps it is not). "Chrustative bundles" can be read as the violent survival engagement between the predators and the victims of the "terrestrial traor." Lizards become dreadful for the sea urchin ("driven urchin's pry to a pounce"); "Doe, Owl, the Hare" having a central place ("planetary pivot") in the landscape are juxtaposed to "the glide species" such as "Vulture" "dragonfly" and "waterbeetle." The gliding species are intermediaries between the earth and the water. The reference to the painting terminology in the title of the poem is pursued in the first stanza with the emerging colours in the text (as if painting a watercolour) such as "blue scog" as a reference to the blue sea as the shelter for some animals mentioned, and "Doe, Owl, the Hare *mantled*" spead over the surface of the canvas and "sky blue large the sea's purple Octopi bickerings" included, along with the "re-in-indigo dozen indignant," wrathful other inhabitants yielding blue-coloured presence on the canvas/landscape. The obscurity created by the neologisms in this section presents to us a rich text

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[69] "taint, n." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, September 2015. Web. 13 Sep. 2015.

that makes various interpretations possible. Charles Bernstein's comments on this neologizing and voicing process is worth considering in order to understand Maggie O'Sullivan's motivation: "[W]ords are the residue of a hope. So often O'Sullivan avers syntax for axial iteration; … Naming, here, is an avocation, kissing cousin of invocation and melody. This is a poetry *not of me/me/me* but *it/it/it*. Ecopoetics as echo-poetics" ("Colliderings" 8, emphasis added).

The poem moves on like a pageant of animals spread over the landscape/canvas. The animals know their place in the predatory cycle and form kinships having that innate knowledge. They enter the text one by one, making their presences as 'packs' and multiplicities:

<div align="center">

Rodent, bat Swing Mare-O-Crow-O-Crane
Midscales cache
….
… Snail, Serpent,
Wren stroke of this tiny wobble entrailed massively
…
Deers—early as early a knifing in livid Ever
fens've powder Spider fishes ground
…
Pheasant
…
Pig gathers in the lemon.
Cow, later of wood.
Lioness, 'twas all moon down in the brainstem,
(*Palace* 11,12)

</div>

The atmosphere described here is full of "dread" as the earth is "scalded, wired lame." Although animals are "dulled" by the routine, the relationships are seized by "Abbatoir Voltages" (*Palace* 11). The word "Abbatoir" is possibly the misspelt version of abattoir which means "a slaughterhouse; a place where animals are killed for food."[70] In the same way, "Birth Palette" ends with references to certain technologies of killing, most of which are related to human mechanisms of retribution and slaying:

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[70] "abattoir, n." OED Online. Oxford University Press, September 2015. Web. 23 October 2015.

Ricochet, straw cauldron, water sickle
rooting turbid Rails.
…
tally-sticks —
Jackal woke fresh, key made from Butterfly depths,
the Chrysalis,
the Spider.
Treasury Futures.
Asterisms liced from the Skull.
Nerve Surge.
Expulsions to a Rope.
(*Palace* 12)

Nerys Williams similarly reads the use of "language of warfare, commerce, punishment" as "indications of punishment as a ritualized killing" (227). It starts with the firing of a "ricochet," a rebounding bullet, cauldron as a device of punishment, "water sickle," "tally-sticks" and finally "Expulsions to a Rope," punishment by hanging. These references are indeed given without a context; therefore, it is obscure whether they are really given to foreground the mechanisms of death and destruction in the human world. Nerys Williams argues "[w]ithin these fragments or indications of historical testimony is the momentum of animal and insect life;" and the natural cycle of birth and death in the natural world has been given with an "erring momentum … [that] reimagines and embraces the folds and pleats within history which are often erased into a convenient chronology" (227). The text is energized by constant re-and de-territorialization of the nomadic subject of poetic performance. The idea of territory is important in understanding Deleuze and Guattari's concept of becoming. For a becoming to take place, the human or non-human has to leave the territory they belong to and connect with the territories beyond their terrains; so, they need to be de-territorialized[71] and re-territorialized in its

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[71] Deleuze and Guattari discuss the concept of deterritorialization in the tenth plateau, "Becoming-Intense, Becoming-Animal, Becoming-Imperceptible" in *A Thousand Plateaus:* "It could also be said that movement ceases to be the procedure of an always relative deterritorialization, becoming the process of absolute deterritorialization. The difference between the two planes accounts for the fact that what cannot be perceived on one cannot but

other's domain. Beginning with "Birth Palette," the human language is deterritorialized by the presence of animals and plant life, foregrounding a trans-corporeal consciousness of landscape and displacing the anthropomorphic gaze.

In *In the House of the Shaman* and *Palace of Reptiles*, the shamanistic ritual provides a framework for exploring the processes of becoming in O'Sullivan's poems. The body of the shaman, as also seen in Joseph Beuys' artwork, becomes a surface for affective becomings; that body not only affects but is also affected by the non-human bodies s/he is surrounded with. The shamanic trance is maintained by "molecular movements" (Bergson 23) which are produced by the affecting/affected body of the shaman. The ultimate aim of shamanic ecstasy is being "carried out of oneself," and "the shaman enters deep into the beyond" through the ecstatic effect of music and dance (Eliade 223). The body of the shaman is immersed by the 'beyond' through animal spirits. O'Sullivan's poems analysed below are particularly interested in those moments of ecstasy, transformation and 'dissolution of self' and language. One of those transformative moments takes place in "Another Weather System:"

> *when your animal is brought back*
> *you*
> *too*
> *water & ice & leaves & snow become*
> *you*
> *too*
> *Day Door Sky & Sing*
> *you*
> *too*
> *scald & crow down ink*
> *you*
> *too*
> *stiffen swoop on ridge*
> *you*

be perceived on the other. It is in jumping from one plane to the other, or from the relative thresholds to the absolute threshold that coexists with them, that the imperceptible becomes necessarily perceived" (282).

too
topple turn hills many more turns
you
too
the Beast do the rain not the Birds do another
you
too
call the Pulsing home. (House 17)

During the séance, the body is painfully ("scald[ed]") evacuated from its homely setting, goes underground and moves beyond the heavens ("Day Door Sky," "topple turn hills many more turns") and can only settle in "the Pulsing home." The shamanic body arises and suddenly descends ("swoop on ridge") moving "freely through three cosmic zones: underworld, earth, sky" (Eliade 99). This moment of ascent and descent or the possession of the soul of the animal is an excruciating experience, full of "Abrasions. Arbitrations. Absesses. Arrow" (*House* 18). The "i" of the poem appears several times as wounded, broken and stuttering, looking ways to heal itself, which might become possible only in the ecstatic moments and singing:

Whorledly (i

     i
     and
     and i
     there
     and
     i
     i
     while
     i
     i
     hear

how winds, how rains, how snow, how ice, how
floods,
how born or well or ill or artery or dead or
healing,
how Fog, Rear, Bloar Abrupted.   Valved.
(House 18-9)

The "i" is unfolded in a stuttering form and the flows of the weather system infiltrates or meets the surfaces of the subject. Along with the stuttering of the "i," the use of lower-cased "i" might also refer to the multiplicity of the subject-positions, or multiplication by repetition. The verb "hear" that ties the textual echoing of the "i" with the rest of the sentence is related to how the weather system should be sensed or experienced; in other words, it has to be heard as it is a sonic performance.

Another shamanic trance takes place in the poem "Giant Yellow," during which the writing of the poem simultaneously and self-reflexively comes into existence. The shaman's body is characterized as a "sensing body in movement"—that movement can only be discovered by the reader "in layers, in textures, in rhythms and juxtapositions that defy strict organization into a semiotic system" (Manning xviii, xiv). Firstly, the opening of the poem gives place to the expressions of flight and transformation that will take place within a few pages. It begins painfully by a "STRUT," which can be taken as the strife between different "hill figures" the previous poem has introduced; the bodies which are drawing together ("Intoothed constrict") try to find their orbit; that is, an animal body to be transformed into, a non-human corporeality (*House* 57). Before "Giant Yellow," in the poem "Hill Figures" shaman's equipment such as "bird-gear," "feather," "skull," "stick" have been brought together. The hill figures—eagles, crow, raven, cow—appear as the possible helping spirits for "BIRTH—herding," the moment of shamanic transformation paralleled with the birth of the utterance. After "ULTRA flutterings"—movement and flapping of the birds—"paper & swan" come into existence together as the following interrupted line says "made is" (*House* 57). This grammatically inaccurate line ties the "paper & swan" with the body parts of the animals "Eyes, Tongue, Jaw —" or with the speaking subject or the reader alike who are expected to join with their bodies "craft / bodies" in the craftsmanship of writing and performance, on that transformative moment. The trance is "orbiting," travelling or achieved

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through "2 horns": "BIRTH— herding" is painful, "scalded, misspelt" (*House* 56,

59):

> Trance
> Orbiting
> 2 Horns, scalded, misspelt. Approximal
> membraneous shadow plaiting, the
> Letter Missing, Missingly
>
>
> Climates end, Spans —
> […]
>
> Embryonic lassing
> ARTILLERY
> Crosses. Crisscross, Crossings gone
> Carapace
> Cutaway Iambic
> Cloaca documents, Octaves of the Kidney (59)
>
>
> […]
> A pen ticks,
> Body of the animal altered
> HELD
>
> DREW
>
> A coast thumps, flank of a Corpse —
> (Collapsed
> Only bigger —
>
> BORN.
>
> Meso-cysted
> BELLOW geometries
>
> Oxidised
> Dalliances
> chain-blue
>
> *KID-EYED ICER BARS*—

So so,
Purpleda Down. Pursea. Vents Trembling

THORNSWAY SINGINGS

[…]

So gather,
(dock & sorrow
totems —
Rickety Hooley Stutter — (*House* 59-60)

This part of the poem is an example of the process of giving birth to a word apart from the cycle of birth in nature—the delivery of the language itself—as suggested by the one-word line "BORN." This delivery is a painful one starting from the "Embryonic lassing," which is the "ATILLARY" of the writer/performer; it takes a path between bodies, "crossings," zigzagging between thought and its materialization by words on the page. The word is being-born, but the foetal membranes should be extracted, too, "Collapsed Only Bigger." All the organs of the body introduced by medical terminology, "mammalian muscle," "thumps," "meso-csyted," "flank" are active in this procedure. The vibrations of birth take hold of the body, "Purpleda Down. Pursea. Vents Trembling" and can only be calmed down by singing, totems, "Rickety Hooley Stutter" (*House* 60), as "song is the birthing element, making pain bearable, pleasure knowable" (Rowe 151). In "Giant Yellow" the preparatory stage of the trance is achieved through the alliterative effect and the use of animistic vocabulary. As "the pen ticks" the words move the nerves, vibrate the page and the speaking subject stammers:

Spine
slub

Squabble-Speak
sub —
statuary —
…
Sylla/

> Bled Garjey,
> auric fin spun key skins
> …
> — acro   pleural petal   fugal
> — thick   fat   spat   fast
>
> whenas crack
> & hammer — (*House* 61)

The alliterative effect with the letter "S" prepares the ground for the fierceness and agony that inflicts the subject in producing the words that will "crack & hammer." Moreover, dividing words into its particles and reproducing them through new sound structures and repetition echo what Deleuze calls stammering in "He Stuttered." In the same way, the wordplay on "sylla/ Bled" (syllabled or sylla/Bled) materializes the stuttering 'growing from the middle' by slashing the word into pieces. The slashing not only draws attention to the painful production of the word but also the proliferation of the meaning-making process. The obscure words like "Garjey" is additionally an example of creating a "foreign language within language," or becoming-minor of language (Deleuze, *Essays* 113).

In "Giant Yellow," the use of "secret language," songs intoned ("*THORNSWAY SINGINGS*") and syllables uttered are accompanied by the rhythms of the drum, which creates a mental and psychic space for accelerations and decelerations, speeds and slownesses in the poem. Those moments discharge 'impersonal affects' with the lines of flight on textual and psychic space. As Eliade explains, the shaman's flight is enhanced by the rhythms of the drum: "it carries the shaman to the 'Center of the World,' or enables him to fly through the air, or summons and 'imprisons' the spirits, … enables the shaman to concentrate and regain contact with the spiritual world through which he is preparing to travel" (168). The drumming enters the verbal plain and the flight is mobilized by the beats of it:

drumming juniper lids

a drum
a drum
RAVEN
it is
touched it

Winged Antimony
Entered
Lacerations
Risen
Earth tr, Yellow Tooks

birds & their habits — jump the channels

call the vision in (*House* 61)

The flight is visually evoked by the indentation of lines in the shape of wings on the final page of the poem. "Winged Antimony," possibly referring to the feathers of the shaman and the way shaman moves in a birdy fashion, following "birds & their habits." The capitalized word "Antimony" can be interpreted as catalyst, the chemical substance that initiates the fusion between the shaman and the bird. Another reading might be related to the colour of the substance— "lustrous, silvery, bluish white" with "a flaky texture"[72]—that captures the colours of that affective stance of becoming-bird, mainly black and yellow ("Earth tr, Yellow Tooks"). The "amorphous" shape of that metal along with the different colours it takes on might also bring together the chemical reactions of the antimony and the shaman's taking hold of the bird habits, being possessed by the animal, leaving his/her human body to be transformed into an animal with birds as the helping spirits. That transitory body is first shapeless,

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[72] *Encyclopædia Britannica* describes the colours of antimony: "There is also an amorphous *black form of antimony* that results from sudden quenching of the vapour, and a yellow form produced by low temperature oxidation of stibine, SbH_3, with air or chlorine. When it is heated in air, it burns with a brilliant blue flame and gives off white fumes of the trioxide Sb_2O_3. The trioxide of antimony is soluble in either acids or alkalies." Reference: "antimony (Sb)". *Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica Online.* Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2015. Web. 07 Sep. 2015 <http://www.britannica.com/science/antimony>

amorphous. O'Sullivan's use of a chemical substance as such might be read as her viewing of shamanic transformation not only as a mental but also as a chemical/physical one.

"Giant Yellow" can be taken as the preparatory stage of the shamanistic trance, which is achieved in the following poems, "Lorica for Zoe" and "Narrative of the Shield." When the shaman prepares for the trance, s/he tries to interact with the non-human spirits, whose bodies enter in the body of the shaman. The shaman's voice is mingled with the sounds of those animals and her/his body is taken hold of by the movements of those spirits, in other words, "*a taking possession of his helping spirits by a shaman*" (Eliade 89, 92, 93, emphasis in original). In *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, Eliade argues that the shaman's transformation into an animal goes beyond the level of imitation:

> The presence of a helping spirit in animal form, dialogue with it in a secret language, or incarnation of such an animal spirit by the shaman (masks, actions, dances, etc.) is another way of showing that the shaman can forsake his human condition, is able, in a word, to 'die.' From the most distant times almost all animals have been conceived either as psychopomps that accompany the soul into the beyond or as the dead person's new form. Whether it is the 'ancestor' or the 'initiatory master,' the animal symbolizes a real and direct connection with the beyond. (93-94)

While the human body remains visible, it exists in another form through the simultaneous death and birth of a new form of identity. In other words, the shaman has to die in order to be carried away by the moments of ecstasy, and those moments of death of the human subject during the shamanic trance can be read as a smooth space of transformation, where the non-human forms proliferate, with "all the greater multiplying—" (*House* 16). The presence of birds in Maggie O'Sullivan's *In the House of the Shaman* and *Palace of Reptiles* might be read as a reference to the animal spirits that make becoming-animal

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possible in the poems. Several species of birds appear as the animal spirits that help the shaman in their flight. Consistent use of bird imagery such as "Flutterings," feathers and wings shows moments of flight and spiritual journey. While the "Giant Yellow" ends with birds that "call the vision in" (61), in the following poem the owl helps as the animal spirit to bring about the trance moment, enabling "a real or direct connection with the beyond" (Eliade 94). The moments of ecstasy follow in "Lorica for Zoe:"

ZAKAT ORO ECHO ZEUS ORIGIN EDDA
ZAMMAT ONYX ELEMENTAL ZETES OPS EYE
ZIUSUDRA OMEN EMBLEM ZAR OBSIDIAN EAR
ZABAT OM EAGLE ZORYA OLAM EYE ZINA OWL ENTRAILS
ZOE OPAL EARTH ZAKAR ORO ECHO ZEUS ORIGIN EDDA
ZAMMA ONYX ELEMENTAL ZETES OPS EYE ZIUSUDRA OMEN EMBLEM
ZAR OBSIDIAN EAR ZINA OWL ENTRAILS ZOE OPAL EARTH ZOE OPAL EARTH
(*House* 62)

The words in this section have been capitalized to give an effect of transition to another state. The first word of each line starts with "Z," which stresses the idea of being carried away by language. They seem to have been randomly chosen; however, there is a formulaic structure behind that choice. The initial letters of consecutive words form the word "ZOE" one after another. To have that combination in each line some obscure words are chosen to fit in this scheme ("ZAMMAT," "ZETES," "ZINA"). The words also create a pseudo-religious atmosphere as they seem to have been borrowed from different religious contexts such as "ZAKAT" from Islam, "ZIUSUDRA[73]" from Mesopotamian (Sumerian) culture, "ZAR[74]" from North African and Iranian context. Considering

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[73] In *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Ziusudra" is defined as the "rough counterpart to the biblical Noah as survivor of a god-sent flood."

