RETURNING TO
REVOLUTION

Deleuze, Guattari and Zapatismo

Thomas Nail

Returning to Revolution

Plateaus – New Directions in Deleuze Studies

'It's not a matter of bringing all sorts of things together under a single concept but rather of relating each concept to variables that explain its mutations.'
Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations*

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For the revolution under way

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Acknowledgements

A Note on the Text

In-text citations for all works by Gilles Deleuze (including those co-authored with Félix Guattari and Claire Parnet) are listed by their date of English translation. Their page numbers, however, are given first according to the page number(s) of the original French text and then followed by the page number(s) of the translated English text. All other in-text citations are to the extant translations, where such translations exist.

Preface

The year 2011 was one of incredible, worldwide revolutionary activity. Shortly after the completion of this book the largest global occupation movement in history crystallised in October 2011. This occupation movement is the practical and theoretical heir to the political strategies developed by Deleuze, Guattari and the Zapatistas as articulated in the chapters of this book. Inspired by the Arab Spring, the occupations in Wisconsin, the riots against austerity measures in Europe and the UK, and the occupations by the Spanish *indignados* and the Greeks at Syntagma Square, the Occupy movement has spread to over 2,556 cities across eighty-two countries, and over 600 communities in the United States (Occupy Together 2011). The Occupy movement is based on the popular outrage at the growing disparity of wealth and power between individuals and corporations, as well as the failure of political representatives to resolve the problems of increasing unemployment, housing foreclosures, paralysing student debt and the aggressive defunding of social services. But, as some theorists have correctly remarked, the Occupy movement is demonstrably more than a mere protest against greedy bankers and corrupt politicians: it is a sustained movement that is responding to the problems of global capitalism and the institution of political representation itself (Hardt and Negri 2011; Žižek 2011; Graeber 2011).

Rather than proposing a list of formal demands or lobbying political parties for reforms to the system (although such reforms would probably not be unwelcome), the Occupy movement has mostly resisted such negotiations as potential co-optations. If the problem were simply corruption or greed one would expect to hear a unified message for reform and legislation. This message could then be adopted by party politicians and mobilised in the next election. The fact that the Occupy movement has not delivered a clearly unified set of demands indicates a deeper mistrust of the very form of political representation itself that would respond to such demands. Additionally, the method of intervention chosen –

'unlawful occupation' – should also indicate a breakdown of the normal legal channels that are supposed to respond to the will of the people. Instead of demanding reforms from representatives or even trying to create its own representatives or leaders, the Occupy movement has seized public space and tried to create its own form of direct democracy based on consensus decision-making, equality and mutual aid. In societies that have failed to provide many of its members with the basic necessities of life and failed to listen to their demands, the Occupy encampments around the world have decided to provide these things for each other. They have created kitchens, libraries, clinics and media centres open to everyone who needs them. The Occupy movement thus demonstrates that state capitalism itself is the cause of the current crisis. Not only does it express a popular acknowledgement that we do not live in the best of all possible worlds, it also demands that we start creating some alternatives to the current system here and now, and not wait around for political representatives or corporations to fix the problems they created.

The Occupy movement and its strategies did not come out of nowhere. As theorists have already done well to point out, many of the strategies deployed by the Occupy movement have their origins in the alter-globalisation movement (Klein 2011; Hardt and Negri 2011; Graeber 2011). In particular, horizontal and leaderless net-working, consensus decision-making and a multi-fronted struggle equally inclusive of race, class, gender, sexuality and environmental issues are important dimensions of both movements. But where did the alter-globalisation movement get these strategies from in the first place? It is well established in the scholarly literature on this topic that the alter-globalisation movement and one of its main organising groups, Peoples' Global Action, originated most directly from the first and largest global anti-neoliberal gatherings: the Intercontinental *Encuentros* organised by the Zapatistas (Notes from Nowhere 2003; Khasnabish 2008; Curran 2006; Engler 2007). The basic principles of horizontalism were laid out by the Zapatistas at the first *Encuentro*; consensus decision-making was (and still is) used by the indigenous peasants of Chiapas, and their struggle was radically inclusive of all fronts of struggle (race, gender, class, sexual orientation and environment). Given this clearly established lineage and the still-active struggle in Chiapas (one of the more long-standing revolutionary 'occupations' in recent history), it is surprising that no one has yet (as I write this) made this connection explicit or traced its strategic influence on the current struggles.

