

CHAPTER 6

RESEARCH FINDINGS: LIVED TEMPORALITIES AND THE RECOGNITION OF THE ACTUAL OTHER

The research project presented in this book has used Deleuze's reading of duration for an empirical and theoretical exploration of lived temporalities. According to Deleuze, duration is a virtual multiplicity. A virtual multiplicity, as the introductory chapter explained, is characterised through its mode of co-existence in opposition to an actual multiplicity. In a virtual multiplicity, the chapter explained, the many co-exist in an open form and everything is open for unpredictable impact by context-conditions. There is constant change and there is constant movement. The chapter argued that Deleuze favoured the chance-driven virtual co-existence of the many over the ordered co-existence of the many in the actual multiplicity, as the virtual multiplicity implies a production of newness. When the virtual multiplicity gets divided, the chapter showed, everything changes in kind. Every division produces a qualitative change of the whole, and the virtual multiplicity constantly divides itself in movements of actualisation. In the actual, by contrast, division just produces a different quantity of the same and things remain as they have been. However, the chapter showed that there is always both; there is the virtual where time is a feeling of constant change and there is the actual where there are discrete, stable representations.

This chapter will first assess the contribution of each of the four empirical chapters to an exploration of lived temporalities, understood as virtual multiplicity. Then, a limit of the definition of lived time as virtual multiplicity will be addressed: it does not include actual others. The Guatemalan home in this book provided a setting where the virtual was naturally balanced by actual others. To study vitalism in the, relatively, premodern settings that I selected in Guatemala in order to understand the postmodern immanence within contemporary global capitalism, implies to substitute the actual conditions of the Guatemalan home with mental concepts. Taking into consideration the work of Jessica Benjamin, in an abstraction of the findings of this book, a per-

spective shall be given for how the actual can be lived in the mode of a virtual multiplicity in the inter-relationality between actual people. Such a perspective emerged in the course of this book through studying the postmodern reading of duration that Deleuze extracted from Bergson in an empirical setting that provided dominantly premodern conditions of the kind that Bergson seems to suggest to retrieve, and then through reading these empirical findings against the backdrop of global capitalist culture (which would be again a postmodern scenario).

6.1 LIVED TEMPORALITIES: TIME AS VIRTUAL MULTIPLICITY

In the chapter on the traditional home, duration has been explored as a realm of the given. The chapter derived a notion of 'passive time' as virtual multiplicity from Bergson for whom active time passes, but past time exists in all its weight. For Bergson, the chapter argued, active time is compressed into discrete units of action and thus the signs of which time consists remain silent. The more passive time is, by contrast, the more signs unfold their unpredictable power of virtual communication. Thus, if a present moment gets directly taken up by action, it remains the same as it has been before. If a present moment gets repeated by passive time, by contrast, it becomes something different. The chapter then argued in sympathy with Deleuze that the repetition of a present moment in passive time makes out of an active present a living present. The living present is a present that is alive. It is open for constant change and the production of newness. In the living present, passive time unfolds in the mode of a virtual multiplicity, open-ended and creative.

In the chapter on the Guatemalan market, duration has turned actual. It is no longer a plane of the given that is below the actual, but the mode of the actual itself. Using the terminology of Deleuze and Guattari in the chapter, the actual that has turned virtual has been described as a plane of immanence. For the self, the chapter suggested, an actual that has turned virtual appears like chaos. Everything is unpredictable, on one level, without distinctions and in constant chance movement. The chapter explored passivity as a mode of how the self can become part of the virtual multiplicity of duration: In territorialisation, the self lets itself be passively attracted by affective impulses from the given actual environment. Through the passive selection of images, the self distances itself from the formlessness and unpredictability of the actual given as it builds up its own territories. Because the passive self selects only those images from the actual given that

suit its present refrain (its present interest), and because the self selects only as much as it feels good to connect to at any given moment, territorialisation is emancipation.