[74] The *OED* defines "zār" as a kind of spirit possession or the name of the ritual of African origins: "In several N. African countries, a malignant spirit, possession by which is a traditional explanation for attacks of (usu. religious) mania, esp. in women, and formerly for some diseases." "Zar, n." OED Online. Oxford University Press, September 2015. Web. 6 October 2015.

the title, "Lorica for Zoe," that poem has a certain spiritual existence through the word Lorica, meaning prayer, yet it is not advocating a divine religion at all. The dictionary reveals that "zoe" is a Greek word meaning "life[75]" (1464). In that respect, the repetition of "zoe" in this section can be read as the celebration of the emergence of (natural) life. There might be another philosophical reference here, particularly to Martin Heidegger's "dasein.[76]" The reason why such an idea is worth discussing is that Maggie O'Sullivan openly acknowledges Heidegger as one of her sources at the onset of "Prisms and Hearers." Her epigraph of this section is from Heidegger's *Poetry, Language and Thought*. The quotation taken from the section, "What are poets for?," is "[t]o be a Poet in a destitute time means to attend, singing, to the trance of fugitive gods" (*House* 50). If a poet wants to be truly a poet, for Heidegger, "the time's destitution must have made the whole being and vocation of the poet a poetic question for him" (92). Maggie O'Sullivan struggles as a poet to find ways to cope with "time's destitution" or the world at a "destitute time." By re-interpreting a Heideggerian use of "zoe," Rosi Braidotti argues that the "nomadic subject is in love with zoe" and explains it within the context of becoming-insect in Kafka's *Metamorphoses*:

> What you see is what you get; this is the bottom line: a scaly and fast-fading body that cannot even adequately express what it needs for the pain to stop. This obscenity, this life in me, is intrinsic to my being and yet so much 'itself', that it is independent of the will, the demands and expectations of the sovereign consciousness. This zoe

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[75] "zoe." *The New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary*. Chicago: Trident P, 1996. 1464. Print.

[76] In *Being and Time*, Heidegger explores his concept of "dasein" ("being-there," "being-in-the-world") in relation to the question of being, which has an 'ontological priority' for him: "When we come to what is to be interrogated, the question of Being requires that the right way of access to entities shall have been obtained and secured in advance. But there are many things which we designate as "being" ["seined"], and we do so in various senses. Everything we talk about, everything we have in view, everything towards which we comfort ourselves in any way, is being; what we are is being, and so is how we are. Being lies in the fact that something is, and in its Being as it is; in Reality; in presence·at·hand; in subsistence; in validity; in Dasein; in the 'there is'" (26).

makes me tick and yet escapes the control of the supervisory agency of the Self… Zoe carries on relentlessly and is cast out of the holy precinct of the 'me' that demands control and fails to obtain it, ending by being experienced as an alien other … This scandal, this wonder, this zoe, that is to say an idea of Life that is more than bios and supremely indifferent to logos, this piece of flesh called my 'body', this aching meat called my 'self' expresses the abject/divine potency of a Life which consciousness lives in fear of. (Metamorphoses 132)

The "Lorica for Zoe" and repetition of "zoe" might thus refer to the infinity, the force that is produced by *zoe*, away from the restrictions of the self, of an identity. The final stanza of "Lorica for Zoe" therefore moves away from the conscious self, and "the idea of Life" visually spreads over the text by the enlarging line lengths. Zoe has been built like a temple in final stanza of the poem.

In the poem, "Narrative Charm for Ibbotroyd" in *Palace of Reptiles*, the lines are interrupted by illustrations of different mushrooms[77]. O'Sullivan is not only experimenting with her visual materials on the page space but also maintaining her theme of shamanic trance through various means such as chemical potency of mushrooms, chants and drumming. In this poem, the ecstasy is made possible by chemical reaction with the mushrooms; in other words, along with the animals, the plant life is supportive of the shaman's therapeutic flight. As Mircea Eliade argues, apart from music and dance, ecstasy and connections with the beyond can be achieved through "intoxication by mushrooms," which is "a mechanical and corrupt method of reproducing 'ecstasy,' being 'carried out of oneself'" (223). Mushrooms are again the non-human bodies that affect the body of its eater/consumer in ways to make trance state possible. Water again becomes a connection between worlds ("Just

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[77] Mushrooms inhabiting the text might also be a homage to Bob Cobbing's sonic performance, "Hymn to the Sacred Mushroom," whose presence is also acknowledged with a poem named "Wingsunsong for Cobbing." Please follow the link to listen to Cobbing's performance <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2VNW5wiFE4M>

as water does, between worlds"); among the noises of "Louded" winds, the blossoming of earth after "Snow of Earth" brings "a new Ear" and "a Seeing turn." All senses should be activated to grasp the moment of berries heathered on land, and "gentled adjoining utterances" are heard from "Rawley Land of animal drumming:"

NARRATIVE CHARM FOR IBBOTROYD

Cobble & Pebble in the teeth. Fang & Club upon a wind is the morning Fields Louded Ably Thus.

Snow of Earth bladder waking to a new Ear when the stir of all Breath would to a Seeing turn, wondered upon; housed many, unhurt is.

O, many berries, Occupying (& not), a Quarter-Day heathered with Rawley Land of animal drumming many gentled adjoining utterances.

Just as water does, between worlds, Giant eveyRUE BETHS here edge the word. Crow trembles in the knot.

Figure 5.1. *In the House of the Shaman*, 44

It is the "Giant eveyRUE BETHS"—with all its multiplication and variation—that "edge the word" in the poem. At first look, it is difficult to make sense of the combinatorial "eveyRUE BETHS:" "evey" might refer to the second meaning of eve made an adjective as "evey" to mean "moist or damp[78]"; and "RUE" refers to "aromatic woody herbs" and "beth" does not contribute to the meaning here

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[78] "eve, v.2." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, September 2015. Web. 22 Sep. 2015.

with its obscurity. There is no direct reference to what the Ibbotroyd suggests as well. As it is capitalised, it might be a reference to an actual place close to where the poet lives. A google search does not help discover the specific location of that place, person or the origin of that name. The invocation to the berries ("O, many berries") that heather "with Rawley Land of animal drumming" has a "gentling" function in making the utterance in comparison with the predatory animal life. In other words, the territory of plants might provide calmness, peaceful trance and non-violent becoming of words.

"Theoretical Economies" and "Narcotic Properties" in *Palace of Reptiles* begin with the description of a mix-media installation or a conceptual artwork. The banner of the former is '<u>theoretical economies</u>' that gives the poem its name. The materials ("bamboo pole", "diamond-shape cards", "glue"), dimensions ("about six feet square") and instructions are given in detail. Compared to the other poems in this volume, the instructive language used in the beginning of the poem is an unexpected gesture. It is as if the reader is supposed to follow the instructions, participate in the production of the conceptual artwork and participate in this ritualistic practice. Peter Middleton points out that these early stages of the poem can be read as "a pastiche of what might be a black magic or an allegory for the reading of a poem in hope of transformation, personal or social;" and the end of the poem is therefore seen as "a purgatorial state of transformation" ("Ear" 108). The instructive language ends with the final note "LISTEN AS THE SKEWERED TRAMPLING OF THE DOOMED / ANIMALS ear into nethery Singes;" the text becomes "Unfixed" and is carried away by songs preparing towards the trance moment:

> walkenon
>
> AB-SUN
>
> SOLSTITIAL, STRUCK-NINE
> (whatll   wattle   wambs

wha
white
whe
who)

leadings out
animals gone

CRUSH.
ZANCA-ZINC
BEING-ARROWED,
NORTHERLY SHEDS, SILVERY THE BYRE OF PEW
BY THE DRUM,   LULLA   LAND BY THE LOG/LANDS VOODOO
OPAL TOO DO   (FIST-PHRASES)

                              SUNKS.   crown-i-slowed, Abdi

lowed, it is

RED

BEES
APART
owl-sha
conks   clay-under   splashing.   Abundance.   weeps.
(*Palace* 21)

"Walkenon" might be read as "walking on," a transitional remark that suggests
the wandering of the text between different registers, sound plays, or states of
mind. From that remark onwards, the syntax totally dissolves. The practicing of
"w" letter and "wh" sounds make the stuttering of the text and the singer even
clearer. The w-sounding stammering is given in parentheses and ends with
"who." That singer is possibly the "owl-sha[man]" whose presence is vocally
evoked by the text. The omission of the "man" from the word shaman can be
interpreted as the transformation of the human form into an animal, an owl in
that case. That moment thus can be seen as affective, transformative and pre-
personal. The text is warned by the "CRUSH." reminding the reader an early
neologism "Chrustative."

Similarly, "Narcotic Properties" opens with the instructions "PLACE A SMALL PALE-CREAM BOWL" and "Wash THE FOLLOWING LEAD ANIMALS" (*Palace* 16). This poem, as the title suggests, can be interpreted as the possibility of art, poetry and in that case song as a means of transcending profane human predicament with their "narcotic properties" and how they also act as relieving the agony in the suffering world. The use of narcotics might also be a reference to the shamanistic rituals initiated by intoxication with plants, beverages, and tobacco. The persona warns that these "lead animals" should be washed with "songerings-a-rung,/a-chant, a-roughy." After drying the animals, they should be placed on a "WHITE CLOTH," from whose centre "A BLOODIED STAIN SEEP[S];" and this procedure should be conducted without haste. These instructions remind us of the second image that opens *Palace of Reptiles*: a palette of animals, including lizards, bat, monkey, horse, elephant, kangaroo, rabbit, eagle, porcupine, deer and others not possible to recognize (perhaps the "lead animals" in the poem), are arranged in circles, "celebrat[ing] ORigins/ENtrances" (*Palace* 64):

Figure 5.2. *Palace of Reptiles*, The Second Opening Image

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The animals enter the volume from the very first pages of the collection with this drawing. The circular shape of the palette abolishes the hierarchies between them in the natural world. Although the rest of the instructions do not fit in the shape of the image, it is important to visualise how O'Sullivan activates aesthetic and poetic properties concurrently. The text ends with a return to the poetic register—neologisms, catalogue of words and sound plays—becoming of the text with the animal:

> All this is repetition of what is seen, is no sound;
> all the noise is in the abruptly thousands, in the
> ABLE TREBLE FLIED
> limbs, in the
> DIMLY DIGITS
> WHERE VISION ENDS
> DISTENDED
> SHIPS OF TORSO
> ARMWAYS
> HIDDENFULS UNHEARD
> PENS, RINGWAYS, CAGES.
> …
> KINSHIP OOZED OUT OF SHAPE, BLUE
> matter. (*Palace* 18)

The first line seems to say that the whole text becomes a "repetition" of the performance of installation on page space. It has to be visualized and heard at the same time. Yet, "is no sound" of the first line is cancelled by the second line "all the noise is in the abruptly thousands." The rest of this section self-reflexively talks about how "kinship" overflows "out of shape"—"a zone of proximity" constituted between the human and non-human bodies (Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand* 293). The word "kinship" in both volumes is usually used in relation to animals and the non-human world, as the second chapter title of *In the House of the Shaman*, "Kinship with Animals" reveals (27). The body-parts, extremities ("limbs") are taking a flight with high-pitched and shrill noises of the bodies involved (ABLE TREBLE FLIED/ limbs). Then comes the

swollen bodies (DISTENDED/SHIPS OF TORSO), among which the silenced and unexpressed exist. "PENS, RINGWAYS, CAGES" can be interpreted as the mechanisms of writing which articulate this affective moment of becomings: pen used by the poet, ringways as the trajectory the poet follows, and cages as confining or imprisoning the words to express how to "ooze" kinships "out of shape."

The first long poem of *Palace of Reptiles*, "Doubtless," has three personae performing textual rituals by turn taking: the painter, the poet and the dancer. These personae can be seen as the proliferation of the role of the shamanic body during the séance. The poem unfolds several ritualistic practices each persona is engaged with through "'ear loads' of clongy, phonemphatic language songs, creating whisdomensial rituals cut with the unknown" (Middleton, "Ear" 98). The epigraphs of the poem from Tom Lowenstein's *Tikigaq: Whale in Ancient Land, Sacred Whale: The Inuit Hunt and Its Rituals* indicate the overriding sentiment in this poem:

> *A traveller's knowledge was incomplete without a sense of former time and previous selves . . . A traveller's own moment of life stretched back and spread far* ('The Land Grows and Dies')
>
> *The places themselves stayed as ancestors had known them. But where the ancestors had fought or died, seen visions or shamanised, they left knots, whorls, vortices of human implication in the landscape. To be in a place of death or vision was to relive the story and extend its relationship with the present.* ('Time and Stories: Playing Out Myth') (*Palace* 31, emphasis in original)

Maggie O'Sullivan's citation from Lowenstein's longitudinal ethnographic study of the Tikigaq people and the whale myth presents to us another dimension of her poetry: the handling of myth and ritual as a poetic material ("Playing Out Myth") and the temporal qualities of the ritualistic "reliv[ing]" of the past. Here,

the inspiration seems to be the stories about the whale myth[79] among Tikigaq people in Alaska, which reveals the connection between the human and non-human world, and the ways in which Lowenstein unfolds the whaling stories of these people in the form of poems that give a chance "*to relive the story and extend its relationship with the present*" (*Palace* 31).

The poem starts with the performance of the painter, which is conveyed through a similar descriptive language as used in "Theoretical Economies." Several colours ("sculpted Purple", "the Black/ on Elm") and materials ("bag of sand", "Knife & Axe") are at play (*Palace* 31). The ritual is peopled by "avian" species and the "faunal" references (*Palace* 32). Through the linguistic ritual of "telling" a story or singing ("as music is to"), the artist's ritual appealing to "the Eyes & Seeing" is materialized through language in the present, moulding the historical:

> He a ritual
> Breath on the Run
> from History
> …
> it Occurs.
> Consider.
>   (Palace 32,33)

After the exit of the painter, the poet offers her services. From that entry onwards, the textual space is taken by nomadic tracing of utterances, ecstasy, sonic plays, "of-the-loop-long-Spillages" (*Palace* 46). The words act like knife and axe; they pierce through the text. It is often painful to "BIRTH THE WORDS [SHE] FELL TRHOUGH;" and the delivery is carried by "AXING OUT" and completed "KNIFEWISE" (*Palace* 34). The human body is deterritorialized by encounters with the non-human forces, lines of flight mobilized through "crossings" between the human and animal counterparts:

> THE INNER PRONG

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79 The whale-hunt reminds us of Deleuze and Guattari's reading of the relationship between Captain Ahab and Moby Dick. Please see Chapter 3, page 64.

TO A KINDLING

OF
HARE
…
HER SKIN'S TALLED CARNAGE —
THE SHADOWED SIDE — I
COLDER & SORRYING'S CURTAIN WOULD HAVE —
SHE LOST, LOST, LOST IN —

ZERO.WHOSO.MADDERING.
CRAW.CRAW.CRYSTAL—
TENDERED FLOOD OF KIN—
5 CROWS

HER TONGUE'S ROWAN
TO THE HOUSE
BROKEN, A SIMILARLY LONG FLESH
(*Palace* 34)

2 HARES,

A TUMULT OF HOLDING —
SHE BELLY-SPLIT
DON'T.NOT.NOT.DON'T.NOT.NOT.NO —
(*Palace* 35)

HARE Songed —

HARE's weave — she —

Ventriloquial —

drawed irises
or stitch —
         Her Vocables
               (Palace 39)

Hares and crows are among the most well-known helping spirits of shamans during the moments of ecstasy and they usually "speak through the shaman's voices" (Eliade 89). In other words, the shaman's "Vocables" are haunted by the animal spirit, leaving the shaman "Ventriloquial." At that moment of

transformation, the skin is "carnaged:" "I" standing alone at the end of the sentence gets colder after being slain, "SHE LOST, LOST, LOST IN —/ ZERO.WHOSO.MADDERING." With the metaphorical death of the human subject, "TENDERED FLOOD OF KIN" arrives. Five crows first, then two hares. Mircea Eliade discusses that "the ecstasy is only the concrete experience of ritual death; in other words, of transcending the profane human condition" (95). The poet/shaman's ecstatic journey is enabled through this ritual of death and reincarnation. Towards the end of the poet's performance section, the poet/shaman tries to get rid of the animistic possession of her body:

> THRU WHICH I,
> STILL STILLS OF BROKEN LETTERS,
> SHAY.SHAY.OCKT.
> CHANK&
> FINNED —
> MOUTHING AT THE
> FEN –
> SOAK
> TOSSING
> DROWN OF ANIMAL —
> …
> A PINK SORREL
> FLUTED, UNHEAVIED
> OF ME —
>
> A HARE
> DANCING —
> (*Palace* 36)

A "pink sorrel" is "unheavied/me" can be interpreted as the withdrawal ("unheavied") of the animal body (a pink horse) from the shaman's body. The hare is dancing, in other words, performance still goes on. Just as every shaman has a song of their own, the painter, the poet and the dancer chant in a particular way. The dancer's song is "sifted" as "Part-Song/all Yellows" and accompanied by "encirclement" (*Palace* 37, 38).