Similarly, no one has yet explored the theoretical origins of the Occupy movement in any depth. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri were quick to cast the Occupy movement as an expression of their own concept of '"multitude form" . . . characterised by frequent assemblies and participatory decision-making structures' (Hardt and Negri 2011). But where did Hardt and Negri get this concept from in the first place? Just as the practical origins of Occupy lie deeper than the alter-globalisation movement, so its theoretical origins lie deeper as well. It has already been recognised that Deleuze and Guattari's work holds special promise in the development of a new philosophy of revolution that can revitalise contemporary political thought. Slavoj Žižek, in particular, has gone as far as to say that 'Deleuze more and more serves as the theoretical foundation of today's anti-global Left' (Žižek 2004: xi). But Deleuze and Guattari's work has moved to the centre of the debate primarily due to the success of Hardt and Negri's political trilogy *Empire* (2000), *Multitude* (2004) and *Commonwealth* (2010), which takes Deleuze and Guattari's work as one of its primary philosophical touchstones (2010: 172). It is to Deleuze and Guattari that Hardt and Negri turn for their philosophical account of how the singularities of the multitude can be sustained in a lasting revolutionary movement. Hardt and Negri's books are certainly some of the best-selling works of political philosophy in our time; *Empire* alone sold over 52,000 copies and was translated into ten languages within its first year of publication (Laffey 2002: 109) and Žižek has called it 'the communist manifesto for the twenty-first century'. Hardt and Negri's influence on the academy and activists has been apparent in the increasing number of conferences, anthologies and journal articles devoted to Deleuze's contributions to political thought, and in the growing interest in these ideas among scholars and students.

But Hardt and Negri devote only brief, although numerous, sections and footnotes to what they admit are the clear Deleuzian foundations of their views. In fact, even in their more academic solo works, where one would expect to find a more sustained engagement with Deleuze's political philosophy, Hardt and Negri prefer instead to engage Deleuze more obliquely through readings of common figures in the history of philosophy: Spinoza, Nietzsche and Marx. Meanwhile, none of the current scholarly books on Deleuze and Guattari have taken their concept of revolution as a central theme, nor do any of the currently available books address Deleuze and Guattari's relationship with contemporary revolutionary practice in

any detail. This book thus offers the first scholarly investigation of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of revolution treated in Hardt and Negri's bestsellers. By offering a detailed investigation of Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy of revolution that complements the one provided by Hardt and Negri, this book fills a lacuna and provides the missing theoretical link at the heart of contemporary revolutionary struggles like Occupy.

However, while a full exploration of the contemporary revolutionary conjuncture and its origins in the theory and practice of Deleuze, Guattari and the Zapatistas is beyond the scope of this book, one of the strengths of this book is that it is meant to be used as a set of four strategic tools to carry out such a contemporary labour. I must admit I am excited to see, at the end of writing this book, the strategic fruit of Deleuze, Guattari and Zapatismo borne in the global Occupy movement and its continued deployment of the revolutionary strategies outlined in the following chapters. The aim of this book is thus not only to provide a thematic account of the concept of revolution in the work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari and its relationship to the contemporary revolutionary struggle of Zapatismo, but to be used in the present as a diagnostic and guide to understanding the current return to revolution.

Introduction

> We have to try and think a little about the meaning of revolution. This term is now so broken and worn out, and has been dragged through so many places, that it's necessary to go back to a basic, albeit elementary, definition. A revolution is something of the nature of a process, a change that makes it impossible to go back to the same point . . . a repetition that changes something, a repetition that brings about the irreversible. A process that produces history, taking us away from a repetition of the same attitudes and the same significances. Therefore, by definition, a revolution cannot be programmed, because what is programmed is always the *déjà-là*. Revolutions, like history, always bring surprises. By nature they are always unpredictable. That doesn't prevent one from working for revolution, as long as one understands 'working for revolution' as working for the unpredictable.
>
> (Guattari 2008: 258)

We are witnessing today the return of a new theory and practice of revolution. This return, however, takes none of the traditional forms: the capture of the state, the political representation of the party, the centrality of the proletariat, or the leadership of the vanguard. Rather, given the failure of such tactics over the last century, coupled with the socio-economic changes brought by neoliberalism in the 1980s, revolutionary strategy has developed in more heterogeneous and non-representational directions. The aim of this book is thus to map an outline of these new directions by drawing on the theory and practice of two of its main inspirations: French political philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari and what many have called 'the first post-modern revolutionaries', the Zapatistas of Chiapas, Mexico (Burbach 1994, 1996; Carrigan 1995; Golden 1994, 2001).