In the chapter on the unpleasant, duration has been explored as a plane of the given on which it is possible to encounter the unpleasant in an active, rather than in a reactive way. In the realm of the actual – where there are representations and where time is an actual multiplicity consisting of discrete entities, the chapter argued in sympathy with Deleuze, the self would fence off from the unpleasant. The only way to cope with the unpleasant is to increase the actual distance from the unpleasant. In the realm of lived time, where time is a *virtual* multiplicity, by contrast, the unpleasant consists of active life forces. The self, through its will to power, is also an active life force. The will to power affirms the unpleasant as an active force in the tension to its own felt activity, and there emerges a field of tension in which everything that was unconsciously affirmed as taking part in a given feeling of displeasure adds further nuances to the overall outcome. In the field of tension in-between the will, the unpleasant and other relevant context-conditions, active life forces react with each other. The reaction creates a movement of internal differentiation – the creative production of newness characteristic of lived time as virtual multiplicity.

In the chapter on Guatemalan buses, duration is the realm where the event takes place. While becoming-active in relation to the unpleasant focuses on the self, the event in the reading employed in the bus-chapter focuses on the other. In order to read the event as a dynamic that takes place in-between self and other, the chapter has brought together the Deleuzian event with the work of Jessica Benjamin. Then, the event becomes a dynamic in which a virtual point gets taken up from an actual other if a virtual point from within an actual self has set itself into resonance to it. Both points extend themselves into virtual series through attracting further signs from within the realm of lived time. In-between the virtual series of self and other, through a co-existence of resonance and differentiation, there emerges a field of tension from where the surface-series of sense can take off. The bringing together of Deleuze and Jessica Benjamin highlights a weakness in the Deleuzian event. In Deleuze, the point-line-surface dynamic of the event takes place exclusively in the virtual, in the realm of lived time. The actual prohibits such a dynamic, because the actual in Deleuze works only – through representation – as quantitative multiplicity. The opposition between a virtual that is organised as qualitative multiplicity and an actual that is organised as quantitative multiplicity means in Deleuze that any impact by the actual on the event is rejected as capturing the free unfolding of dynamics within the virtual. The actual is there, but it has no positive function. It is

only the opposite of duration, where everything takes place that interests Deleuze.

6.2 THE RECOGNITION OF THE ACTUAL OTHER

6.2.1 The Desire for Omnipotence and the Desire for Mutual Recognition

In the remainder of this chapter, I will extend the Deleuzian concept of the virtual multiplicity through the work of Jessica Benjamin in a way that integrates the recognition of the actual. This step will, I believe, open up the positive potential that this book has found – inspired by Deleuze – in lived time towards an ethical perspective for *actual* human and non-human co-existence in this global capitalist world.

In Deleuze, as the previous chapter has shown, the event escapes the logic of the actual (representation) by relating to the actual other as virtual other only. This is the liberating moment of the Deleuzian event: it starts in the actual, but the actual is made to act in the logic of the virtual (affection). The actual in the event does not capture through representation, rather it affects through sensation.¹ In J. Benjamin's reading of Winnicott, one could say, the actual is as well a world of active forces that unfold as qualitative multiplicity. The actual is encountered through affection. As in Deleuze, in Jessica Benjamin the challenge is to escape the capture of what one might call pre-given, ready-made representations through a leap into the realm of affect. Jessica Benjamin's work shows, however, why relating to the other as virtual other is not enough: the virtual other is just an extension of the self.² J. Benjamin points out that the self in what she calls the 'bonds of love' relates to the other through identification.

The fourth and fifth chapters of this book have shown that in affection, the self contracts something from the other that responds to its own desires or fears. At the beginning of every affect, the self, by contracting a virtual other relates to itself in the other. Thus, in the Deleuzian event, there is – as in Benjaminian identification – an ini-

1 See J. Benjamin 1988, pp. 4-5 & 219-201. See also J. Benjamin 2004: 'Beyond Doer and Done To: An Intersubjective View of Thirdness', pp. 9-11.