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During the shamanic séance, feathers on the shaman's costume support the shaman's transformation into an animal, becoming-animal, and the spiritual flight s/he is expected to make. With feathers and sometimes with wings, the shaman/ess is thought to "acquire her magical plumage" and be related with "the beliefs in 'helping spirits' who aid the shaman to perform his aerial journey" (Eliade 157). In "Wingsunsong for Cobbing,"[80] for instance, O'Sullivan experiments with the page space by drawing a bird with wings open wide, perching on the words and phrases sonorously voiced by capitalized letters. The title of the poem reveals that it is a tributary song written for Bob Cobbing, whose visual and sonic performances have been influential on British experimental poetry scene in general and Maggie O'Sullivan in particular. The use of the portmanteau word, "wingsunsong," introduces a play right from the start of the performance: wings'n'song, or, wing-sun-song, or wings-unsong. All these combinations make it clear that wings, the flight, is central to the performance of the poem. The lines follow the direction of the wings, thus vertically situated on the page and the page has to be rotated in clockwise direction for reading, suggesting an unconventional use of the page space. Not only have the visual aspects of the poem but also the catalogued words introduce us to a transcorporeal universe, in which unlikely bodies are allied and thresholded: "VOODO BERRIES," "RUE," "LIZARD," "AMETHYST," "FERN," "TOTEM," "POETRY," "DANCER," "PLANKTON," "SHAMAN," "MERCURY," "DRAGON"[81] (*House* 47-48).

Two other collage pieces[82] in *In the House of the Shaman* visually materialize the process of becoming-animal. Two different insects have been placed on feathers of different birds and ripped papers. On the papers, it is

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[80] The poem has been saved as an image in Appendix A.

[81] Most of the words used in "Wingsunsong for Cobbing" have been recycled from previous poems.

[82] Larger images have been copied to the Appendix A.

possible to read the names of several animals, along with neologisms, meaningless words, broken/torn words. Some of the words in the scrapped papers coincide with words used in the text (such as, HILL, RUSH, STONES, GOOSE); and the photocopied ripped papers are collaged in different directions:
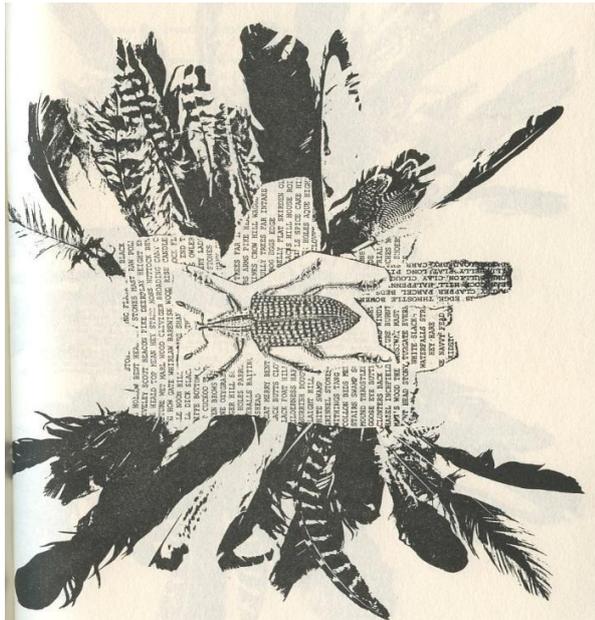

Figure 5.3. *In the House of the Shaman*, 67
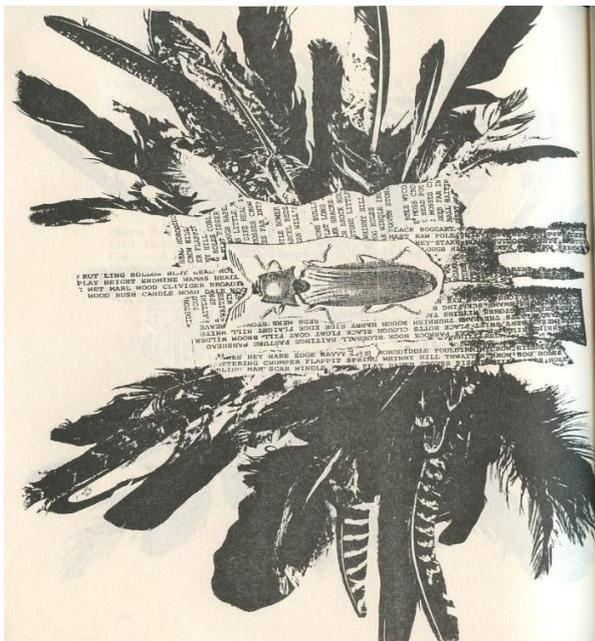
Figure 5.4. *In the House of the Shaman*, 68

The territory of textual space is deterritorialized by the body of the insect and the bird feathers. The 'aerial journey' undertaken is visually placed on a text, by connecting feathers with the words capitalized and the body of the insect to draw attention to the flows between several othernesses. Deleuze and Guattari seem to valorize the insects over other animals in terms of their capacities for the metamorphosis:

> [B]irds are still just as important, yet the reign of birds seems to have been replaced by the age of insects, with its much more molecular vibrations, chirring, rustling, buzzing, clicking, scratching, and scraping. Birds are vocal, but insects are instrumental: drums and violins, guitars and cymbals. A becoming-insect has replaced becoming-bird, or forms a block with it. The insect is closer, better able to make audible the truth that all becomings are molecular. (Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand* 308)

Insects make possible not only becoming-animal, but also becoming-molecular, thus becoming-imperceptible. Rosi Braidotti draws attention to the qualities of insects that make becoming-imperceptible possible: "dryness, hairiness, metal-like body-frames, great resilience. They are environment-bound, thus elemental, either because linked to the earth and to its underground/crust (*chthonic* forces) or defying its gravity thanks to aircraft-like bodyframes … the shifts in sensory and spatio-temporal co-ordinates" (Braidotti, *Metamorphoses* 153). Animals are bound to a territory and they mark their territories for survival and maintain their life as "pack." In the case of the insects, the "vibrations" they make are attempts to mark their territories. O'Sullivan's play with several sounds created by the letters "s," "z" reclaim the presence of insects, their "rustling, buzzing, clicking, scratching, and scraping" in both volumes. In those images above, insects and birds through feathers mark their territories, as well as the text through its borders. However, the intersecting surfaces and thresholds of their bodies can be read as lines of flight. Maggie O'Sullivan seems to acknowledge the forces of insects to make imperceptibility

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possible; what endures out of experimentation and also subverts the primacy of human subject is insect, as suggested by the images of insects with their resilient presence, right on top of the feathers and text. All in all, these images suggest a connection between the text, animals, the artistic practices, and how the animal might textually and visually be enhanced in an artistic way.

Similarly, *Palace of Reptiles* opens with two images, one of which is the palette of animals arranged in concentric circles as discussed above and the second one is the one below which seems to be one of Maggie O'Sullivan's drawings. The image below is formed up of disjointed lines that make up of a flowing body—a strange corporeality which cannot be understood if it is a human or non-human body:

Figure 5.5. *Palace of Reptiles*, The First Opening Image

If the page is rotated right hand-side it might also be a body of a reptile. Besides, that image can also be taken as the shaman figure with wings and mask, transforming into an animal. The moment of transformation—becoming-animal of a human body—can only be felt/sensed through the flows—the

obscure, fragmentary lines of that strange body. Moreover, that drawing might also refer to the figure of a dancer who appears several times in the poems such as "Ellen's Lament," "Now to the Ears" and "Doubtless."

In order to comment on the affective becomings in Maggie O'Sullivan's poetry, not only the use of language but also the non-linguistic components of the poems should be considered. The poetic space becomes a smooth space of ruptures, unusual use of punctuation marks, non-linguistic items such as images, drawings, or mix-media assemblages. Maggie O'Sullivan is one of these writers who "make[s] the standard language stammer, tremble, cry, or even sing" and who "twists language, makes it vibrate, seizes hold of it, and rends it" (176). In a Deleuzean fashion, Maggie O'Sullivan sees it as a long-term project to take language as her primary poetic and artistic material in order to draw attention to the UNsaid, UNheard, Unofficial, NON-standard, UNpracticed:

> [M]y work is driven by the spoken, sounded or breathing voice. Particularly I have always been haunted by issues of VOICELESSNESS—inarticulacy—silence—soundlessness—breathlessness—how are soundings or voices that are other-than or invisible or dimmed or marginalised or excluded or without privilege, or locked out, made UNofficial, reduced by ascendant systems of centrality and closure, configured or Sounded or given form & potency: *how can I body forth or configure such sounds, such tongues, such languages, such muteness, such multivocality, such error*—& this is perhaps why the non-vocal in mark & the non-word in sound or language — make up much of the fabrics & structures of my own compositions. Working with the lexicon—whether regular, pre-existing or newly-made—mis-spell, mis-heard, mis-read, compound—contraction or part of a word such as a letter or a syllable or word-cluster to explore *the densities, measures, weights, textures, sounds, movements, sights & silences in the body & skin that is language—and being open to, dwelling in, & turning inside-out*—figuring out the word in all its multiform abrasions, magnetisms, beauties & musics & incertitudes too. (Interview by Andy Brown, 90-91, emphasis added)

The sounds of both human and non-human bodies coalesce in the moments of becoming. Unlikely sounds also retard the signification process and terminate the representative function of writing, as Isobel Armstrong contends, "[t]he vocables, the cadences, the cries and songs—and sometimes the moans and gasps—within the splittings of the diction create another provisional sign system from the ruins of the old" (59). Such stylistic and formal choices resist closure and mimetic representation of the world as it is; thus, her poetry in general becomes a critique of the politics of writing and poetic practices of the mainstream publishing. The ways in which Maggie O'Sullivan uses linguistic and non-linguistic components are examples of how experimental poets render the page space an interface between conflicting forces that enable the movement, lines of flight, stammering and vibrating possible. Scott Thurston similarly points out the basic experimental procedures used by Maggie O'Sullivan such as "short lines and multiple margins …; the capitalisations, differing sizes of font, slashes and dashes, and other punctuation symbols … the phrase, poised and juxtaposed in space and given extra energy by the high frequency of neologisms" (15).

The use of punctuation marks such as dashes, slashes and the spontaneous capitalization of words ungrammatically and sometimes for emphasis is a common stylistic choice that many poets make. Moreover, O'Sullivan's syntactic experiments in *In the House of the Shaman* and *Palace of Reptiles* foreground the process of text's becoming a performance piece, which is also the basic material of stuttering in O'Sullivan's work. The lines are separated by dashes, which regulates the use of breathing during the performance of the poem, and slashes[83] are used between words or word-units to emphasize pairings, and silently give voice to the violence that inhabits the

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[83]   —A slash, A
Scream, A smash, A burn pushed
in
side (*House* 23)

page space. Moreover, the dashes at the end of each line, unlike the periods, give a sense of incompleteness, an undecided moment, where lines of flight become possible. The incomplete words ("sacri," "morrow," "flicted," "inci/acci/incu," "nexions"), random scattering of prefixes ("pro," "UN," "Exo," "equi-"), non-standard contractions in poetry ("thru," "w/," "&"), lack of verbs to link words or phrases and to create a context, and frequent misspellings ("fraility," "aboreal," "cliven," "caesaran," "caesarian") also show the fragmentary nature of O'Sullivan's text—which can be read as the "molecularization" of both language and subjectivity:

> 'the word' itself, whose arrival in the work as both historical (incarnate) and timeless (deferred) meaning-making material is, for her, *l'invention de l'autre*, the future and past happening now … O'Sullivan's update of such revolutionary metaphysical projects more clearly lets it go, lets difference be, absorbing the damage that this does to linguistic control and thereby taking it in (like a latter-day shaman) to transform perceptions of self as well. (Huk 64)

Romana Huk seems to say that the difficult meaning-making process through linguistic inventiveness is the place where we should look for the discovery and emergence of the other in O'Sullivan's poetry. In that sense, O'Sullivan's nomadic poetics, mainly the linguistic practices, is revisionary of earlier metaphysical models of language and subjectivity. The language itself is becoming-molecular; its molar unities dissolve with the ungrammatical choices made on each page, as O'Sullivan expresses, "[t]he language is becoming itself, or more than itself, more importantly. Not mimicking or emulating" ("Transformation" 247).

The final section of *Palace of Reptiles*, "riverrunning (realisations," is a stuttering text par excellence. There are many entrances and exits in that poem/performance piece, which is provided with a bibliography in the end. Several of these entrances and exits are references to James Joyce's *Finnegan's*

Wake, Irish story telling tradition, a nightmare, Joseph Beuys' quotations, Maggie O'Sullivan's auto-commentary and criticism of her own work, historical and ancestral references in the "Numerology" section, autobiographical notes and shamanistic transformation in the form of a song in the final section. The poem starts with the repetitive use of the verb "tell" and the noun "tale" in order to suggest an idea of telling a tale—a performance of stuttering:

> TALK.
> Tell-Tale.
> Heard-Tell.
> Tell-Tales.
> Heard-Tell-Of.
> Uttering—Tell-Tale. (*Palace* 59)

Telling the tale of a silenced past of her Irish[84] ancestors is not easily articulated. This stuttering stanza is followed by a quotation[85] from James Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake* and the text is "spinning" ("Minding a Spin") to find a beginning to tell that tale, which begins with an Irish context. In other words, the stammering finds its contexts to stammer even more when "Then.Now.There.Here" upsurge:

> In Irish, AMHRAIN : CEOL :
> A Song, A Song Said Otherwise, half-sung / half-said,
> SINGS — Speaking the Self / whom sang / Singing over / —
> The Irish again — ABAIR AMHRAN — Say us a Song —
> Say, Speak / Words Spoken / Give Us Your
> Tongue It to See — dark blades how sang crows
> Disquieting the auditorium's fabular harmonics —
> Worlds by Words / Telling Alive mirrors to the
> stream affrighted Speaker & listener — *turn by turn*
> *between, & the moon late in rising — Live Blood/Its*
> *Rise with the Other* /A Wilder Air Chancing to Poetry's

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[84] O'Sullivan tries to unleash herself from all identificatory demarcations; therefore, Irishness is not a central concern in her poetry. It is just one of her sources and texts to be explored in the processes of linguistic experimentation.

[85] 'WELL, YOU KNOW OR DON'T YOU KENNET OR HAVEN'T I
TOLD YOU EVERY TELLING HAS A TALING AND THAT'S
THE HE AND THE SHE OF IT' (*Palace* 59).