There are two important reasons for undertaking a philosophical interrogation of this admittedly young revolutionary direction. First, political life does not have the leisure to wait until after the revolution for the hindsight of philosophical inquiry. If philosophy waited until a new political form of revolution had already come and gone, it would be useless in the formation of the revolutionary process

itself. Thus, it is not in spite of, but rather precisely because of the fact that we are in the middle of this return to revolution that a philosophical interrogation and clarification of its practical meaning is needed. Second, since the turn of the century we have heard consistently from the Left (the alter-globalisation movement and the World Social Forum in particular) that 'another world is possible'. But what we have not heard is, more positively, what this alternative world to neoliberalism is. Beyond the political philosophy of possibility, what is needed is a more constructive theory and practice of this 'other world'. I believe we can locate the beginnings of this world in the work of Deleuze, Guattari and the Zapatistas.

The aim of this book is thus threefold: first, to provide a philosophical clarification and outline of the revolutionary strategies that both describe and advance the process of constructing real alternatives to state capitalism; second, to do so by focusing on three influential and emblematic figures of its history, mutually disclosive of one another as well as this larger revolutionary return: Deleuze, Guattari and the Zapatistas. Third, and more specifically, this work proposes four strategies[1] that characterise this return to revolution: (1) a multi-centred diagnostic of political power; (2) a prefigurative strategy of political transformation; (3) a participatory strategy of creating a body politic; and (4) a political strategy of belonging based on mutual global solidarity.

I. Methodology

DELEUZE AND GUATTARI

Thus, with the aim of developing these four strategies, I draw from Deleuze and Guattari's political philosophy by extracting from it the concepts that are most relevant and thematically productive to the problem at hand: revolution. More specifically, this work proceeds by way of four guiding questions that allow us to address the central issues underlying contemporary debates in revolutionary theory and practice: what is the relationship between history and revolution? What is revolutionary transformation? How is it possible to sustain and carry out the consequences of a revolutionary transformation? And how do revolutions connect with one another to produce a new form of worldwide solidarity? Deleuze and Guattari never wrote a book, or more than a couple of focused pages at a time, on the concept of political revolution.[2] In fact, the present volume is the first

and only full-length work to centrally thematise this concept in their *oeuvre*. Because their usage of the concept of revolution was topical and problem-based, created to be put to use, so my own methodology will follow suit: I focus here exclusively on the problem of revolution. Additionally, this methodology allows for the most productive and focused use of their work, as it deals with one concept per chapter and provides a philosophical parallel to the political practices of the Zapatistas.

Deleuze and Guattari's political philosophy is not only conceptually advantageous to this effort, it is historically relevant as well. Deleuze and Guattari, unlike most of their philosophical contemporaries after the revolutionary events of May 1968, remained openly faithful to the concept of revolution throughout their work. In fact, it is in the aftermath of the failure of many of the political experiments that happened in the 1960s around the world that Deleuze and Guattari wrote their largest work of political philosophy, *Capitalisme et schizophrénie*, volumes one and two (1972, 1980). They were witnessing during these years the end of what Alain Badiou calls 'the last great emancipatory narrative: the revolutionary Party-State' (2010a: 101; 2010b: 67). Accordingly, in *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, revolution is consistently valorised and juxtaposed against state-capitalism as well as state-socialism and the party/union bureaucracy, heavily criticised in France and around the world in the 1960s and 1970s. During the increasingly conservative and reactionary years of the 1970s and 1980s, Deleuze and Guattari worked tirelessly, in their single largest work, towards a political philosophy that would no longer be subordinated to state, party or vanguardism. If we want to look for some of the earliest philosophical origins of the contemporary revolutionary sequence, it is in these dark but fecund years (1970s and 1980s) that Deleuze and Guattari, perhaps more prolifically and more influentially than any other major philosophers at the time, created political concepts most consonant with the leaderless and networked horizontalism that characterises today's return to revolution practically demonstrated in Zapatismo, the alter-globalisation movement and the Occupy movement (Klein 2011).[3] Even Slavoj Žižek admits that 'Deleuze more and more serves as the theoretical foundation of today's anti-global Left' (2004: xi). But it was also during the 1980s that another revolution was emerging, not in France but in the mountains of the Mexican Southeast: a revolution that would more and more serve as the practical foundation for the 'alter-global Left'.