2 The chapter on the unpleasant has introduced the Deleuzian concept of the little ego (see above, introduction to chapter 4). When Deleuze writes that the virtual object that gets contracted from the actual other is an ego (Deleuze 1968a, p. 97), he expresses something similar as when Jessica Benjamin writes that the self relates to the other (J. Benjamin 1988, p. 37).

tial moment of oneness between something from the self and something from the other. The moment of oneness gets broken up into series that are by definition different from each other. The previous chapter has described this process as follows: a virtual point is drawn from the actual world and extends itself into a virtual series by attracting further signs. A different series establishes itself in resonance to the first series. In Deleuze, the series are different from each other, because within the virtual, everything is singular. There will never be two signs that attract exactly the same further signs into any series. The balance of tension between resonance and difference that is the basis for the creative production of newness in a virtual multiplicity, is in Deleuze specific to the virtual and opposed to the actual. When taking into account the work of Jessica Benjamin, by contrast, the affirmation of difference in the self-organisation of time in the event would be related to the affirmation of the other as actual other. Jessica Benjamin's work seems to suggest that as long as the self relates to the other as virtual reality only, it does not relate to the other as different from itself. The actual in Benjamin is not only that what captures through representation but also that which lies beyond the lived time of the self.³

In Bergson, as the first chapter of this book has introduced, encountering the other through lived time was linked to physically staying with the other over the entire period of the unfolding of the process. In the Deleuzian translation of Bergsonian dynamics into the fleetingness and instantaneity of an actual that has turned virtual, the first chapter went on to argue, the encounter with the other is limited to the instantaneity of setting an intensive impulse. The process of differentiation that generates sense in the event, unfolds itself without being forced to stay with the other, either physically or mentally. In Jessica Benjamin, however, to stay with the virtual other only for the short time that an affect takes to start off, and then to let the intensive impulse unfold itself independently from the actual other, is depicted as 'projective identification'.⁴ A projective identification perceives the actual other in terms of the initial identification with the other and splits off the rest. In sympathy with the work of Jessica Benjamin, the crucial question concerning the Deleuzian event would be whether the series of the other is the series of a virtual other or the series of an actual other. The series of a virtual other that emerges through projective identification would be generated from signs from within the virtual time of the self. The series of the actual other, by contrast, would be generated from signs that pose a limit to the virtual time of the self.

3 See J. Benjamin 1988, chapter 1, p. 38.

4 See J. Benjamin 2004, pp. 4, 19. Benjamin here refers to Melanie Klein for whom identification with the other is projective identification'.

The challenge in J. Benjamin is to encounter the other through the virtual as actual other, rather than as a projection of the own will.

Perceiving the other as actual other is called 'recognition' in Jessica Benjamin.⁵ In Deleuze, recognition is one with representation and therefore it is rejected.⁶ Both belong to the realm of the actual. In Jessica Benjamin, the challenge to the recognition of the other as actual other is the self's unconscious desire for setting the own will as absolute⁷ (J. Benjamin: 'the desire for omnipotence'). The desire for omnipotence does not necessarily exist in the adult human being. However, it is likely to occur, due to conflicting experiences in encounters with actual others in the past, most notably in those early stages of childhood, when the human being confronts for the first time the limitation of its own virtual by the actual other. Whereas in Deleuze, the free unfolding of the logic of the unconscious presents itself only from its creative side, Jessica Benjamin enables one to question the unlimited unfolding of the virtual: she points out that the disregard of actual limits prevents the possibility of inter-relationality with actual others.⁸ The experience of inter-relationality can gradually substitute the experience of omnipotence through the gradual recognition of the 'No' of the will of the other to an absorption into the virtuality of the self⁹ (J. Benjamin: 'the destruction of the other'). The recognition of the other as actual other is the outcome of a process of letting oneself be affected by the other, not only in those aspects where it is similar to the will of the self, but also where it stays in contrast to the will of the self. The gradual affirmation of the experience that the other, besides its engagement with the self, has also an existence independent from the will of the self, opens the way for what J. Benjamin calls 'object usage'. Translated into Deleuzian terms, object-usage would be a virtual encounter with an actual other. In Jessica Benjamin, inter-relationality with actual others is not a limitation, but something that comes with its own particular pleasures. Object-usage is possible where the self affirms the experience of inter-relationality with actual others as more desirable than the omnipotence of the own virtual.

"When the subject fails to make the transition from 'relating' to 'using,' it means that he has not been able to place the object outside himself, to distinguish it from his mental experience of omnipotent control. He can only 'use' the object when he perceives it "as an external phenomenon, not as a projective entity," when he recognizes it "*as an entity in its own right.*"¹⁰

5 See J. Benjamin 1988, p. 12. See also *ibid*, pp. 22-23.

6 See Deleuze 1968a, chapter 3.

7 See J. Benjamin 1988, pp. 27-36.

8 See *ibid*, pp. 51-4 & 62-68.

9 See *ibid*, pp. 36-42.

10 *Ibid*, p. 37.