Music (Amplified) Edgewise —
(*Palace* 59, emphasis added)

The song/poem creates moments of linguistic territorializations and deterritorializations. When the Irish words are uttered, the reader is deterritorialized by the strange production of a foreign language and the pronunciation of it; immediately, the following words help them reterritorialize again. "AMHRAIN" and "CEOL" are followed by "A song" and "ABAIR AMHRAN" with its translation "Say us a Song." The misspelling of "AMHRAIN" and "AMHRAN" on the same page also points to how the speaker "errs" while creating a foreign language within a standard one. Moreover, O'Sullivan revives a silenced ancestral past ("half-sung/half-said") with her return to the Irish tradition of "saying a song" and telling a story. The lines interrupting with their capitalized form open up new possibilities of "singing" the silenced, missing parts in the composition of subjectivity. The lower-case parts are written in a theorizing fashion. Romana Huk reads the poem's "Telling Alive" as "form[ing] utterances encountering the immediate, through the body, which is … a process O'Sullivan constantly links to the continuous (and potentially violent) exchanges between language and otherness, the non-identical" (54). The encountering with the other ("Live Blood/Its/Rise with the Other") is textually played out in O'Sullivan's "riverrunning" by making the page space a smooth space of linguistic experimentation. The sudden capitalization of some lines might also be related to the way they should be performed, while "Telling Alive":

'REPEAT, REPEAT . . . BLED, BLED ON A SUDDEN AT A SOUND'

What happens in the telling?
A Blackbird, its gouged throb unscripted —
Marigold's plush & Boiling sheer
geranium Tang.
A Chirp. Braided, attended misbehaves
animated by extension, lips drove, I eared / Listen out for
the light –

<u>Ear-Loads I Sing!</u>

…
Sounded by Un — I DENT / if / EYE where, to, to, towards the
far end — far away from : at fault : breach : in error :
at a loss : outlying : ruled out : caesarian : exiled : unknown :
outCRY july i (*Palace* 62)

The choice of words and the way they are articulated can also be examples of stuttering in O'Sullivan's texts. Words and lines are divided by dashes and colons, which also controls the breathing during the vocal performance. The words are laboured painfully by these violent separations as suggested by the misspelt word "caesarean." The syntax of "<u>Ear-Loads I Sing!</u>" and play on the word "unidentify" as "Un — I DENT / if / EYE" explode with the underlined form and interruptions respectively. Maggie O'Sullivan moves on to explore the process of subject's becoming which takes place at the emergence of the words; the subject is therefore ahistorical and embryonic:

                                                    … moving
        my eye out among the ribbed & swimmish places
        Uncoiled, Endowed among us
        in the arrival of
        remembrancing   responding   realising journeying

        the moment by
        moment
        anchor out of her
        depth that is
        LANGUAGE
        DANCE
        DREAM
        'COLLIDERINGS' (*Palace* 63)

It is possible to read "eye" as a pun to suggest "I" and "eye" that participate in the event of "remembrancing   responding   realising   journeying" at the moments of unfolding of the subject. Another portmanteau word used here "remembrancing" blends the acts of remembering, re-membering and re-embracing. The subject embraces the present ("Then.Now.There.Here") while

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unfolding the memories. It is in *Logic of Sense* that Deleuze discusses the sense-making function of portmanteau words. The term suggests a combination of two discrete words into a new word—very much like O'Sullivan's neologisms. These words are "esoteric words" for Deleuze, that "contract several words and envelop several senses" such as "snark," combination of snail and shark, "frumious" of "fuming+furious" (44). Although portmanteau words suggest a synthesis, that synthesis is a disjunctive one that may include "logical contradictions," (Deleuze, Logic 178) when we consider the sense-making processes such as in "remembrancing," "collide-ring" as language works to multiply the meaning, interpretations might go in different directions. Similarly, in "Hill Figures," O'Sullivan uses several portmanteau words in a Joycean fashion[86]. The reader encounters the first neologism right in the first line, "vasish." It might be a combination of vas, vase (or was, when the sound is considered) and vanish. In anatomy "vas"[87] is defined as a tube carrying any fluid in the body; "vase" can also be taken as a vessel or container and "vanish" is disappearing from sight, fading. It is possible to hear all these words in their multiplicity in the word, "vasish." "Twindom" is another portmanteau word O'Sullivan uses several times in the text. It might be read as a synthesis of "twin-dle" and "kingdom," drawing attention to the duplicity of the shaman's kingdoms during his/her flight as: "to live in the Sky/ to live Underground" (*House* 55).

Poetry as event comes into existence through ritualistic "colliderings[88]" of language, dance and dream. Borrowed from physical chemistry, the word "collidering" here suggests movement between bodies—among the human and

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[86] Both Peter Middleton ("Poetry" p. 784) and Robert Sheppard ("Elsewhere" p.29) argue that these words sound like Joycean puns.

[87] "a hollow organ serving for the conveyance of a liquid in the body." "vas, n." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, September 2015. Web. 22 October 2015.

[88] *OED* defines "collider" as "[a] molecule or atom that collides with other molecules or atoms, esp. to an extent that needs to be allowed for in kinetics." "collider, n." OED Online. Oxford University Press, September 2015. Web. 16 Sep. 2015.

the non-human and at differing speeds—between texts, materials, and temporalities:

> Moving Up in the Spring & Down in the Autumn —
> Collaborations / Liberations /
> VISION / MYTH / RITUAL
> Words, Breath,
> *Divergence & Multiplicity, my tend sees errant, Vulnerable*
> *Chanceways* —
> *BECOMING*
> Strains of Lament & Desire
> & Perpetual Strong SONG —
> (*Palace* 64, emphasis added)

O'Sullivan's songs are therapeutic; blending "VISION," "MYTH" and "RITUAL," they aim to repair the "damaged" selves. The written song is meant to be performed ("words, breath"). Songs are thus expressions of consolation, desire and creating "chanceways" for "BECOMING:"

> Flux of Utterance, Mistakes, Da-mage, Duncan's 'MISUSE,
> MISUNDERSTANDING, THE WHOLE SPIRITUALISED UNIVERSE'
> activated,
> closely, broadly, introspectively — Charting ambiguity,
> tending possibilities in language. In Saying this I am
> *Telescoping / have you witness I am Sing Lingered, Indeterminate*:
> […]
> The works I make Celebrate ORigins/ENtrances — the
> Materiality of Language: its actual contractions &
> expansions, potentialities, prolongments, assemblages —
> the acoustic, visual, oral & sculptural qualities
> within the physical: intervals between; in & beside.
> Also, the jubilant seep   In So of Spirit — Entanglement
> with vegetations, thronged weathers, puppy-web we agreed
> animals.   *Articulations of the Earth of Language*   that is
> Minglement, Caesura, Illumination.
> Heart. (*Palace* 64, emphasis added)

The text nomadically wanders between different allusions, lines with different formal qualities, punctuation marks scattered and sections that run like the river, with never-ending flows. This part of the poem is specifically meta-poetic

as Maggie O'Sullivan repeats her main interest in the "materiality of language" once more and how that interest is actualized in her poetry. Her vision and trajectory is "errant," as the speaker claims, which is full of mistakes, deviating from the standard ("divergences", "swole divulgements"), always in struggle ("resistances") and exhausting the "possibilities in language" through trials, ambiguity, "Vulnerable Chanceways." The reader is the "witness" of these processes of language becoming-imperceptible ("have you witness I am Sing Lingered, Indeterminate"). The lines, "[e]ntanglement/with vegetations, thronged weathers, puppy-web we agreed/animals," remind us of the central place the flora and the fauna, animal life and the weather system play in the vocalization of "the Earth of Language" and a new language of the earth.

The "riverrunning (realisations" closes with "**2nd LESSON FROM THE COCKEREL**" which is made up of all capitalized words, phrases and short sentences, punctuated unevenly by periods and commas. As Robert Sheppard points out, this poem having a similar structure as the first cockerel poem published in *Unofficial Word*, "suggests a shamanistic trance favoured by Rothenberg" ("Talk" 174):

> **RIVERCRAFT**. CAREY NEON. DOVE-WEBBING FATIGUES.
> THE SASHED, SILENT ONE WHO HEARS. THEN AS ONE WHO.
> CONJURING SPAT LIGHTS ON THE PALATE. MUSEY TIGHT
> SADDED, HAWDY KERDY'S, RAGE RUGGING JET. PORTAGE
>   THICKENS (NEVERINE SPARROWS IN
>   THE MOUTH BLISTER). RED STROUDERS
> **RIGHT-HAND**   DEW-BUCKLING WINTER, TONGUE-A-SAD-
> **PASSAGEWORK**   OF-ALL-BIRDS WHEN THE WAVES COME
>   BONED, BLEED LICKS THE SWIRE-HEAD.
>   THE DONE-SKIRT, THE SCALDING.
>   THE SHOT-OVER BELLIES READ WITH
>   JASPER, MINCE, THE MASSIVE SHIVERS,
>   LOOF, SWOLE: **JUTTING MULTIPLICATION.**
> (*Palace* 70)

Along with the alliterative sound structure of the poem, its visual qualities should be explored. After the first four lines, the poem has been conducted in two columns: the left column dominated by a rectangular empty space with the

words "RIGHT-HAND PASSAGEWORK" self-reflexively turns the eyes of the reader to the right column which has the rest of the lines continuing from the opening four lines. Marjorie Perloff reads the first cockerel poem as experimentation with the "catalogue poem" previously used in the work of Pound, Zukofsky and Ginsberg, and she further argues that the "verse units [of "A Lesson from the Cockerel"] are closer to the Old English alliterative line" (164). The second cockerel poem is in parallel with the first one considering Perloff's commentary. The "cataloguing" of stream of thoughts and short alliterative sentences that evoke snapshots of violent engagements creates a meditative moment like the shamanistic initiation. The meaning of the catalogued words such as "CAREY," "HAWDY KERDY'S," "NEVERINE," "STROUDER" and "MUSEY" are left obscure. The bodies have been processed through "scalding," "bleeding," "minc[ing]," and "swelling" and the avian populations "fatigued" withdraw from the scene ("TONGUE-A-SAD-/OF-ALL-BIRDS WHEN THE WAVES COME BONED"). The choice of vocabulary in the poem, such as "RAGE RUGGING JET," "BLEED LICKS," "SCALDING," "SHOT-OVER BELLIES," "MINCE," and "SHIVERS," indicates violence and pain experienced by the poet-shaman practicing her "RIVERCRAFT." If we read this poem as "a shamanistic trance" like Robert Sheppard, then these moments of violence and pain can be taken as the shaman's entering into another body, encountering and becoming-other with the non-human spirits mediating the ecstatic journey. Drawing towards the end in the final line, the volume resists closure and freezes the nomadic wandering of the text like a running river: "& then maybe you go to another place —" (*Palace* 70). "Riverrunning (realisations" has unfinished sections and multiple commencements; there is no waiting, retardation, but "**JUTTING MULTIPLICATION**," which is the concluding phrase of both the poem and the volume (*Palace* 70). The *OED* defines jutting as "projecting, standing out beyond the main body.[89]" It is written in bold and capital letters for

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[89] "jutting, adj.2." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, September 2015. Web. 10 Sep. 2015.

emphasis; moreover, the poem is ironically finalized with a word that suggests plurality, reproduction and extension rather than closure. The ending of *In the House of the Shaman* with the "multiplication" of the text with images of torn and collaged texts, the bodies of insects and drawing of feathers support the same idea of proliferation rather than closure.

To conclude, O'Sullivan's experiments with form and language form the basis of her writing, creating a work of art and a work of literature at the same time. Maggie O'Sullivan's ultimate focus has been on the materiality of language,[90] acknowledging the transformative forces of language to make other worlds possible. This chapter thus aimed to understand the types of becoming at work in O'Sullivan's *In the House of the Shaman* and *Palace of Reptiles* while the text unfolds the non-human encounters of the human subject and undergoes a shamanistic ritual. The experiential use of language and sound structures in *In the House of the Shaman* and *Palace of Reptiles* develop "zones of proximity" between the human, animal, plant life, discarding the anthropocentric view of natural life and connections in nature. The affective landscape in these volumes is created through the activation of all senses in the process of words coming into existence: visual, tactile, oral, olfactory—blended within by the medium of linguistic experimentation. The writing/reading process during those moments of transformation becomes a predatory act which includes violence and suffering at the heart of producing performance, and O'Sullivan's focus on the shamanic practices of poetics can thus be read as a therapeutic realm for her readers. While the role of the poet multiplies in conveying "time's destitution," the reader/listener is equally responsible for sharing the "ear-loads" that the poet sings in an ecstatic manner.

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[90] Maggie O'Sullivan repeatedly talks about this in her interviews in different contexts. Please see O'Sullivan's interview with Andy Brown, page 89; with Scott Thurston, page 248; with Charles Bernstein and PENN students.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

This study attempted to analyse Peter Reading's *Perduta Gente (1989)* and *Evagatory (1992)* and Maggie O'Sullivan's *In the House of the Shaman (1993)* and *Palace of Reptiles (2003)* from the theoretical perspective of Deleuze and Guattari's nomad thought, which offers a trans-corporeal and post-human understanding of subjectivity, space and aesthetics. By concentrating on the formal and linguistic experimentation in their poetry, this study aimed to understand the human subject's engagement with its non-human others and with the landscape through the concept of becoming. The focus on these connections between human and non-human bodies—including objects, animals, plants, wastes, cityscape, weather system, and landscape—revealed a notion of subjectivity and space which is 'non-unitary' and mobile through de-re-territorializations. In this regard, this study mainly argued that Reading and O'Sullivan's nomadic subjects in the poems were constantly reproduced in relation to these non-human forces. Furthermore, nomadic articulations of language in Reading and O'Sullivan's poetry such as broken and inventive syntax, linguistic and topographical experiments were thus read as sites where becomings were discovered. The 'minor' usages of language and formal tactics were discovered through a close reading of the moments of textual stuttering, sonic and visual components of poems, and the procedural tactics such as visual and verbal collages. The use of language itself as a poetic material in the poems calls into question the notion of writing which claims to be authentic and to represent empirical reality.

Peter Reading's *Perduta Gente* and *Evagatory* were analysed by concentrating on the smooth spaces within the striated urban space and discovering the movements (or lines of flight) between the human and non-human bodies of the cityscape and landscape, the bodies which "pass into the landscape and themselves become part of the compound of sensations" (Smith xxxvi). The cityscape in *Perduta Gente* and landscape in *Evagatory* were taken as counter-emplacements of complex power relations within capitalistic societies and post-industrial urban spaces. The bodies of the dipsos, the homeless, the vagrant or the radioactivated which are located in such affective and smooth spaces were read as intensities of otherness fighting against the State philosophy.

Reading's experimentation with various degrees and forms of textuality is accompanied by social criticism, mainly about the decline of Britain and the deterioration of the earth in general. Reading's particular style of handling these thematic concerns through techniques such as "viral referencing," avant-garde collages, employment of found materials, experimentation with various—often archaic—poetic metres, and montaging of sounds and voices pushes his texts outside conventional poetic practices. What makes Reading's poetry nomadic is this attempt to push the limits of writing. There is no idyllic past to be mournful about; the existential anguish in his poetry is real and at present. As Peter Reading concludes in many of his interviews and poems, poetry might be one way of tackling with the pain of being alive. However, he warns the reader that poetry makes nothing change. He tries to find a suitable language to express the atrocities of life itself on a global scale, and discovers, to his disappointment, that no human language is eligible to represent those horrors in a rational way. That is why, his texts turn into schizophrenic wanderings between different sources, vocabularies and visual assemblages. The use of these experimental procedures in Reading's poetry is not as radical as the linguistic experimentalism to be found in Maggie O'Sullivan's poetry, but

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significant in bridging the gap between the mainstream poetics and more radical forms of innovation. Although language openly becomes a poetic material to be investigated in his work, it does not completely dissolve or lose its referential status. Although Reading does not claim that he has political commitment, his poetry presents an alternative politics of writing in the sense of "minor" literature.

Maggie O'Sullivan's poetic project is based on performance, vocalization and foregrounding of the 'materiality of language.' The words given birth on the textual space are also meant to be vocalized. Therefore, as in other innovative poetries, the role of the listener/viewer/reader is to participate in this meaning-making process and transformative experience. O'Sullivan's vision and means are shamanistic and ritualistic with the ultimate aim of linguistic and formal experimentation. Maggie O'Sullivan is definitely a poet of the present; her poetic performances take place here and now. The sonic quality of Maggie O'Sullivan's poetry has a rhizomatic relation with other senses that can attract a reading of such poetry through the concepts of becoming and affect.

O'Sullivan's lexical experimentation is also nomadic in the sense that she brings together utterly different worlds of experience, molecularizes language into its smallest particles and mixes human discourse with vegetative and animistic vocabulary. The lyric self dissolves in Maggie O'Sullivan's poetic performances; and the poetic space is mobilized by movements of experimentation. Maggie O'Sullivan's experimental style brings about an alternative understanding of the poetics and politics of the earth and ecology as suggested by the epigraph of *In the House of the Shaman* from Gertrude Stein: "And each of us in our own way are bound to express what the world in which we are living is doing" (House 8). She is trying to discover an ethical and aesthetic model, a "transformative ethics" as Braidotti calls it, to shift our perceptions of the earth, art, aesthetics, readership and politics of writing in general and to "cultivate the political desire for change or transformation"

(*Transpositions* 8). In other words, hers is not only an attempt to fight the representationalist poetics but also a project defying the striated, arborescent models of thought that shape the way we understand the world.