Yes, Deleuze and Guattari never wrote a book on political revolution, but this does not mean that they did not write about revolution extensively and consistently throughout their political philosophy. If the present book has adopted the method of creating concepts through the assembly of heterogeneous fragments from Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy of revolution, it is not only out of methodological affinity, but out of a practical necessity of doing so as well. And if the present book has chosen to extract these concepts from Deleuze and Guattari rather than from other political philosophers in this time period, it is because Deleuze and Guattari (in addition to their unique influence on the alter-global Left) never gave up on their belief that a worldwide revolution could emerge from the smallest of political experiments without the representation of the state, party, vanguard or proper class consciousness, as indeed it did with the Zapatistas.

Zapatismo

But if Deleuze and Guattari theorised this nascent revolutionary sequence so well, why the need to extract anything at all from the Zapatistas to outline these four strategies? Although not exactly the same, what I am calling the recent return to revolution[4] can be loosely associated with the popular emergence of what is often called the alter-globalisation movement (AGM). While the AGM and groups like Peoples' Global Action (PGA) and the World Social Forum are a significant part of the present revolutionary sequence, the sequence itself is not reducible to the features of these groups, in part because these meta-groups are composed of hundreds of sub-groups from around the world. In any case, the AGM did not start in Seattle in 1999. Most of the historical scholarship on the AGM dates it from 1994, that is, from the beginning of the Zapatista uprising (Notes from Nowhere 2003; Khasnabish 2008; Curran 2006; Engler 2007). Zapatismo and the Intercontinental *Encuentros* were the first and largest global anti-neoliberal gatherings of their kind and gave birth to several important groups like PGA (Khasnabish 2008: 238; Olesen 2005). And although they are obviously not the only source of inspiration, it is well documented that the Zapatistas' declarations against all forms of domination, their strategic refusal of capturing state or party power, their creation of directly democratic consensus-based communes, and their vision of a mutual global solidarity network were all highly visible and have had a lasting impact on

revolutionary theory and practice today (Khasnabish 2008). Thus, understanding Zapatismo plays an important role in understanding the larger movement currently under way today.[5]

But my argument that we are witnessing a new revolutionary sequence is not merely an empirical one,[6] although many strong empirical arguments for the emergence of a new revolutionary sequence have been made (and in far more complete ways than I am capable of here).[7] I am thus truly indebted to those works; they are like the empirical companion to this philosophical work.[8] What I am arguing instead is that, in addition to this descriptive history of the past fifteen years of struggle, we can also define the emergence of this new revolutionary sequence by its creation of a set of novel and coherent strategies (that are both practical and theoretical). But since concretely locating these strategies in even the most active organisations of the last fifteen years is well beyond the scope of the present work, I want to focus on a deeper analysis of two of the earliest, most influential and most prolific sources of this often cited 'return to revolution': Deleuze and Guattari, and Zapatismo.

Accordingly, I try to give equal qualitative importance to extracting these strategies from both the political writings of Deleuze and Guattari and the actions of Zapatistas (although admittedly I spend more quantitative time with Deleuze and Guattari in this book). Politics, I hope to demonstrate in the case of Zapatismo, has its own thinking and does not need philosophy to think for it or represent its thought back to it (Lazarus 1996; Badiou 2005a; Foucault 1977). Rather, what the Zapatistas offer that other activists and philosophers do not is a particularly prolific and conceptually creative site at the beginning of this new and still-in-process revolutionary sequence. Many have gone as far as to call Zapatismo the first 'post-communist', 'post-modern' (Golden 1994) and 'post-representational' revolution (Tormey 2006; Proyect 2003). This book thus aims to contribute some novel philosophical clarifications, not for the Zapatistas themselves, but for others who wish to understand and continue the Zapatista struggle elsewhere. But as these practices appear only here and there in various writings and political actions over a fifteen-year period and never in a coherently self-described manifesto, the method of extraction and creative reassembly is one of necessity with the Zapatistas as well.