The concept ‘object usage’ in the work of Jessica Benjamin goes back to the work of object-relation theorist Donald W. Winnicott.¹¹ Jessica Benjamin goes beyond Winnicott in distinguishing between the other as object and the other as subject.¹² The will of the other subject is not only a force that lies outside one’s own will. Rather, the will of another subject is also a force that can be affected by one’s actions. The term ‘subject’ in Benjamin refers to the self of the actual other. Action acts on others through its virtual effects in ways that are unpredictable to the self. Which affective impulse will be contracted by the other, depends on dynamics within virtual worlds that lie outside the perceptive capacities of the self. If, as in Deleuze, the event would take place purely in the logic of the virtual, it would have no direct impact on actual others. The omnipotence of the own virtual would remain unrestricted. In sympathy with the work of Jessica Benjamin, by contrast, taking into account the virtual effects that one’s actualisations produce in actual others, becomes a further point to demonstrate how the logic of the actual other enters the logic of the virtual. Why should it matter how the actual other is affected by the self’s action? In Deleuze, an unconscious element establishes virtual communication between the points and the series in an event.¹³ This unconscious element remains independent from the desire for recognition, because in Deleuze the event is pre-individual. If, however, the event is read as a virtual dynamic that takes place in-between an actual self and an actual other, the desire for recognition is part of the unconscious element that establishes communication. Then, in every encounter between self and other, a desire for mutual recognition is part of the will of the self. Jessica Benjamin emphasises that only through feeling one’s actions recognised by another self, can one recognise oneself as active and therefore alive.¹⁴ Inter-relationality in sympathy with Jessica Benjamin begins where the desire for mutual recognition sets a counterpoint to the desire for omnipotence, and thus the recognition of the actual other is allowed to limit the omnipotence of the own virtual.

“[...] the process of recognition, [...], always includes this paradoxical mixture of otherness and togetherness: You belong to me, yet you are not (any longer) part of me. The joy I take in your existence must include *both* my connection to you *and* your independent existence – I recognize that you are real.”¹⁵

11 See Winnicott 1971, chapter 6.

12 See *ibid*, pp. 42-50.

13 See introduction to chapter 5.

14 See J. Benjamin 1988, p. 15.

15 See *ibid*.

The existence of a desire for omnipotence means that the Deleuzian plane of immanence as an actual that has turned virtual is not only a state of the given, but also a disposition of the human mind. There is a human unconscious desire for leaving everything in a state of immanence and for orientating oneself only according to the logic of the own virtual, the logic of spontaneous affection. In a global capitalist culture in which the actual has turned virtual, the desire for omnipotence is an unconscious *desire* for immanence inherent to the human being. The desire for immanence reflects an actual environment that has turned into a plane of immanence itself. While in the premodern setting of the Guatemalan home the actual conditions of daily subsistence posed a limit to the desire for immanence, in a global capitalist culture, such actual limits have disappeared. Nevertheless, as a state of the mind, the desire for immanence receives its natural balance through another desire – the desire for mutual recognition, which is equally specific to the human being.¹⁶

6.2.2 The Desire for Mutual Recognition and the Desire for a Holding Space

How can the desire for mutual recognition be actualised? How can it be lived? Space, the logic of the actual in Deleuze, enters in the work of Jessica Benjamin the logic of the virtual as ‘desire for a holding space’¹⁷. To feel hold means to feel trust into both the presence of others (resonance) and into the non-obtrusiveness of others (positive distance). The concept of holding in the work of Jessica Benjamin goes back to the concept of the ‘holding environment’ in Winnicott.¹⁸ Winnicott highlighted with the concept of the holding environment that it depends not only on genetic dispositions whether a child develops a creative, productive and joyful relation to the world. Rather, actual social conditions are crucial as well. The holding environment provides the balance between trust in the actual other and freedom from the actual other that is necessary, according to Winnicott, for being with oneself.