After a detailed analysis of Reading and O'Sullivan's poetry, it is possible to claim that the page space in their poems becomes a "war machine" against the poetic conventions. Both Reading and O'Sullivan use similar poetic procedures, such as collage, capitalization, neologisms, unusual punctuations and drawings. With the scattering of non-verbal materials such as images, drawings, found documents and intertextual references in the volumes under scrutiny, they play with the idea of originality and authorial control. Both poets provide a ground for a renewed understanding of poetics and an aesthetic paradigm which aims to find an expression for the suffering of the world, the contemporary environmental crisis, and to reclaim 'kinship with nature.' Although language still counts in Peter Reading's poetry, it remains incompetent in elaborating the horrors of environmental decline, urban distress and the schizophrenic state of things under a capitalist regime. Maggie O'Sullivan's language also draws attention to a similar crisis of representation of the suffering earth and inexpressibility of such horrors.

Above all, Reading and O'Sullivan's works are caught up within the same paradox about the function of poetry in the contemporary world. O'Sullivan's return to the shamanic experience in order to discover the healing function of poetry and art might be an attempt to cope with the pain and horrors of the contemporary world. While Maggie O'Sullivan's poetry offers a possibility of healing by returning to pre-Christian ritualistic practices, Peter Reading's poetry provides no consolation for his readers, as he relentlessly repeats in *Perduta Gente*: "Nothing can ever be done;/things are intractably thus" (Poem 48). The moments of ecstasy in O'Sullivan's poetry could highlight the transformative power of art and language which engages the reader in its performance;

however, what the readers get from Reading's poetry is the aggravation of distress—they cannot get out of the circles of hell.

Further studies about Peter Reading and Maggie O'Sullivan's poetry might explore the ways in which their works can be read alongside or compared with other examples of linguistic innovation outside Britain in order to draw attention to the degrees of experimentalism in different poetic cultures. A similar reading of Peter Reading's work can be extended to his volumes published especially after the 2000s. His employment of elegiac patterns and Old English poetic measures might be possible topics for further research. Moreover, the argument focusing on the natural world in Maggie O'Sullivan's poetry can also be developed by investigating her poetry collections such as *Natural History in 3 Incomplete Parts* and *all origins are lonely* in order to have a detailed understanding of her "ec(h)o-poetics." O'Sullivan's use of the sacred and the spiritual can be another topic for further research by comparing her poetry to her American counterparts such as Jerome Rothenberg, Allen Ginsberg and Charles Bernstein. The work of both poets could also be interpreted through an ecocritical reading, particularly focusing on the implications of ecological decline and post-pastoral affinities in their poetry.

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APPENDICES

A. ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 0.1. Poem 30, *Perduta Gente*

1. Radiation Protection
7. Contamination Control
1. Personnel Movement Control

INTRODUCTION

Radioactive contamination may spread f
another in various ways. One of the princi
moving into a contaminated area and trackin
material on their clothing, shoes and perso
Various movement control techniques have ev

RADIATION EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Hazard Identification

radiation hazards present in the shutdow...
those normally present and those having p
ng retubing activities, are:

Ambient Gamma-fields

nt Gamma-fields are found within the reac
l shutdown conditions. These fields resu
ated components and fuel within the react
mination residing on the interior of pip

Radiation Beams Originating from the

gical shielding normally provides effec
iated with the activated in-core compo
as intense as 300 R/H, may emanate fr
al of a shield plug (S/P) from or of a

Radiation Fields Originating fror
Components and Fuel Removed from

Figure 0.2. Poem 34, *Perduta Gente*

236

Functional Disturbance of the Gut Fo

After irradiation of the gut in
following disturbances of general fu:
one to two hours:

(1) Nausea and vomiting

This might be thought of as a "r
which stomach contents are dispo
handled by the normal digestive
bably originates in the brain.

(2) Diarrhoea

This is also a rejection phenome
mechanisms.

it was discovered that some of the staff
ject had radioactive contamination on their
estigation it became evident that this form
tected by our "Pancake" contamination meters,
"smear" meters, but not by our older field
foot monitors, nor by the portal monitors.

Please find attached a status report
place · · · ·
number of workers on the Large Scale
had contamination on their skin and c
the hand and foot monitors

Carbon-14 Contamination Problem

Figure 0.3. Poem 44, *Perduta Gente*

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Health Implications

Based on the risk estimates
can be concluded that the ri
cancer after irradiation to
from negative to an upper bc
year per rem (Section 2.1).
mulation of extremity dose t
lifetime, it can be shown th
skin cancer is 2.4 x 10^{-5} pe
risk, based on the 5% case-f
1.2 x 10^{-6} per rem which is
of the total stochastic risk
Therefore, our calculation i
ICRP's skin weighting factor   ꭎea.

OPERATING MANUAL

function

                inr   Some
        deaths in   weeks, possible
        eventual death of 50% of indi-
        viduals for about 450 rads.

        Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea in
        first hours. Short latent
        period followed by diarrhea,
        hemorrhage, purpura, inflam-
        mation of throat, fever by
        end of first week. Rapid ema-
        ciation, and death as early as
        2nd week with possible eventual
        death of 100% of exposed indi-
        viduals.

        approved by

Figure 0.4. Poem 53, *Perduta Gente*

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VOI SINGEY VO HUMS BELLOWING BOLDS GIFTING SING SONG
CROCKO CRUNKLE CRINKLE CRANKLE CAMELLIA

ELASTIC GENETICS TORSO LEAVENED VOODOO BERRIES RUE ROW RATCHES
HEART SINGEY O BOAT MEAT BALLET BUTTON BUDDED JIG JOG JARL IRIS

GIRLIE HOOVES CLOUTIE SPAN JOY STAVE BLUELY ROBIN RONIC

PERSIMMON TANTRA LIZARD INKINGS CUNIFORM CRESCENT AMETHYST MIRACULOUS

PRINTIES BEARTOOTH FISHES

FERN LASH LARGED OCTAVES BLACKENING SEPTIC RUSSULA
ICON OX TALL THUNDERER SAID SEEN STRANG SINEWS
OPEN TOTEM PQWERTRY POETRY CARA MALL EYEZED
CLOVENS CROOKED CLAWED TOM TOM RAIN MAKER LANCER DANCER BRIMA BLOSSOM

47

Figure 0.5. *In the House of the Shaman*, 47

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Figure 0.6. *In the House of the Shaman*, 48
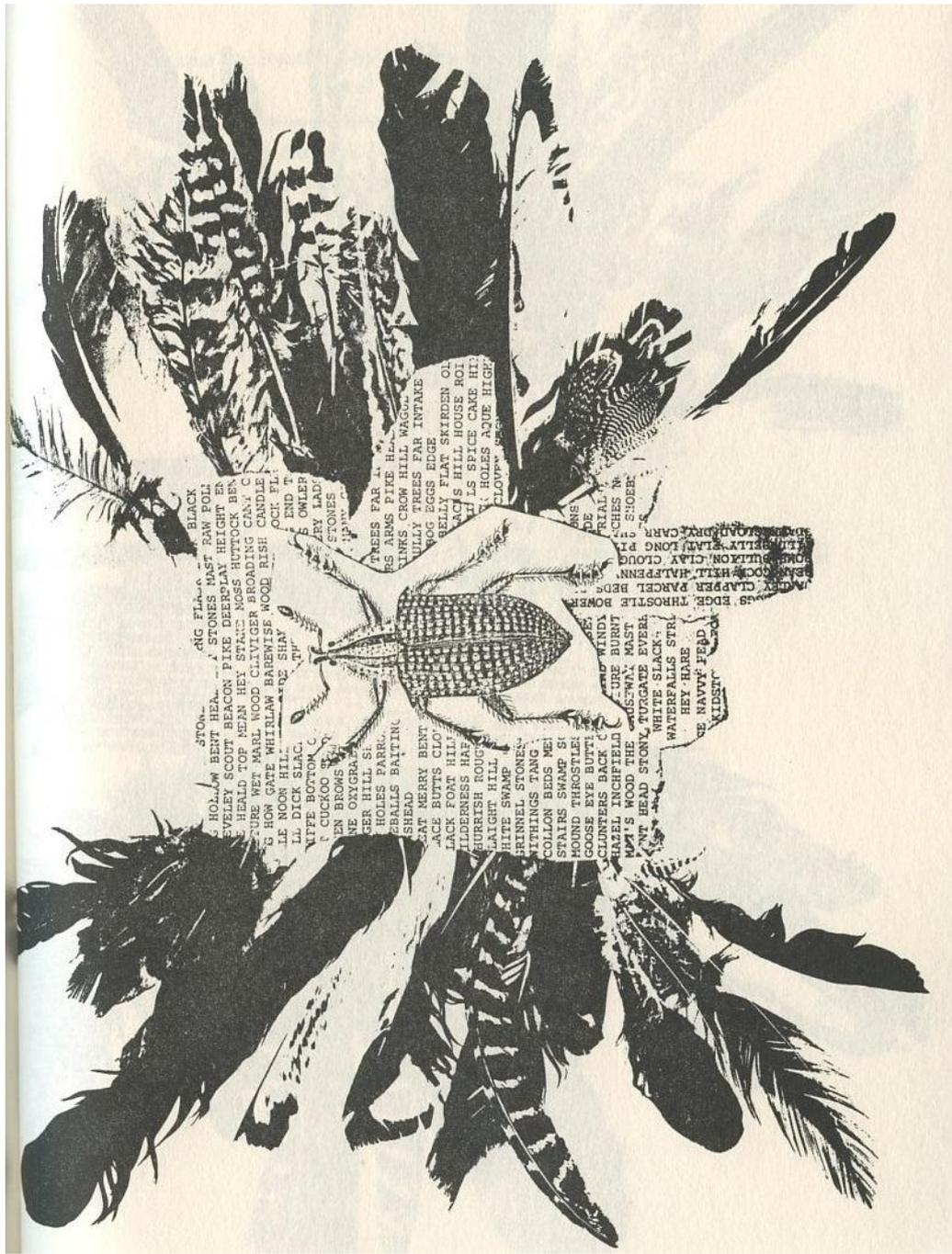
Figure 0.7. *In the House of the Shaman*, 67
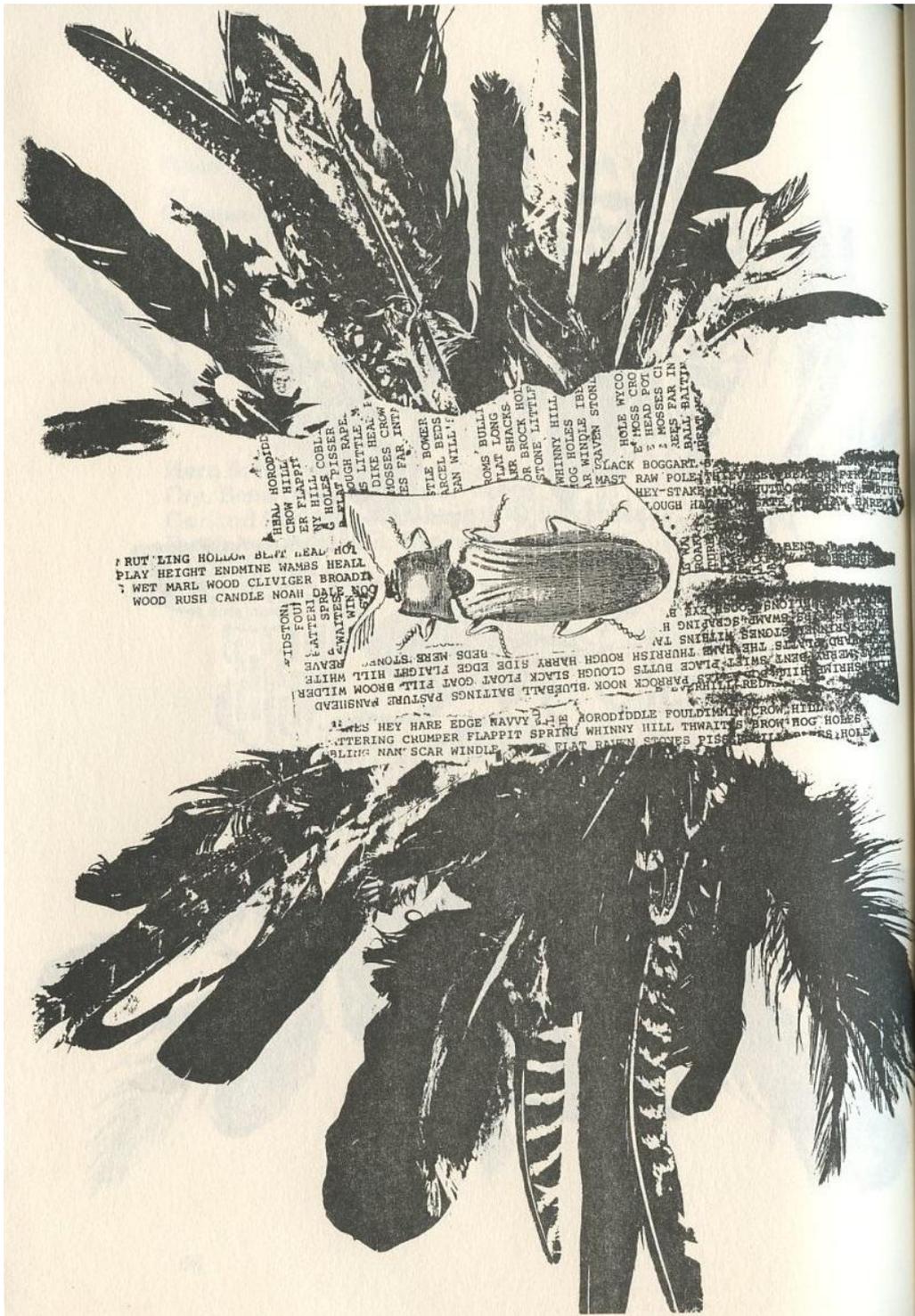
Figure 0.8. *In the House of the Shaman*, 68

B. CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Türe Abacı, Özlem
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EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MA	METU English Literature	2007
BA	HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY Department of English Language and Literature	2003

WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2005-Present	METU Department of Foreign Language Education	Research Assistant

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Turkish (Native), English (Advanced), French (Intermediate),
German (Beginner)

PUBLICATIONS

1.   Türe Abacı, Özlem, (2015). "Tahsin Yücel'in "Aramak" Adlı Öyküsünün Yapısökümcü Bir Okuması/A Deconstructive Analysis of Tahsin Yücel's Short Story "Aramak" ("Quest")", *TURKISH STUDIES-International Periodical for the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic-*, ISSN: 1308-2140, (Prof. Dr. Şefik Yaşar Armağanı), Volume 10/12 Summer 2015, ANKARA/TURKEY, DOI Number: http://dx.doi.org/10.7827/TurkishStudies.8438, p. 1143-1154.

2. Türe Abacı, Özlem. "Raging Souls Far from the Paternal Home": Performing the Contested Spaces in Hanif Kureishi's *Borderline*. 17th METU British Novelists Conference Proceedings: Hanif Kureishi. Eds. Nurten Birlik, Buket Doğan and Seda Coşar Çelik. Ankara: Sözkesen, 2010. (ISBN 978-605-125-592-7)

3. Türe Abacı, Özlem. "'I am holding my beads in my hands': Strategies of Subversion and Resistance in Grace Nichols' Poetry." *Identity, Migration and Women's Bodies as Sites of Knowledge and Trangression*. Eds. Silvia Del Pilar Castro Borrego and Maria Isabel Romero Ruiz. Oviedo: KRK Ediciones, 2009. 61-70. (Alternative Collections 33)

4. Birlik, Nurten, and F. Özlem Türe. "Fatih Akın's *Head-On*: Two clashing sites of being." *KreisLäufe-Circular Flows: Capillaries of World Culture*. Eds. Markus Gottwald, Matthias Klemm, Birgit Schulte. Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2007. 121-137. (Diskursive Produktionen 9)

CURRENT RESEARCH INTERESTS
Contemporary British Poetry, Modernism in Literature and Arts, Experimental Poetries, Aesthetics and Criticism, Post-human Theory, Literary Theory and Criticism, Postcolonial Studies.