Assembly, Relay and Contribution

But if Deleuze, Guattari and the Zapatistas share in common their being particularly early and influential sources of concepts for the philosophical development of what myself and others (Graeber 2002; Grubacic and Graeber 2004) are calling the present revolutionary sequence, what is their relationship to one another in a philosophical work, methodologically based on conceptual creation through extraction and reassembly? First, I certainly do not want to argue for a direct mutual influence between Deleuze and Guattari and the Zapatistas. Despite being more of a historical/empirical question than a philosophical one, it is also highly unlikely (and not worth trying to map their degrees of separation). Deleuze and Guattari, to my knowledge, were not aware of the early stages of the Zapatista uprising (before 1994), nor were the Zapatistas likely readers of Deleuze and Guattari's work leading up to 1994. Second, I do not want to argue that we should use Deleuze and Guattari's political philosophy to interpret, explain or understand the Zapatistas, as some scholars have done (Evans 2010)[9], any more than I want to argue that we should use the Zapatista uprising to legitimate, ground or justify Deleuze and Guattari's political philosophy. This approach not only presupposes a privileged foundationalism of theory over practice, or practice over theory, but also risks perpetuating a long legacy of Eurocentrism and theoretical imperialism (Spivak 2010). Third, the aim of this book is not to discover in either Deleuze and Guattari or the Zapatistas the philosophical foundations of all political life or 'the political', in part because this task is conceptually totalitarian, but also in part because this task is impossible and only reveals to us the ungrounded and anti-foundational character of political being as such (Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy 1997). So rather than argue the point of political anti-foundationalism that has been argued elsewhere and much better, this book proposes a different project.

This book instead proposes to read Deleuze and Guattari and the Zapatistas side by side as parallel origins of the same strategies that have now become central to revolutionary and radical Left movements in the twenty-first century. To be clear, the four strategies common to Deleuze, Guattari and Zapatismo that I outline in this book are not models of all political action. Rather, they are only four (there are possibly others) of the transitional tools that have been and are likely to be deployed elsewhere in contemporary political theory and practice. My thesis is not to have discovered the four essential

strategies that connect Deleuze, Guattari and the Zapatistas or the four foundations of revolutionary strategy as such. Rather, my thesis is that we can locate the origins of four of the most historically and theoretically influential revolutionary strategies of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century in the work of Deleuze, Guattari and the Zapatistas. They created these four common strategies at roughly the same time (1980s and 1990s) in two different regions of the world (France and Mexico) and in two different domains (politics and philosophy) without direct influence on one another.[10] Neither is founded or derived from the other, but understood together we gain a better sense of both. Additionally, these four common strategies can also be useful for understanding contemporary movements like the *indignados* in Spain or the global Occupy movement, to the degree that these draw heavily on these four strategies and the legacy of Zapatismo and the alter-globalisation movement.

By reading Deleuze, Guattari and the Zapatistas alongside each other we can see where a theoretical action is unclear, weak or too general, and where a practical action will clarify, strengthen or specify how to take theory in a new direction, and vice versa. Where one hits a wall, the other might break through, not as a substitute for the other but as a relay or assemblage of two heterogeneous actions: theory and practice (Foucault 1977: 207). This methodology of doing political philosophy by extracting and reassembling a system of useful practical-theoretical relays is one used by Deleuze, Guattari and Foucault, and one I follow in this book. Accordingly, philosophy, for Deleuze and Guattari, is political insofar as it is directed towards creating concepts that are 'adequate to what is happening around us. It must adopt as its own those revolutions going on elsewhere, in other domains, or those that are being prepared' (Deleuze 2004: 191/138; see also Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 96/100). This book thus adopts as its own the current revolution in preparation.

But this adoption and adequation is not a matter of representation or resemblance. Intellectuals do not simply stand at the front and off to the side of revolutionary struggles as its representatives (Foucault 1977: 208). Whether theory is supposed to inform practice or practice is supposed to inform theory, in each case their relationship has typically been a totalisation of one over the other (1977: 206). In contrast, the goal of developing a political philosophy of practical-theoretical relays is not to ground one in the other or to describe or interpret the world more accurately, but rather to *transform* the world itself using both theory and practice, side by side.

Theory does not cause praxis, nor does praxis cause theory: both are heterogeneous components constitutive *of* revolutionary strategy itself. The political analysis of revolutionary movements is thus never a question of representation, interpretation or 'speaking for others'. Rather, as Guattari says, 'It is a question of situating their trajectory to see whether they are in a position to serve as indicators of new universes of references that could acquire sufficient consistency to bring about a radical change in the situation' (2008: 328). But, as Guattari continues, because 'there are no universal scientific models with which to try to understand a situation ... known in advance of the situation', one must continually develop new concepts that *help articulate* the situation, *not* represent it (2008: 343, 397). This is what I have aimed to do with the practical-theoretical relays (what I am calling 'strategies') I propose in this book: to extract four common strategies, which will help further articulate the current revolutionary conjuncture.