“Winnicott frequently described the relationship between self and other in spatial metaphors: the space that holds us and the space in which we create. Inter-subjective space, if we translate into Winnicott’s terms, begins with the holding environment between mother and baby and expands into the transitional area, the child’s area of play, creativity, and fantasy. The transitional space is suffused with the mother’s protection and one’s own

16 See *ibid*, p. 224.

17 See *ibid*, pp. 123-32.

18 See Winnicott 1971, chapters 1, 4, 5.

freedom to imagine, discover, and create. [...] this transitional space [...] permits the important experience of being and playing alone in the unobtrusiveness but reassuring presence of the other. In the relaxation of this space it is possible to know one's impulses (drives) as coming from within, to know them as one's own desire."¹⁹

In Bergson and Deleuze, the leap into the virtual is the way for the self to leave the logic of the actual behind. Jessica Benjamin's reading of Winnicott suggests that being with oneself is a pre-condition for the leap into the realm of feeling that in Deleuze is the virtual.²⁰ However, being with oneself in Benjamin's reading of Winnicott is explicitly not an expression of a world without actual others, as is the virtual in Deleuze. Rather, the leap into the virtual is expression of feeling that there exists a holding space in inter-relationality with actual others. Jessica Benjamin emphasises that desire has two moments.²¹ First, there is the desire for feeling oneself held by a holding space (security) and then second there is a fascination with the world (affection). And only if the desire for feeling held is satisfied can the curiosity for contact with the world develop.

In the research setting of the traditional Guatemalan home in the second and fourth chapter of this book, the desire for feeling held was naturally satisfied by the daily tasks of subsistence. Therefore, the orientation by the realm of lived temporalities could be read with Deleuze as affection by the world only. When the orientation by lived temporalities becomes a perspective for a joyful and meaningful existence within global capitalism in which the actual has turned virtual and everything is principally in a general state of immanence, by contrast, there will be only a holding space if the self explicitly affirms the desire for feeling held as a pre-condition for attraction by the world. While in the premodern scenario of traditional subsistence presented in this book, the holding-space was given through the dependence on actual others, with Jessica Benjamin it becomes a question of daring to affirm the desire for mutual recognition as a desire for a holding space against the existence of a desire for omnipotence. Even if global capitalism is defined with Lash as an actual where any kind of spatial distinction is likely to have been dissolved sooner or later into a general state of absolute immanence, on the level of lived time, the human desire for mutual recognition can still displace the immanent given through a desire for a holding space with actual others.

19 J. Benjamin 1988, pp. 126-7.

20 See *ibid*, p. 42.

21 *Ibid*.

6.2.3 The Desire for a Holding Space and Becoming-Active

In Winnicott, the self depends on the holding environment provided by the other.²² On the same theoretical ground that Guattari used to formulate his account of territorialisation,²³ Jessica Benjamin, by contrast, emphasises that even very small children also hold themselves, through letting themselves be attracted by some aspects of a given environment and not by others.²⁴ Although a self can only choose what to connect to from what the actual environment provides, the emphasis on the difference between a given environment and a holding space emphasises the self's agency. The question of feeling held then becomes a question of holding oneself.²⁵ In sympathy with the work of Jessica Benjamin, the desire for holding oneself becomes part of the will for life. Deleuzian vitalism has been introduced in the fourth chapter of this book as 'becoming-active'. In Deleuze, becoming-active refers to the relation of a singular self to its given environment. The self becomes active in that its will for power lets itself be affected by selected intensities from a given environment. At stake is the individuation of a self in relation to its environment. In Deleuze, the condition for the will to power to unfold is affection by the world. In the tension to the work of Jessica Benjamin, the Deleuzian becoming-active affirms only the second aspect of desire. In Jessica Benjamin, by contrast, becoming-active²⁶ also entails the affirmation of a desire for a holding space, the first aspect of desire. The holding space is affirmed as a pre-condition for one's own joyful encounter with the world. Then, the will for life expresses itself not just as a will for the own individuation, but also as a will for relations of mutual recognition with other human beings. Where the second aspect of desire, affection, relates to the way the virtual part of the self, or the Id, relates to the world, the first aspect of desire relates to the way the actual part of the self, or the Ego, relates to the world. Becoming-active in Jessica Benjamin thus entails both a virtual and an actual dimension.