C. TURKISH SUMMARY

Çağdaş İngiliz Şiirinin son dönemlerde geldiği nokta çoğulculuk sözcüğüyle tanımlanabilir. 20. yüzyılın ikinci yarısında ortaya çıkan çeşitli akımlar ve şiir türlerine rağmen, bir edebi tür olarak şiirin, roman ve hikâye türlerinin popülerliği karşısında düşüşe geçmiştir. Tony Frazer'a göre şiire olan ilgi gün geçtikte azalmakta ve talep gören eserler şiirlerden ziyade basit bil dille yazılmış ve ilk okunuşta hazmedilebilecek hikâyeler ve romanlarla yer değiştirmiştir. Şiir dünyası artık gizlemli (esoteric) ve kenara itilmiş bir uğraşı olarak algılanmaktadır. Şiirin bu denli marjinalleşmesi çoğunlukla ekonomik sebeplerden ve yayın dünyasındaki kapitalist eğilimlerden kaynaklanmaktadır. Yayınevleri yeterince satılmadığı veya kazanç sağlayamadıkları için şiir kitapları basmaya gerek görmüyorlar. Peter Middleton bu bağlamda Oxford Üniversitesi Yayınevi'nin yeterince kar elde edilememesinden dolayı şiir listelerini iptal etmelerini eleştirmektedir. Aynı şekilde büyük yayınevlerinden Penguin ve Faber'in şiir listeleri de üniversite kütüphanelerine ve eğitim kurumlarına yönelik basılan eski şiir koleksiyonlarını ve iyi bilinen şairlerin kitaplarına yer vermektedir. Bu üzücü tabloya rağmen, şairler tanınmak, eserlerini okuyucuya ulaştırabilmek ve seslerini duyurabilmek için farklı yollar takip etmek durumunda kalmaktadırlar. Deneysel şiirle ilgilenen şairler de işte bu noktada yayın endüstrisinin bu kapitalist yaklaşımlarına eleştiri getirerek, küçük yayınevleri, dergiler ve birlikler kurarlar, bazı edebi kuruluşlar tarafından destek görürler. Ayrıca internet ortamının sağladığı düşük bütçeli oluşumlar da alternatif şiir türlerinin yayılması ve kabul görmesi için önemli alanlar olmuştur. Deneysel şiir bir anlamda var olan sistem içerisinde kabul gören ve reklamı yapılan ana akıma ait şiir türlerine de aykırı ve yeni seslere yer veren yaklaşımlar

sunmaktadır. Bu çalışma kapsamında incelenen 1980'ler sonrası Çağdaş İngiliz Şiiri bu anlamda oldukça üretken ve çokseslidir. Genel anlamda ana akım şiir endüstrisine karşı çıkan, dilsel ve biçemsel yeniliği savunan ve lirik geleneğin öğelerini gözden geçiren deneysel şiir bu çalışmanın odak noktası olarak alınmıştır.

Deneysel şiirin öne sürdüğü biçemsel yenilik anlayışı belli bir felsefi ve edebi arkaplana sahiptir. Bazı eleştirmenler deneysel şiiri modernizmin devamı olarak görmekte, bazıları ise öncü (avant-garde) sanat anlayışlarıyla ilişkilendirmektedir. Deneysel şiir öncelikle dilin gerçeği olduğu gibi aktarma kapasitesiyle ilgili yazın politikalarına eleştirel bir şekilde yaklaşır ve dili şiirin bir malzemesi haline getirip rolünü değiştirir. Postmodern estetik anlayışından etkilenmiş olsa da deneysel şiir modern tüketim anlayışlarına ve kapitalist toplum yapısına bir eleştiri getirme çerçevesinde postmodern sanat ve edebiyatla arasına mesafe koyar. Başka bir deyişle, deneysel şiir kolay bir tüketim malzemesi haline gelmeyi reddeder; okuyucunun kısa bir sürede tüketebileceği bir edebi malzeme yerine, kendisinin de metni çözümleme, anlamlandırma ve hatta yeniden yazma sürecine dâhil edildiği bir tecrübe yaşamasını bekler. Okuyucuyu dilin kapasitesini sorgulamaya itmesi ve şiirin bilinen yollardan üretilip tüketilmemesi nedeniyle deneysel şiirin zor olduğu konusundaki tartışmalar da devam etmektedir.

Redell Olsen'e göre deneysel şiirin en önemli özellikleri anlamın sürekli ertelenmesi, anlatının çoklu dağılımı, sürece dayalı yazım yöntemlerinin kullanımı, lirik öznenin parçalanması ve çoğalması, rastgele derlenmiş belgelerin kullanımı ve okuyucunun aktif bir şekilde katılımının beklenmesidir (48). Dilsel deneyler çoğunlukla dilin betimleme kapasitesini, lirik öznenin ya da otoriter bir şair figürünün anlama hâkim olma çabasını bozguna uğratır. Olsen ayrıca deneysel şiirle uğraşan şairlerin dile saf ve dolayımsız bir malzeme olarak bakmadıklarını, bunun yerine dili hem şiirin aracı hem de konusu haline getirdiklerini belirtir (44). Lirik öznenin varlığı bu saf ve dolayımsız bir malzeme

olarak görülen dili kullanarak dış gerçekliği yansıtabilme yetisine sahip aşkın bir egoya bağlıdır (Kinnahan 178). Deneysel veya yenilikçi şiirler, lirik öznenin varlığıyla ortaya çıktığına inanılan bu mutlak bilinci sorgular; lirik özne, çokseslilikle yer değiştirir ya da tamamen çözülür. Lirik özne dilin ötesinde var olamaz; benlik dil tarafından üretilen ve ancak dil vasıtasıyla somutlaştırılabilen bir konum durumuna gelir. Bu anlamda, deneysel şiirle uğraşan şairlerin lirik özneyi kullanış biçimleri politik bir tercihe işaret etmektedir.

Tüm bu tartışmalar göz önünde bulundurularak, bu çalışma Peter Reading'in *Perduta Gente* (Kayıp İnsanlar) ve *Evagatory* (Gezinti) ve Maggie O'Sullivan'ın *In the House of the Shaman* (Şamanın Evinde) ve *Palace of Reptiles* (Sürüngenlerin Sarayı) başlıklı şiir kitaplarında, Deleuze ve Guattari'nin göçebe düşünce kavramı ve uzam, beden ve şiirsel performans politikaları çerçevesinde oluş süreçlerini incelemiştir. Kuramsal çerçeveyi oluşturan göçebe düşünce kavramı ve bu düşüncenin beden, uzam ve özne odaklı tartışmaları göz önünde bulundurularak göçebe düşünce kavramının Peter Reading ve Maggie O'Sullivan'ın şiirlerindeki dilsel ve biçemsel deneyimciliği/deneyselciliği nasıl anlaşılır kıldığı da tartışılmıştır. Göçebe düşünce kavramının ortaya attığı uzam ve özne algısı, akılcı ve bütünsel bir benlik algısına karşı çıkıp çoğulculuk söylemini ve oluş ontolojisini (ontology of becoming) alternatif olarak sunar. Başka bir deyişle, bu ontolojik yaklaşımla akıl ve bedeni birbirinden ayıran ikiliğe dayalı aşkın özne anlayışı reddedilip 'beden odaklı özne' kavramını keşfetmeyi amaçlar. Göçebe düşünce kavramı öznellik, uzam ve beden algısını incelemek için uygun bir metodolojik araç haline gelmektedir çünkü bu anlayış geleneksel yazın anlayışını bertaraf eder ve deneyimciliği/deneyselciliği bir düşünme alanı olarak kullanır. Başka bir deyişle bu çalışma, irdelenen eserlerle Deleuze ve Guattari'nin göçebe fikrinin edebi eserlere uygulanış şekliyle bir benzerlik olduğunu öne sürer. Peter Reading'in doğanın yok oluşu, kentsel alandaki şiddet ve kapitalist toplum düzenini eleştiren karamsar yorumlarından başlayarak, Maggie O'Sullivan'ın dili şiirin nesnesi olarak görmesi, şiiri performansla eş

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tutuşu ve şaman ayinlerini kullanışı bu çalışmadaki şiir çözümlemelerine ışık tutan noktalardır. Her iki şair de felsefe, zooloji, meteoroloji, botanik, kimya, biyoteknoloji, astronomi ve bilişsel bilimler gibi farklı disiplinlerden ödünç aldıkları terimlerle şiir dilini hem yeniden kurmakta hem de şiir dilinin çoğullaşmasını sağlamaktadır. Reading ve O'Sullivan'ın şiirlerindeki sözcüksel deneyler, özgün sözdizimi, neolojizm ve görsel malzemelerin kullanımı gibi dilsel ve biçemsel yenilikler de şiirlerinde göçebe düşünce kavramının yüzeye çıktığı noktalar olarak görülmektedir.

Kuramsal altyapının tartışılmasına bağlı olarak çalışmaya dâhil edilen şairlerin hangi kıstaslara göre seçildiği ve niçin seçilen eserlere odaklanıldığı ise ilk bölümde ayrıntılı bir şekilde açıklanmıştır. Aynı derecede olmasa da hem Peter Reading'in hem de Maggie O'Sullivan'ın eserlerinde dilsel ve biçemsel deneyler ön plana çıkmaktadır. Her iki şairin eserleri de kariyerlerinin büyük bir bölümünde küçük yayınevleri tarafından basılmıştır. Zamanla daha popüler hale gelmelerine rağmen resmi Çağdaş İngiliz Şiir külliyatında bu şairler "ötekileştirilmiş" olarak değerlendirilebilir. Hem Peter Reading hem de Maggie O'Sullivan şiir kariyerleri boyunca Londra merkezli şiir politikalarının ve çevrelerinin dışında kalmışlar ve yazın politikalarını bu çevrelerden ayrı bir şekilde şekillendirmişlerdir. Her iki şairin de şiirleri ve dili kullanış biçimleri açık bir şekilde ana akım şiir endüstrisi tarafından desteklenen okuma ve yazma biçimlerine karşı çıkmaktadır. Her iki şair de yazınsal geçmişlerinin dışında görsel sanatlarda eğitim almış ve şiirlerinde görsel sanatlara dayalı bu etkileri ön plana çıkarmışlardır. Şairlerin aynı nesilden olmasına özellikle dikkat etmekten ziyade şiirlerin üretildiği tarihler dikkate alınmıştır. Bu bağlamda, Reading ve O'Sullivan'ın özellikle 1985-2000 yılları arasında yazılan şiirlerine yer verilmiştir. Bu şiirlerden bazıları kitapların basım yılından önce farklı dergilerde yer bulmuş daha sonra bu çalışmada irdelenen kitaplara dâhil edilmişlerdir. Son olarak, bu şairlerle ilgili bilimsel bir çalışma sürdürebilmek için gerekli sayıda ve ölçüde bilgi birikimi bulunmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışma şiir ve felsefe, şiir söylemi ve

kuramsal çalışmalar arasında bağ kurarak son dönemdeki şiir çalışmalarına katkı sağlamayı hedefler. Bu çalışma, ayrıca Deleuze ve Guattari'nin göçebe düşünce kavramının sınırlarını deneysel şiir alanındaki tartışmalarla genişleterek "göçebe şiir" (Pierre Joris tarafından ortaya atılan) çalışmalarına da katkıda bulunmayı hedeflemiştir.

Bu çalışma, şiir çözümlemelerine ait bölümlerle birlikte giriş ve kuramsal tartışmalar içeren diğer iki bölüme de yer vermektedir. Giriş bölümünde İkinci Dünya Savaşı sonrası İngiliz şiirinde, ana akım ve ötekileştirilmiş şiir ekolleri arasındaki 'şiir savaşlarına' dikkat çekilmiş ve İngiltere'de deneysel şiirlerin özellikleri ve algılanışıyla ilgili değerlendirmelere yer verilmiştir. İngiliz Şiiri, 20. yüzyılın ikinci bölümünde, çoğulculuk ve farklılık sözcükleriyle tanımlanabilir. Bu nedenle, Çağdaş İngiliz Şiir çalışmalarında en önemli zorlukların başında bu farklı görüşleri sınıflandırma sorunu gelmektedir. Ayrıca bu bölümde şiir türünün kalıcılığını ve edebiyat dünyası tarafından kabul görmesini sağlayan antolojiler yoluyla deneysel şiirin İngiliz Şiir külliyatının içinde nasıl konumlandırıldığı tartışılmıştır. Antolojiler bir edebi dönemin özelliklerini yansıtmakla birlikte şiir dünyasına giriş yapmış şair ve yazarların tanıtılmasında önemli bir yere sahiptir. Çağdaş İngiliz Şiirinde, Galler, İrlanda, İskoçya şiiri gibi coğrafi özelliklere göre gruplandırma yapan antolojilerle birlikte, İngiltere'nin eski kolonilerinden gelen şairlerin yazdığı şiirleri içeren antolojiler, ayrıca deneysel şiir gibi Londra merkezli ana akım şiir ekollerine karşı çıkan alternatif ekolleri içeren antolojiler de bulunmaktadır. Deneysel şiiri diğer şiir akımlarından ayıran en önemli özelliklerden biri olan küçük yayınevleri tarafından basılması genel olarak edebi eserlerin basım politikaları konusunda eleştirel bir bakış içermektedir. İngiltere'de deneysel şiirin yer bulmasını sağlayan en önemli olaylardan biri 1960-1975 yılları arasında gerçekleşen İngiliz Şiir Hareketidir (British Poetry Revival). Bu harekete, dönemin Şiir Derneğinin (Poetry Society) resmi dergisi Poetry Review'un (Şiir İncelemesi) baş editörü Eric Mottram ve şair Bob Cobbing öncülük etmiştir. Bu yıllarda ana akım şiir ekolleri, şairleri ve eleştirmenleriyle

daha radikal ve deneysel şiir üreten şiir endüstrisi arasındaki uçurum en üst düzeye ulaşmıştır.

Çalışmanın üçüncü bölümünde kuramsal tartışmaların yer aldığı, çalışma boyunca göndermeler yapılan göçebe düşünce kavramı, göçebe özne, pürüzsüz/çizilmiş uzamlar, göçebe şiir ve duygulanım gibi kavramlar açıklanmıştır. Spinoza, Nieztsche ve Foucault gibi düşünürleri takip eden Deleuze ve Guattari, göçebe düşünce kavramıyla sözmerkezci epistemolojilerde bulunan metafizik modellerden ve postyapısalcılıktaki dilsel modellerden ayrılarak yeni bir ontoloji, beden merkezli bir maddeciliği, önermektedir. Felsefi yaklaşımları, beden ve oluş ontolojilerini ön plana çıkararak daha önceki epistemolojilerden tamamen ayrılmaktadır. Göçebe düşünce, akıl ve beden arasındaki ayrımı ortadan kaldırıp bu ikili karşıtlıktaki dışlanan bedeni öznenin oluşu için önemli bir konuma getirir. Bu anlamda gösterilen (signified) durağan, sabit, mutlak ve ideolojik konumundan değişkenliğin, sürekli hareketin, çoğulculuğun hâkim olduğu daha kaygan bir düzeye aktarılmaktadır.

Daniel Smith *Kritik ve Klinik*'in giriş bölümünde göçebe düşünce kavramını beş ana başlıkta özetler: dünyanın tahrip olması, öznenin dağılması, bedenin parçalanması, politikanın minörleşmesi ve dilsel kekeleme. Bu çerçeveyi takip ederek kuramsal bölüm, akılcı ve bütünsel bir özne anlayışından sıyrılmış göçebe öznenin tartışılmasından başlayıp akıl ve beden ikiliğine alternatif üreten bir beden anlayışını ele alır. Daha sonra, pürüzsüz/çizilmiş uzamlar ve rizom kavramlarını tartışarak uzamsal çözümleme yapabilmek için gerekli kavramsal konulara yer verilmiştir. Son olarak, Deleuze ve Guattari'nin *Felsefe Nedir?* başlıklı kitaplarında ayrıntılı bir şekilde tartıştıkları duygulanım (affect) ve algılayış (percept) gibi terimler üzerinden, edebiyat ve sanatta yazarların biçem yoluyla göçebe bir yazın şeklinin ve yazının minörleşmesinin nasıl sağlandığı konusuyla noktalanmıştır.

Göçebe düşünce kavramı, Eflatun'dan bu yana uzanan betimlemeci düşünme tarzıyla yani Deleuze ve Guattari tarafından "devlet felsefesi" (state

philosophy) olarak görülen düşünce sistemiyle savaş halindedir. Devlet felsefesi, otorite ve düzeni sağlamaya ve toplum içinde belli bir sıradüzen kurmaya çalışan devlet aygıtlarıyla (state apparatuses) birlikte hareket eder. Brian Massumi devlet felsefesinin iki işlevi olduğunu söyler: düşünen özneyi yaratma ve devlet aygıtlarına sadık bir şekilde düşünen öznenin kavramlarını üretme. Başka bir deyişle, özne, öznenin ürettiği kavramlar ve bu kavramlarla düzenlenen nesnelerin paylaştığı ortak bir öz vardır: benzerlik üzerine kurulu kimlik oluşumları (Massumi 4). Bu bağlamda, Deleuze ve Guattari bu sıradüzenle belirlenmiş ağaçsı (arborescent model) düşünme şekline karşı çıkar. Göçebe düşünce kavramı, benzerlik (sameness) ve tutarlılık (consistency) yerine farklılık (difference) ve dışsallığa (exteriority) odaklanır.