So, if there are no universal foundations or categories for all political life, as Guattari argues, then the goal of political philosophy changes significantly. If the role of leadership and critique are forever bound by the question of political foundations, then the alternative task of an engaged political philosopher is to intervene and contribute immanently to political struggles themselves just like anyone else. Or as Subcomandante Marcos says, 'We had to be honest and tell people that we had not come to lead anything of what might emerge. We came to release a demand, that could unleash others' (Marcos 2001c). Or perhaps, as Foucault says of his own philosophical interventions,

> So, since there has to be an imperative, I would like the one underpinning the theoretical analysis we are attempting to be quite simply a conditional imperative of the kind: if you want to struggle, here are some key points, here are some lines of force, here are some constrictions and blockages. In other words, I would like these imperatives to be no more than tactical pointers. Of course, it's up to me, and those who are working in the same direction, to know on what fields of real forces we need to get our bearings in order to make a tactically effective analysis. But this is, after all, the circle of struggle and truth, that is to say, precisely, of philosophical practice. (2007: 3)

In sum, the aim of the present volume, in addition to the aforementioned three aims, following Marcos, Marx and Foucault, is not to interpret the world, but to transform it by outlining some revolutionary strategies that might unleash something else. Thus the ultimate

criterion of success for this book is not that it has simply described the world, but that it will have been useful to those engaged in the present revolutionary task of changing the world.

II. Interventions

The question of general methodology having been addressed, what are the specific philosophical interventions being proposed in this book as regards the work of Deleuze and Guattari and the Zapatistas? That is, within what readings, contexts and assumptions do I propose to draw on these political thinkers? In this next section I propose two interventions, one into the scholarly literature on Deleuze and Guattari and one into the political commentary written on the Zapatista uprising. In both cases my conclusion is similar: to reject reading them as either theories of political representation or theories of political differentiation. I propose, rather, to read them as theories of political constructivism, that is, as contributions to the *creation* of a new collective political body. I deal firstly with Deleuze and Guattari.

DELEUZE, GUATTARI AND REPRESENTATION

Deleuze and Guattari's political philosophy, due in part to the increasing amount of anti-capitalist activity in the last fifteen years, has recently come to significant scholarly attention. With this attention, the concept of revolution has emerged as a central point of interest. Paul Patton has gone as far as to say that revolutionary deterritorialisation is the normative concept underlying their entire political philosophy (2000: 10).[11] And in his book *Deleuze and Guattari: An Introduction to the Politics of Desire*, Philip Goodchild locates their 'concern for the immanent transformation of society [revolutionary desire] as the sole purpose of their political philosophy' (1996: 5). But within this common interest one can see the formulation of at least two well-argued readings of this concept of revolution.

On the one side, Deleuze and Guattari's concept of revolution is read as a process by which marginalised or minor peoples come to be increasingly included and represented by the liberal democratic state. We can see this type of reading in the work of anglophone scholar Paul Patton (translator of *Différence et répétition*, 1968, and author of *Deleuze and the Political*, 2000), as well as that of francophone scholar Philippe Mengue (author of *Deleuze et la ques-*

tion de la démocratie, 2003). Revolution, as a real object of political aims, according to Mengue, should be considered as a process of becoming-mediated and becoming-represented under a democratic state. Non-mediated, non-representational politics, according to Mengue, are not only highly speculative but practically impossible and undesirable. Deleuze is thus, for Mengue, an ultimately anti-democratic thinker.

> What is the big difficulty of micropolitics? It is that it refuses all media-tion and representation. It pretends to be capable of doing it, but – letting aside, for a moment, the problem of the theoretical or speculative valid-ity of such a thesis – experience has shown that this refusal is absolutely impossible and not even desirable. Indeed, politics is linked to the func-tion of mediation and representation – the *doxic* plane of immanence guarantees it . . . opinion is at the heart of politics. (2009: 172)

Paul Patton, however, highlights the concept of 'becoming-democratic' found in Deleuze and Guattari's later work and argues that, despite their lack of a normative political position, there are liberal democratic principles implicit in their political philosophy. Despite Deleuze and Guattari's frequent criticisms against modern state democracies, Patton argues that 'the appearance of "becom-ing-democratic" in *What Is Philosophy?* represents a new turn in Deleuze and Guattari's political thought' (2008: 178). Specifically, it takes a normative turn in favour of the institutions, rights and values of modern liberal democracy.