In relation to the material presented in this book, for example, the fourth chapter has shown that becoming-active in Deleuze depends on the self's freedom to feel 'No' towards the other. Through the perception of the given as an active force in co-existence with the perception of the own unpleasure towards this given as active force, a field of tension emerges that sets free an active movement of differentiation, the creative production of newness that in Deleuze is characteristic of

22 See Winnicott 1971, for example p.11.

23 The notion of the emergent self by child-researcher Daniel Stern, see above, chapter 3.

24 See J. Benjamin 1988, pp. 25-27.

25 See *ibid*, pp. 123-32.

26 See *ibid*, chapter 4.

time as virtual multiplicity. The field of tension that sets free an active movement of differentiation emerges through the differentiation of the will of a self from a given environment. By contrast, in sympathy with the work of Jessica Benjamin, the emphasis on the dynamic of becoming-active would be an implicit ‘Yes’ towards the other:²⁷ the field of tension that sets free the movement of differentiation emerges through holding in the mind the tension between the affirmed activity of the will of the other and the affirmed activity of the will of the self as different from this. The way to cope with conflict, with a perceived feeling of unpleasure towards the given, is related to the degree that a self achieves to affirm the two aspects of desire. While the Deleuzian reading of the Nietzschean active forgetting that has been introduced in chapter four of this book is a way to encounter the actual unpleasant (the perceived ‘No’ towards the other) according to the virtual logic of sensation only, the ability *to hold* the activity of the other despite its being in conflict with the own will *combines* the sensational logic of the virtual *and* the representational logic of the actual. In the inter-relational approach to ‘becoming-active’, any momentary ‘No’ towards the other on the virtual level of affect, goes together with a deeper and more fundamental continuous feeling of ‘Yes’ towards the ‘other’ on the actual level of holding.²⁸ Such a way to cope with conflict is possible if the actual desire for feeling held can be recognised even in moments of frustration and unpleasure towards the other. The desire for feeling held can make one internally stay with the other despite a perceived unpleasure. Then, the unpleasant can generate an active movement of differentiation.

The Deleuzian event, as it has been introduced in chapter five of this book, is expression of the attempt to do without holding. Liberation from the actual is, in Deleuze’s account, the encounter with the other in the realm of affect without letting the surface of sense that the event generates be restricted by the representation of the other. The Benjaminean holding-space, by contrast, can affirm the desire for holding, because the holding of the other is not perceived as a danger to the own singular activity.²⁹ Everyone interacting can, if necessary, set their ‘No’ as absolute against the ‘Yes’, and thereby break-up any inter-relational space. Mutual recognition rests on the awareness that both self and others are principally always able to go away. More fundamental than being together, is the active singularity of each of those interacting. Active singularity is the basis of inter-relationality, and in this sense the holding space is a mediating sphere between actual self and actual other that allows both self and other to actively and singu-

27 See J. Benjamin 2004, p. 7.

28 See J. Benjamin 1988, pp. 36-42.

29 See *ibid*, pp. 169-76.

larly affirm what they give or take into and from this field, rather than just reacting to what the other does to one.³⁰ I give through my action something into the space in-between. You can take it up from there if you want, but you don't have to. In the same way, I can take up what you have given into the space between us, or I can leave it there. What we both experienced together has taken place in that common space in-between us. From there, I can let myself be affected by it afterwards, and you can do so according to your own singular ways and according to your own singular time.

Jessica Benjamin is concerned with showing the possibility for becoming-active in long-term stable relations, reminiscent of the conditions prevailing in the traditional home that has been the setting for the research in chapter two and four of this book. In a translation of the dynamics of becoming-active into a context of global capitalism's plane of immanence, where subjects and objects are characterised first of all by constant mobility, by contrast, to affirm the desire for a holding space could give one the trust that one will be able to build-up a sufficiently comfortable holding space within any given environment whatsoever. This would be reminiscent of the account of the event given in chapter five of this book, where the feeling of inner balance gets built-up among ever new actual others. However, where the event in chapter five is about inter-relationality with actual others in momentary surface encounters, the holding space in J. Benjamin gives one the feeling of being held in the inter-relationality with actual others in a much more existential way.