Özne ve öznellik sorunu Avrupa felsefesinin ve deneysel şiirin tartıştığı ortak noktalardandır. Romantik şiirdeki lirik özne kavramından beri İngiliz şiirinde hâkim olan özne anlayışı bütünsel, kendi kendine yetebilen, gözlemleri ve algılarına dayalı dış dünyayı gerçeğe uygun olarak aktarabildiğine inanan bir özne anlayışıdır. Modern şiirle birlikte bu özgün ve bütünsel özne anlayışı değişmiş, postmodern ve deneysel şiir ile de lirik öznenin konumu tamamen yer değiştirmiştir. Deleuze ve Guattari'nin öznellik anlayışı iki temel modele eleştiri getirmektedir: Descartes'ın kogitosu ve Freud'un psikanalizi. Deleuze ve Guattari, ilk olarak, beden ve akıl arasındaki ikiliği dirimselci (vitalist) yaklaşımlarıyla ortadan kaldırmaya çalışmışlardır. Deleuze ve Guattari ilk olarak Freudçu psikanalizin odaklandığı Ödipal ilişkiler ve bilinçaltının yarattığı özne kavramını sorunsallaştırılmaktadır. Ayrıca aydınlanma felsefesinin odak noktası olan akıl ve akılcılık gibi kavramlarla da eleştirel bir dille irdelenir. Deleuze ve Guattari'ye göre özne, eksiklik (lack) ya da gerçekleştirilememiş bir arzu (desire) ile ilişkilendirilmez, tam tersine akışkanlık (fluidity), çoğulculuk (multiplicity) ve kaçış noktalarıyla (lines of flight) tarif edilir. Göçebenin zaman, uzam ve günlük yaşam algısı bir şizofreniğin tecrübesi gibi kargaşa ve arzunun akışkanlığı ile

şekillenir. Göçebe özne, bastırma (repression) ve eksiklik gibi söylemlerden öte bir içkinlik düzleminin (plane of immanence) ürünüdür.

Rosi Braidotti, *Göçebe Özne* isimli kitabında göçebenin bedenini farklı ancak birbirine bağlı noktalarda yolculuk halinde olan bir beden imgesini göz önünde bulunduran bir eğretileme olarak kullanır. Göçebe özne, oluş süreçleriyle gerçekleşir; bu oluş süreçleri farklı bedenlerin birbiriyle bağlantısı, içkinlik düzlemi üzerindeki hareketleri ve tüm yapısal bağların kopuşuyla gerçekleşir. Deleuze ve Guattari'nin kitaplarında bahsi geçen bu oluş süreçlerinden bazıları şunlardır: kadın-oluş (erkek egemen özne anlayışını sorgulayan), hayvan-oluş (insan merkezciliği eleştiren), molekül-oluş (bedenin bütünselliğini eleştiren) ve algılanamaz-oluş (bütünsel özne kavramını yok eden) (Hickey-Moody and Malins 6). Oluş süreçleri öznenin bağlı olduğu tüm yapıları yok etmeye odaklanmaz, aksine çoğulculuğu sağlayan tüm türlerin bir arada var olmasına olanak sağlar. Bu bağlamda, oluş süreçleri iki önemli kavramla bağlantılıdır: çoğulculuk ve öteki. Göçebe özne, kendisi için çizilmiş sınırları aşmak için arzu duyar, bu nedenledir ki geçtiği uzamlarda hiçbir hak iddia etmeden sadece bu sınırları aşmayı ve hep arada kalmayı (intermezzo) tercih eder. Bu geçişkenlik ve eylem (performance) hali göçebe öznenin kolayca sınıflandırılmasını engeller ve özne için özgürleştirici bir ortam sağlar. Göçebe düşünce kavramının sunduğu varoluşsal durum bir düşünme ve yazma politikasıyla ilişkilidir.

Elizabeth Grosz, *Space, Time and Perversion* (Mekân, Zaman ve Sapkınlık) başlıklı kitabında, beden politikalarıyla ilgili kavramların, uzamsal ve zamansal boyutlarının göz önünde bulundurularak incelenmesi gerektiğini söyler (90). Özne, uzam ve zaman kavramları birbirlerinden bağımsız var olmazlar. Mutlak ve geometrik olarak sabit olan Kartezyen uzam anlayışının aksine, göçebenin kat ettiği uzamlar özne ile etrafındaki nesneler, olaylar ve diğer bedenlerle, uzamlarla ilişkisellik (relationality) çerçevesinde değerlendirilir. Deleuze ve Guattari için toplumsal mekânlar ve devlet felsefesinin işleyişi "pürüzsüz"

(smooth) ve "çizgisel" (striated) uzamlar arasındaki bağ ile anlaşılır. Göçebe uzamlar kimlik politikalarıyla belirlenen sınırların dışına çıktığı için öznenin geçişkenleştiği ve üretkenleştiği uzamlardır. Pürüzsüz uzamlar, sıradüzenin hâkim olduğu katı ve sınırlarla şekillendirilmiş toplum örgütlenmesine bir alternatif sunar. Tam anlamıyla özgürleşmeyi sağlayan uzamlar olmamasına rağmen, pürüzsüz uzamlar devlet felsefesiyle yönetilen toplumlarda kaçış noktaları oluşturur. Çöl göçebelerinin hayatlarını göz önünde bulunduran Deleuze and Guattari, pürüzsüz uzamların duygulanıma, "rüzgâr, gürültü, tantananın ve dokunma duyusuna dayalı" uzamlar olduğunu, çizgili uzamların ise görsel ve optik özelliklerin göz önünde bulundurularak ölçülebilir uzamlar olduğunu söyler. Kentsel mekânlar Deleuze ve Guattari için mükemmel bir çizgiselliktedir; ancak şehirler her zaman kentsel mekân örgütlenmesine meydan okuyacak pürüzsüz uzamlar üretmek için de ideal yerlerdir.

Deleuze ve Guattari, bahsi geçen kavramlarıyla ilgili açıklama yaparken Kafka'dan Beckett'e, Antonin Artaud'dan Proust'a, Herman Melville'den Sacher-Masoch'a kadar yetmiş beşten fazla yazara atıfta bulunmaktadır. Bu nedenle, kuramsal bölümde son olarak Deleuze ve Guattari'nin edebiyat ve sanat eleştirisine yönelik tartışmalarına yer verilmiştir. Bu bağlamda, Deleuze ve Guattari'nin göçebe yazın ve göçebe öznenin edebi eserlerde nasıl çözümlenebileceğine dair fikirleri tartışılmıştır. Deleuze ve Guattari için sanat "duygulanım bloklarından" (bloc of sensations) oluşmaktadır. Herhangi bir sanat üretiminin malzemesi sesten renge veya taşa göre değişebilir ve aynı şekilde edebi eserlerin hammaddesi olan dil de bu "duygulanım bloklarından" oluşur. Deleuze ve Guattari *Felsefe Nedir?* başlıklı kitaplarında, yazarın kelimeleri kullanırken "farklı bir sözdizimi yaratarak, standart dilin kekelemesini, titremesini, ağlamasını ve hatta şarkı söylemesini sağlar: bu yazarın özgün tarzını oluşturur… yazar dili eğer büker, titreşimlerle kontrol eder, lime lime eder" der (176). Bu tarz bir yazın anlayışı hem yazın politikalarını hem de estetik anlayışı değiştiren minör bir edebi (minor literature) anlayış getirir. Giriş

bölümünde de açıklandığı üzere bu çalışma özellikle Peter Reading ve Maggie O'Sullivan'ın şiirlerinde bu tarz göçebe bir yazının nasıl incelenebileceğine odaklanmaktadır.

1946'da Liverpool'da doğan Peter Reading, İngiliz çağdaş şairleri arasındaki en yaratıcı ve aykırı şairlerden biridir. İlginç bir özgeçmişe sahip olan Peter Reading, kısa bir ressamlık tecrübesinden sonra hayatını idame ettirebilmek için, yirmi yıldan uzun bir süre Shropshire'de bir hayvan yemi fabrikasında kantar operatörü olarak çalışmıştır. Bu işçi sınıfındaki geçmişini şiirlerinde kullanmakla birlikte, bilinçli olarak akademik ve edebi çevrelerden uzak kalmayı tercih etmiştir. Şiir yaşamının son dönemlerinde Lannan Vakfı'ndan aldığı ödüller ve maddi destekle mali anlamda daha rahat bir dönem geçirmiştir. 1974 yılında yayınlanan *For the Municipality's Elderly*'den (Kasabanın Yaşlılarına) başlayarak, eserlerinde romansı bir dil kullanarak kahramanlara odaklanır ve İngiltere'nin gücünü kaybetmesine kadar değişik toplumsal konulara değinir. Robert Potts'a göre Reading'in 1970 ve 1980 arasındaki şiir kitapları bireysel karakterler ve trajikomik olaylar içerir ve Reading tıpkı Charles Dickens gibi farklı sosyal olaylar hakkında çoğunlukla hiciv içeren toplumsal yorumlar yapar. 1990'lardan itibaren şiirlerinde daha önce görülmemiş deneysel çalışmalara yer verir. İşte *Perduta Gente* ve *Evagatory* Reading'in şiir çalışmlarının bu aşamalarına denk gelmektedir. Toplumdaki gerileme ve yok oluş Reading'in şiirlerinden hiç eksik olmaz. Reading, "her yerde değişim ve yok oluş görüyorum—en azından İngiltere'de öyle" der. Bu gerileme ve yok oluş temalarıyla birlikte, tabu olarak kabul edilen ve şiirde yeri olmadığı düşünülen birçok konuya Reading'in şiirlerinde rastlamak mümkündür. Peter Reading'in şiirlerindeki başlıca temalar şunlardır: *[Untitled]*'da (Başlıksız, 2001) ölüm; Faunal (2002) ve *-273,15*'te (2005) çevresel yok oluş ve çevre felaketleri; *C*'de (1984) kanser gibi ölümcül hastalıklar; *Ukulele Music*'te (Kitara Müziği, 1985) kentsel şiddet; Perduta Gente'de (Kayıp İnsanlar, 1989) nükleer tehlike ve Çernobil nükleer faciası; *Eschatological*'da (Kıyametbilimsel, 1996) türlerin yok

oluşu ve insan türünün varoluşsal acısı. Bu çeşitli temalar Reading'in eserlerinde farklı şekillerde karşımıza çıkar, farklı bağlamlarda ve biçemlerde okuyucuya yeniden aktarılır. Eleştirmenler Peter Reading'in kullandığı temalar ve biçemsel tercihleri konusunda hemfikir değildir. Isabel Martin, Anthony Thwaite and Sean O'Brian gibi isimler Peter Reading'in şiirlerini överken, birçok eleştirmen de Reading'in şiir zevkini değersiz bulur. Değindiği konular konusunda kötü eleştirilere bazen de hakaretlere maruz kalan Peter Reading, Alan Jenkins'le yaptığı röportajda şiiriyle ilgili eleştirilere şu şekilde karşılık verir: "Sanat şarap gibi sizi uyutsun istiyorsanız bazı sanatçılar kesinlikle size göre değil. Sanat ancak zor şeyleri, başa çıkılamayacak konuları ele aldığında beni cezbedebilmiştir." Bu anlamda, Peter Reading kötümser olduğunu ve insanları sevmediğini açıkça dile getirir; ayrıca korkunç bir insan olduğunu, hiççiliği benimsediğini ve hoşa gitmeyen şeylerin şairi olduğunu açıklıkla ifade eder.

Dördüncü bölümde, Peter Reading'in *Perduta Gente* ve *Evagatory* başlıklı şiir kitaplarında oluş süreçleri, göçebe uzamlar, bu uzamların bedenler-arası (trans-corporeal) bağlantılarla nasıl şekillendiği ve biçemsel deneylere göçebe düşüncesi çerçevesinde odaklanarak incelenmiştir. Reading'in olgunluk dönemine ait bu eserler, onun şairlik hayatının biçemsel anlamda dönüm noktaları olarak değerlendirilebilir. Peter Reading'in şair kimliğine ve şiirlerinin genel özelliklerine değinerek bu eserler iki açıdan ele alınmıştır. Öncelikle, göçebe düşünce kavramı hem tematik hem de biçemsel anlamda kentsel uzamların ve tabiatın yansıtılmasında ortaya çıkmakta ve şiirlerdeki göçebe özneler devlet aygıtlarının çizdiği sınırları ihlal ederek yeniden varoluş alanları yaratmaktadır. Göçebe öznenin kentsel alandaki varoluşu, insan bedeninin dışındaki diğer varlıklar—nesneler, binalar, çöpler, dışkı veya hayvanlar gibi—tarafından sürekli yeniden konumlandırılmakta, akışkan ve değişken bir hal almaktadır. Başka bir deyişle, şiirler, bedenler-arası ilişkiselliği (relationality) ortaya koyan bir özne anlayışı içermekte ve bu öznenin oluşumunda "materyal,

biyo-kültürel ve sembolik güçler" göz önünde bulundurulmaktadır (Braidotti, *Yer Değiştirmeler* 37).

İkinci olarak, Reading'in şiirlerindeki dilin kullanımı, metinsel ve görsel kolajlar ve diğer biçemsel tercihler gibi deneysel süreçler araştırılarak "kekeleyen" bir metnin nasıl ortaya çıktığı incelenmiştir. Deleuze ve Guattari'nin *Bin Plato*'sundaki (*A Thousand Plateaus*) platolar gibi Peter Reading'in şiir kitapları da herhangi bir sayfadan veya bölümden başlanarak okunabilir. Peter Reading'in bilinçli olarak sayfa numarası kullanmayışı da okuyucuya farklı metinler, dil dizgeleri ve metinler arası atıflar konusunda özgürce bağ kurmasına olanak sağlamaktadır. Deleuze ve Guattari, yazarların ancak kendi dillerinde "yabancılaşarak" (foreigner in his own language) kekeleyen bir metin elde edebileceklerini söyler. Kullandığı Latince kökenli kelimeler, yarattığı kelimeler, farklı disiplinlerden ödünç alınıp farklı bağlamlarda kullanılan kelime tercihleri Peter Reading'in eserlerinde dilin minörleşmesine yol açar. Ayrıca, görsel malzemelerle, kolajlarla ve bulunmuş belgeleri karıştırarak şiirlere ait sayfa uzamının ve türün sınırlarının aşılmasını sağlar. Örneğin, Peter Reading *Perduta Gente*'de gazete kupürlerini, emlak ilan sayfalarından alınan bölümleri, Çernobil'le ilgili gazete haberleri ve radyoaktif sızıntıyla ilgili sahte bir belgeyi, eski bir askerin evsizlerle ilgili yazdığı ırkçı bir mektubu ve çeşitli metinlerden alınmış tamamlanmamış düz yazı metinlerini büyük bir titizlikle bir araya getirir. Her bir metin farklı bir sese, farklı bir ifadeye, dil kullanımına ve farklı yazı karakterlerine sahiptir; bu malzemelerin hepsi aynı anda var olurken gerçekliğe hâkim bütünsel bir sesin oluşmasına engel olmaktadır.

Bunların dışında, *Perduta Gente*'de kent merkezinin "kayıp insanları" mülksüzler, evsizler ve ayyaşların aykırı bedenleriyle kent merkezinin "çizilmiş" (striated) uzamlarında nasıl "pürüzsüz" (smooth) uzamlar yarattığı incelenmiştir. Şiirler, evsizlerin işgal ettiği, kartondan sığınaklar, çöp alanları, küçük çadırlar, havalandırma boşlukları, uyku tulumları, göçmen mahalleleri ve park bankları gibi çeşitli uzamlar arasında dolaşmaktadır. Reading, evsizlik ve mülksüzlük

temalarını metinler vasıtasıyla harekete geçirmekte, bununla birlikte dünyayı etkileyen çevre felaketleri, salgın hastalıklar ve kapitalist dünya düzeninin neden olduğu eşitsizliklere dikkat çekmektedir. Mülksüzler, evsizler ve ayyaşlar modern dünyanın göçebe özneleri haline gelmiştir ve bedenleriyle devlet aygıtlarının kontrolü altında tuttuğu toplumsal mekânları tehdit eden "savaş makinalarına" (war machines) dönüşmüşlerdir. Peter Reading aynı mülksüzlük temasını *Evagatory*'de şekil değiştirmiş bir yolculuk temasıyla ortaya koymaktadır. *Perduta Gente*'nin Dantevari cehennemini andıran kent merkezleri *Evagatory*'de yerini sanal bir şekilde katedilen farklı coğrafi noktalara bırakmaktadır. Bu coğrafi uzamlar, "kılavuzsuz, yönsüz, ışıksız" (19. Şiir) bir yolculukta serseri bir mayın gibi savrulan bir yolcunun uğradığı anlık duraklardır. Bu uzamlar üzerindeki seyahat hali metinsel anlamda belli bir "yoğunluk" (intensity) yaratmakta ve geçişlerin yarattığı farklı hız vektörleri metni anlaşılamaz kılmaya kadar götürmektedir (becomings-imperceptible). Göçebe özne bu değişik uzamlardan geçişlerinde yersiz yurtsuzlaşmakta (deterritorialized) ancak bulunduğu uzamdaki bitki örtüsü, hava durumu, hayvanlar, uzama özgü coğrafi özelliklerle bedenler-arası (trans-corporeal) ilişkiler kurarak yeniden mekâna tutunmaya çalışmaktadır (reterritorialized). Bu anlamda özne, sınırları aşarken kendi bedenini, insan dışındaki nesnelerin ve varlıkların varoluşuyla birlikte sürekli bir yapılandırmaya tabi tutmaktadır.