6.2.4 'Becoming-Active' and the Circumvention of Becoming-Reactive

In Deleuze's account of the event, the desire for mutual recognition with an actual other and the desire for virtual holding spaces in inter-relationality with the actual world remain absent. This is understandable when taking into account that in Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche, becoming-reactive stands for passive expectations towards security, care and structure provided by the other. This, in sympathy with the work of Jessica Benjamin, ignores the other due to a fear of submission under the perceived omnipotence of the force of the other.³¹ In an inter-relational perspective, in sympathy with the work of Jessica Benjamin, however, the Deleuzian Nietzschean becoming-active, where the actual other is ignored altogether and the actual is kept in a virtual state of immanence, would be a form of becoming-reactive itself. Both the submission under the will of actual others and the ignorance of the

30 See J. Benjamin 2004, pp. 3-5, 11.

31 See *ibid*, chapter 4.

will of actual others, in sympathy with the work of Jessica Benjamin, would be expressions of an unconscious desire for omnipotence. Jessica Benjamin's work allows for an inter-relational definition of becoming-reactive. Any encounter in which there are only the self and the other will end in domination or submission, and become reactive. The work of Jessica Benjamin offers a perspective for the circumvention of becoming-reactive. She emphasises that the leap into passive time has to be a 'surrender' to an actual theme that mediates between self and other and not a 'submission' to the other.³²

The organising principle in the Deleuzian theory of the event is an unconscious element. This element establishes virtual communication between the series, which in chapter five of this book have been called the series of self and other. The unconscious element is the kernel for both resonance and differentiation between the series. It is what brings the series together, but in each series this shared element of resonance unfolds itself in a different way. The unconscious element establishes a link between the actual self and the actual other, but because the dynamic takes place solely within the virtual, it remains within the subjective world of a singular self. An actual self perceives a moment of resonance in-between self and other, but although the actual other will feel there is some kind of resonance, it is uncertain how the actual other unfolds this element or whether it lets itself be affected by this element at all. The dynamic of the Deleuzian event remains within the virtuality of the subjective experience of a singular self. The work of Jessica Benjamin enables us to highlight besides the unconscious element also the existence of an actual element that establishes communication in an encounter.³³ Similar to the unconscious element, the actual element contains the moment of resonance that brings self and other together, but at the same time it contains differentiation, since both self and other will relate from their respective backgrounds to this element. Both self and other let the actual element unfold within their own, subjective virtual worlds. Whereas in Deleuze, the forces of life within the virtual world of the will to power can co-exist as active due to ontological givenness, in the work of Jessica Benjamin the will of self and other can relate to each other as active forces within the virtual, if there is an actual element that can be shared by both and to which both actual self and actual other can actively relate in their respective ways. In contrast to the virtual element that establishes communication, the actual element can be consciously impacted. If the actual theme that emerges in an open-ended encounter

32 J. Benjamin 2004, p. 3.

33 See *ibid.*, p. 2. J. Benjamin speaks of a 'third'. The 'third' is something beyond both self and other. This definition makes the third compatible with what in the context of the discussion of the Deleuzian event in the introduction to the fifth chapter of this book would be the actual other.

leaves only space for the self *or* the other, then from an inter-relational perspective the encounter has been reactive. Although the self in Benjamin thus receives a certain agency in determining the actual theme, in the end, this theme emerges through passive resonance. It is the actual outcome of the virtual play of forces in-between a self and an other. The actual theme, however, also allows for focused encounters between actual self and actual other. Then, the actual theme is pre-given and as such structures the encounter as something to which both self and other relate with their different virtualities, but which also exists outside the virtual worlds of both.

“Once we have deeply accepted our own contribution – and its inevitability – the fact of two-way participation becomes a vivid experience, something we can understand and use to feel less helpless and more effective. In this sense, we surrender to the principle of reciprocal influence in interaction, which makes possible both responsible action and freely given recognition. This action is what allows the outside, different other to come into view. (Winnicott 1971) It opens the space of thirdness, enabling us to negotiate differences and to connect.”³⁴