Beşinci bölümde şiirlerine yer verilen Maggie O'Sullivan son otuz yıldır İngiltere'de deneysel şiir çalışmalarıyla ve şiir okumalarıyla bilinen bir şair, sanatçı ve küçük çaplı bir yayıncıdır. Yirmiden fazla eseri olan O'Sullivan, Geraldine Monk ile ortak derlediği Kuzey Amerika ve Birleşik Krallık'ta deneysel şiir yazan kadın şairlerin şiirlerine yer veren antolojisi *Out of Everywhere: Linguistically Innovative Poetry by Women in North America and the U.K.* (Her yerden: Kuzey Amerikalı ve İngiliz Kadın Şairlerden Dilsel Yenilikçi Şiirler, 1996) ile daha tanınır hale gelmiştir. Maggie O'Sullivan'ın şiirleri "kekeleyen" (stuttering) metinlerdir ve şiirleri, genellikle "dışarıdakiler," "alttakiler,"

"ötekiler" ya da metinlerde hâkim dil tarafından sessizleştirilmiş öğelere odaklanmaktadır. O'Sullivan'ın şiir algısı performansa, seslendirmeye ve dilin şiirin nesnesi olması üzerine kuruludur. Sayfa üzerinde acılı bir süreç sonucunda doğan kelimeler ayrıca seslendirilmek üzere üretilmişlerdir. Bu nedenle, Maggie O'Sullivan'a şiirin performansla birlikte üretildiği anın şairi diyebiliriz. Çünkü şiir performansları burada ve şimdi gerçekleşmektedir. Ayrıca, Maggie O'Sullivan, şiirlerinde şiir geleneklerini olduğu gibi kabul etmeyen "ötekiyle" (the other) bağ kurabilen nadir şairlerdendir. Bu anlamda, Bernstein, Maggie O'Sullivan'ı William Blake'den başlayan ve içinde Hugh Macdiarmid, Tom Rawoth, Caroline Bergvall, Linton Kwesi Johnson, Basil Bunting, Christina Rosetti ve Allen Fisher gibi farklı dönemlerde yazan şairlerin bulunduğu bir geleneğin parçası olarak görür. Maggie O'Sullivan'ın eserlerinde farklı etkileri görmek mümkündür. Maggie O'Sullivan, Basil Bunting, Bob Cobbing, Bill Griffiths ve Charles Bernstein gibi deneysel şiir alanında iyi bilinen şairlerden, James Joyce, Samuel Beckett ve Antonin Artaud gibi yazarlardan ve Joseph Beuys ve Kurt Schwitters gibi Alman enstalasyon sanatçılarından esinlendiğini sık sık dile getirir, hatta bazı şiirlerini bu isimlere ithaf eder.

O'Sullivan'ın dilsel ve biçemsel deneyleri, şiirlerinin odak noktasıdır; aynı anda hem bir edebi eser hem de sanat eseri üretme çabasında olduğu görülmektedir. Özellikle, dilin şiirin nesnesi olarak kullanılmasını ön plana çıkaran bu şiirler, dilin kullanımındaki değişiklik ve dildeki öteki yaratma çabasına odaklanarak dilin dönüştürücü gücünü vurgulamaya çalışmaktadır. O'Sullivan'ın sözcüksel deneyleri (lexical experimentation) de göçebe düşünce kavramından etkilenmektedir; çünkü şiirlerde çok farklı terimler, farklı disiplinlerden gelen bilgileri bir araya getirip farklı olasılıklar yaratmaya, dili en küçük bileşenlerine kadar parçalayıp mikro-düzey süreçlerini keşfetmeye ve insan dilini animistik öğelerle ilişkilendirip merkezsizleştirmeye odaklanmaktadır. Bu deneysel çalışmalarla bütüncül lirik özne çözülmekte, şiirin uzamı ise deneysel süreçlerle hareket halinde sunulmaktadır.

Beşinci Bölümde, O'Sullivan'ın *In the House of the Shaman* (Şamanın Evinde)ve *Palace of Reptiles* (Sürüngenler Sarayı) kitaplarında, oluş süreçleri, insanla hayvanlar, diğer canlılar ve nesneler arasındaki bağ incelenerek ve şamanik ayinlerin bu bağı nasıl oluşturduğuna bakılarak çözümlenmiştir. Dilin deneysel bir şekilde kullanımı ve sesi ön plana çıkaran şiir performanslarıyla insan, hayvan, bitkiler arasında "yakınlık alanları" ("zones of proximity") ortaya çıkmaktadır; ayrıca insanın doğa hayatına ve doğayla bağ kuruşunda insan-merkezli yaklaşımını eleştirmektedir. Bu anlamda, *In the House of the Shaman* ve *Palace of Reptiles*'da bütünsel ve mutlak bir öznenin varlığından söz etmek mümkün değildir; aksine, şiirlere "ötekiyle" ve çevresiyle sürekli temas halinde olan ve oluş süreçlerini harekete geçiren, eylem halinde dille birlikte oluşan dinamik bir özne anlayışı hâkimdir. Ortaya çıkan bu göçebe özne anlayışı, Braidotti'nin de bahsettiği üzere, "erkek/beyaz/heteroseksüel/standart bir dil konuşan/varlıklı/şehirli" gibi ayrıcalıklı öznel konumları ters-düz eder ve "ucu açık bir benlik yitimine (de-personalization)" sebep olur. Aynı zamanda, insanın "ötekileri" üzerine kurmaya çalıştığı hâkim dili bertaraf edip, doğanın insan-merkezli bir anlatımla algılanmasına da karşı çıkar. Bu nedenledir ki, O'Sullivan'ın deneyimci projesi, bu egemen söylemlerin temelsizliğine dikkat çekmeye odaklanmıştır. Şiirlerde, doğal mekânlar, görsel, dokunsal, sözel ve koku almaya dayalı tüm duyuların harekete geçirilmesiyle oluşmaktadır. Okuma ve okuma esnasında metni yeniden yazma süreci, başka bir deyişle, performansın oluşma şekli tıpkı metnin içindeki şiddet ve acı içeren hayvanlar dünyasının bir kopyasına dönüşmektedir. Bu esnada şairin ve okuyucunun rolleri eş zamanlı olarak çoğalmakta, metni aynı anda yaratma ve anlamlandırma süreci devam etmektedir.

Şamanizm Maggie O'Sullivan'ın şiirlerinde oluş süreçlerinin ortaya çıkması konusunda bir çerçeve oluşturmaktadır. Dilin dönüştürücü gücünü keşfetmeye çalıştığı şiirlerinde, acı çeken dünyayı bir anlamda şamanik ayinlerle tedavi etmeye çalışmaktadır. Şamanın bedeni genellikle hayvanlar arasından

seçilen bir "yardımcı ruh" tarafından ele geçilir ve bu yardımcı ruh vasıtasıyla şaman özellikle üç kozmik uzam arasında—yeraltı, dünya ve gökyüzü—seyahat eder (Eliade 99). Şamanın transa geçmesiyle gerçekleşen bu seyahat hali, O'Sullivan'ın şiirleri düşünüldüğünde şiirlerdeki hayvan-oluş (becomings-animal) ve öteki-oluş (becomings-other) süreçleri için ışık tutmaktadır. Şiirlerdeki bu oluş süreçleri hayvanları taklit etme ya da hayvanlarla insanın benzerliklerine dikkat çekme olarak ortaya çıkmaz; aksine oluş süreçleri dil ve dilsel deneyler yoluyla etkinleştirilir. Belirtilen uzamlardaki insan dışındaki tüm nesneler, hayvan sesleri ve gürültüleri, atmosferik olaylar bir anlamda insan dilini ele geçirir; dilin insan-merkezli ve betimleme odaklı gücünü bu bağlantılarla daha da zayıflar.

Maggie O'Sullivan'ın kitaplarındaki sayfa alanı (page space), göçebenin takip ettiği bir yol gibi durağı olmayan bir yolculuğa dönüşmektedir. Maggie O'Sullivan, Dell Olsen'le yaptığı söyleşide bu durumu şöyle ifade eder: "Şiirlerim … bir ızrar, vahşet, acı, sessizlik alanıdır: ayrıca, bir kurtuluş, telafi etme ve iyileşme alanıdır. Bir varoluş alanı, bitmeyen bir seyahattir. Sözün, düşün, ayinin, büyünün çoğaldığı kutsal bir alandır." Kapak sayfalarından itibaren, O'Sullivan'ın kitaplarında sanat eserlerinin, müzik notalarının, çizimlerin, insanın 'ötekilerinin' (non-human others) ve diğer şiir dışı malzemelerin dille harmanlandığı bir şölene dönüştüğü görülmektedir. Peter Reading'in şiirlerinde olduğu gibi, Maggie O'Sullivan da dilsel ve biçemsel deneylerle, başka bir deyişle kendine ait tarzlarıyla, kekeleyen metinler oluşturur ve okuyucularına bu "kekelemeyi işitmeleri" ("ear my stutter") konusunda tavsiyede bulunur. O'Sullivan metinsel kekelemeyi çoğunlukla tire (hyphen), uzun tire (dash), taksim işareti (slash) gibi noktalama işaretlerini ve beklenmedik büyük harf kullanımı dilbilgisi kurallarına aykırı bir şekilde kullanarak sağlar. Buna ilaveten, söz dizimini, performansın bir parçası olarak görüp beklenmedik anlarda böler, harekete geçirir, özne ve yüklem arasındaki bağı koparır ya da sadece art arda gelen kelimelerden oluşan anlamsal yapısı bozulmuş söz dizinleri olarak örgütler. Son olarak, hem dilin hem

de öznenin çözülüşünü tamamlanmamış kelimelerle ("sacri," "morrow," "flicted," "inci/acci/incu," "nexions"), neolojizmlerle ("traor","tainy", "Chrustative," "vasish," "twindom," "garjey"), öneklerin etrafa anlamsızca saçılmasıyla ("pro," "UN," "Exo," "equi-"), standart olmayan kısaltmaların kullanılışıyla ("thru," "w/," "&"), kelimeleri birbirine bağlayacak yüklemlerin olmayışıyla ve tekrar eden yazım hatalarıyla ("fraility," "aboreal," "cliven," "caesaran," "caesarian") sağlar. Bu tarz dilsel ve biçemsel tercihler, dili kapalı bir sistem olarak algılamaya karşı çıkmakla birlikte yazın politikalarına da bir eleştiri getirir. Bu nedenle Maggie O'Sullivan, sayfa alanını, hareketi daimi kılan, baskın varoluş koşullarından kaçış noktaları ve titreşimler yaratan, çatışan güçlerin yaratıcı bir savaş ve seyahat alanı olarak görür.

Deleuze ve Guattari'nin göçebe düşünce kavramıyla sunduğu kuramsal çerçeveyle, bu çalışma Reading ve O'Sullivan'ın şiirsel tercihlerini ve biçemsel vurgularını detaylı olarak incelemiştir. Onların şiirlerinde insan merkezli özne ve uzam anlayışını sorgulayan ve dili şiirin nesnesi haline getirerek önceki şiir geleneklerine karşı çıkan bedenler-arası ve göçebe bir estetiğin ön plana çıktığı görülmüştür. Sonuç olarak, Reading ve O'Sullivan'ın şiirlerindeki göçebe öznelerin, kentsel uzamlarda ve tabiatta 'öteki' (insanın dışındaki) nesne ve hayvanlarla devingen bir ilişki içerisinde olduğu görülmektedir. Üstelik bu şairlerin şiirlerindeki sözcüksel deneyler, özgün sözdizimi, neolojizm, görsel malzemelerin kullanımı gibi dilsel ve biçemsel yenilikler de şiirlerinde göçebe düşünce kavramının yüzeye çıktığı noktalar olarak görülmektedir. Şiirler ayrıntılı bir şekilde incelendikten sonra, Peter Reading ve Maggie O'Sullivan'ın şiirlerinin, mevcut şiir geleneklerini sorgulamaya iten bir "savaş makinesi" (war machine) olduğu iddia edilebilir. Bu anlamda, her iki şair de kolaj, büyük harflerin kullanımı, noktalama işaretlerini bilinçli bir şekilde yer değiştirerek, neolojizm, metin içi çizimler gibi yöntemler kullanmaktadır. Bunun yanında, imgeler, çizimler, rastgele derlenmiş belgeler (found documents) gibi söze dayalı olmayan materyaller ve metinler arası atıfların şiirlerin arasına dağıtılmasıyla

hem orijinallik fikri hem de yazarın metinler üzerindeki otoritesi sorgulanmaktadır. Her iki şair de şiirlerinde, tüketime dayalı dünya düzenini ve sebep olduğu çevresel krizi sorgulamakta, insanın dışındaki canlılarla yeniden bir bağ kurmayı hedefleyen yeni bir yazın ve sanat anlayışı benimsemektedir. Bu sorunlara yaklaşımlarında Peter Reading'in şiirlerinde dil tam anlamıyla çözülmezken, Maggie O'Sullivan'ın şiirlerinde dil göndergesel (referential) ve gerçeği betimleme özelliğini kaybetmektedir. Maggie O'Sullivan bilinçli bir şekilde gerçekçi ve erkek-egemen şiir geleneklerine ve düşünce tarzlarına karşı çıkmakta ve Rosi Braidotti'nin *Transpositions*'da (Yerdeğiştirmeler) bahsettiği "dönüştürücü bir etik" (a transformative ethics) anlayışını benimsemektedir. Bu anlayış çerçevesinde, O'Sullivan, şiire, dünyaya, sanata, estetiğe, okuma ve yazma politikalarına dönüştürücü bir bakış açısı kazandırmaya çalışmaktadır.

Peter Reading ve Maggie O'Sullivan, eserlerinde günümüzün sorunları karşısında şiirin işlevinin paradoksal durumuna dikkat çekmektedir. Maggie O'Sullivan, şiirlerinde şamanik tecrübeye yer vererek çağdaş dünyadaki acılarla ve dehşet verici olaylarla başa çıkmak için şiir ve sanat yoluyla tinsel bir şifa arayışı sunmaktadır. Bu bağlamda, O'Sullivan, Hristiyanlık öncesi şamanik ayinlere dönerek iyileşme olanağı ararken, Peter Reading, *Perduta Gente*'de sürekli tekrar ettiği "Yapılacak bir şey yok; hiçbir şey düzeltilemez" dizeleriyle şiirlerinde okurları için hiçbir teselli sunmayacağını açıkça ifade eder. Okuyucuya da müdahil olma şansı veren şiir performanslarıyla O'Sullivan, şiirlerindeki geçiş anlarıyla sanat ve dilin dönüştürücü gücünü olası kılarken, Reading'in şiirleri acıyı ve karamsarlığı artırmakta ve okuyucuyu cehennemin alt katmanlarına hapsetmektedir.

Bu çalışma kapsamında değinilemeyen bazı konular ileride Peter Reading ve Maggie O'Sullivan'ın çalışmalarda kullanılabilir. Örneğin, bu iki şairin eserleri İngiltere dışında yaşayan diğer deneysel şairlerin eserleriyle karşılaştırılıp farklı kültürlerdeki şiirsel deneyselcilik ile kıyaslama yapılabilir. Göçebe düşünce kavramı ve çevreci eleştiri tarzları, Peter Reading'in 2000 yılından sonra yazdığı

şiirlerinde ve Maggie O'Sullivan'ın *Natural History in 3 Incomplete Parts* (3 Eksik Bölümde Doğa Tarihi) ve *all origins are lonely* (tüm kökenler yalnızdır) isimli kitaplarında da rahatlıkla incelenebilir. Son olarak, Maggie O'Sullivan'ın kutsallık ve ayin konusundaki yaklaşımı Kuzey Amerikalı şairler Jerome Rothenberg, Allen Ginsberg ve Charles Bernstein'in şiir yaklaşımlarıyla kıyaslanabilir.

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TEZİN ADI: NOMAD THOUGHT IN PETER READING'S *PERDUTA GENTE* AND *EVAGATORY* AND MAGGIE O'SULLIVAN'S *IN THE HOUSE OF THE SHAMAN* AND *PALACE OF REPTILES*

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