6.2.5 The Circumvention of Becoming-Reactive and Responsibility

If the self affirms the desire for mutual recognition and feels its ability to actively impact the virtual space in-between self and other, responsibility becomes possible. In Deleuze, responsibility gets rejected.³⁵ In the context of his argument, responsibility belongs to the logic of the actual. The actual works in a mode of representation, and thus in a mode of quantitative multiplicity. It captures the free unfolding of the event. Moreover, in a global capitalist culture that, according to Lash, is characterised by the disappearance of the actual into the virtual, the basis for responsibility then disappears as well. In the approach of Jessica Benjamin, by contrast, responsibility has to do with both the virtual and the actual. In Jessica Benjamin, a reactive action is one that feels like being driven by a perceived virtual impulse only. An active action, by contrast, is one in which the impulse from the virtual is taken up with the conscious affirmation, ‘Yes, this is what I want to do now. This is my response to the perceived impulse.’ In an active action, the self is able to hold itself. Therefore it can encounter the perceived impulse as other. In an active action, virtual and actual combine. Responsibility according to J. Benjamin refers to the feeling to be able to claim authorship for the potential effect of what one sets

³⁴ Ibid, p. 5.

³⁵ See Deleuze 1969, p. 60.

into the virtual space in-between actual self and actual other. Responsibility in J. Benjamin is an achievement that will not always be reached. There are moments when one feels a victim of virtual impulses. Then, however, any action taken will be a reactive action. Responsibility in an inter-relational perspective implies a care for structures that people who are beyond any significant relation to one's virtuality have built up themselves. It is about holding the encounter with any given other in a balance where oneself and others are still able to hold themselves.

"[...] the sense of authorship is dependent upon having an inside (holding oneself); without it, desire becomes depersonalized, mere drive. One is "driven," not responsive to the other or to oneself. The ability to hold oneself gives to every act its authority, its purposefulness in regard to the other, its authenticity for the self."³⁶

Responsibility, in sympathy with the work of Jessica Benjamin, becomes an ethical demand.³⁷ Deleuze had shown in his reading of Nietzsche how a consciously set ethical principle could impact the unconscious dynamics in the event at the moment of selecting intensities from their unbound state in the virtual into a bound state in action. The ethical principle linked the virtual and the actual, the unconscious and the conscious. The ethical principle in Deleuze's Nietzsche was to 'live the present in a way that there is so much joy that it would be okay if this very moment would repeat itself eternally'.³⁸ In a Benjaminian inter-relational perspective, this ethical principle would have to also entail care for the holding space in-between self and actual human and non-human others. Whereas in Bergson the encounter with the other as actual other seemed to be a natural fact, and in Deleuze the encounter with the actual other is explicitly rejected, in Jessica Benjamin the encounter with the actual other becomes an achievement that the self, due to past experiences and resulting unconscious desires for omnipotence, often has good reason to avoid. In sympathy with Jessica Benjamin, however, the affirmed desire for an existentially relevant encounter with the actual other can become a starting point for making the limit of the human for adapting to the time of global

36 Jessica Benjamin 1988, p. 128.

37 See J. Benjamin 2004, pp. 14-22, esp. p. 15. Jessica Benjamin writes about the 'moral' dimension of inter-relationality. However, she introduces the term in opposition to abstract values and emphasizes that the basis of any inter-relationality has to be the affective encounter with the 'other'. I would prefer, as well due to its reminiscence with the Nietzschean ethical dimension of the eternal return, prefer the term 'ethical' for what Benjamin describes under the term 'moral'.

38 See introduction to chapter 4 of this book.

capitalism productive. Through affirming its desire for holding spaces, for trust and recognition in inter-relationality with actual others, the human can inscribe itself with its particular temporalities and desires into the new given and thereby displace it.

6.3 CONCLUSION

An awareness of the dynamics that occur in the realm of time as qualitative multiplicity, the realm of lived time, becomes crucial when social structures dissolve into a state of immanence. When everything is open and in constant movement, the structuring of one's time becomes a singular and personal achievement. The recognition of passivity as a way to leap into the realm of lived time and of orientation by one's own will as a means to orientate oneself in the realm of lived time, and the recognition of the will of the other as actual other that allows one to maintain a balance between the virtual and the actual, can become techniques to encounter the immanence of the given. Then, the creativity and productivity of encounters in the realm of lived time can make living without pre-given external structures possible and enjoyable. The less structures there are, the more an acquaintance with the realm of lived time becomes crucial.

This book shall help people to learn to live with immanence, both at the margins and in the centres of global capitalism.