While this position may not be the dominant reading of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of revolution, the authors of this position have certainly contributed to a healthy debate over the concept. Despite agreeing with these authors in a host of other areas, I find a few problems with this position. Firstly, it seems a bit strange to say, as Mengue implies, that the historical practice of direct democracy (non-representational, non-mediated democracy) would be simply speculative. Countless volumes on the history of the Paris Commune, the Spanish Civil War, the Landless Peasants Movement in Brazil and others (not to mention those of many indigenous peoples like the Zapatistas) attest to the very non-speculative nature of direct versus representational democracy. There is a meaningful distinc-tion between the two that remains unaddressed by both Patton and Mengue. Secondly, if these events have been experienced, as Mengue claims, they could not possibly be just speculative. The assertion that these experiments have been tried, and have failed, would seem

already to indicate that some did find them desirable enough to start them and perhaps die for them. Thirdly, the determination of what is and is not possible and desirable is precisely what revolution aims to transform. I find the closure of this possibility politically suspicious. The brute fact that the liberal state has won a certain historical battle and is the presupposition of many political philosophers has nothing to do with the possible emergence of another more inclusive and desirable form of political organisation. In the end, given Deleuze and Guattari's clear and consistent critique of state representation and mediation, one has to disavow too much of their political work and explicit condemnations of state democracy in order to make them liberal democrats. Additionally, this move takes away one of Deleuze and Guattari's most original contributions to the history of political philosophy: a non-foundational theory of revolution (without state, party, vanguard or representation).

DELEUZE, GUATTARI AND DIFFERENCE

On the other side, Deleuze and Guattari's concept of revolution is more often read as the pure process of political becoming, uncaptured by all forms of political representation and mediation (territory, state and capital). We can see this type of reading in the work of American and Italian philosophers Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (authors of *Empire*, 2000; *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*, 2004; and *Commonwealth*, 2010) as well as in the work of American scholar Eugene Holland (author of *Deleuze and Guattari's Anti-Oedipus: Introduction to Schizoanalysis*, 1999). Opposed to defining the aim of revolution by its inevitable incorporation into the liberal state apparatus, as Mengue and Patton do, Hardt and Negri draw from Deleuze and Guattari a theory of revolutionary potentiality or 'difference-in-itself' that they call the 'multitude'. Rather than basing revolutionary action on an analogy with, an opposition to, a resemblance with or a representation of the originally presupposed political bodies of territory, god, king, statesman or capital, Hardt and Negri propose a Deleuzian-inspired theory of political creativity located ontologically anterior to any constituted or mediating power, whether state, people or capital. Deleuze and Guattari's concept of revolution, according to Hardt and Negri, should not be read as a theory of possibility defined by what is dominantly understood to be 'possible' or 'feasible' (as Mengue argues), but rather as a pure potentiality 'to become other than one is'.

In Hardt and Negri's version of Spinozist-Deleuzian political ontology, the concept of the multitude stands, not as a new form of representation for global minority movements (that would speak for them), or as a negative movement 'against representation', but rather as an *expressive* potential that all such subjugated groups have 'to revolt', 'to create something new'. But since this potential is not a political object nor even a specific political event, but rather a pure 'becoming-revolutionary' that allows for the possibility of new conditions, elements and agencies in the political field as such, Hardt and Negri are able to avoid the restrictions of only thinking Deleuze and Guattari's theory of revolution as taking place within a representational political domain. Thus, 'the creative forces of the multitude that sustain Empire are also capable of autonomously constructing a counter-Empire, an alternative political organisation of global flows and exchanges,' as they claim in their book *Empire* (2000: 11–23). Examples of this potential for counter-empire, Hardt and Negri argue, are the alter-globalisation movement (2010: 368) and the nomadisms of refugees and immigrants who remain unrepresented in politics today. Their transformation-in-itself is the real sphere of 'the political', perpetually open to all those who potentially participate in its non-exclusive community.

Similarly, for Eugene Holland, 'it is not the entity but the process that has revolutionary potential' (2006: 100). Thus, 'Schizophrenia is the potential for revolution, not the revolution itself' (2006: 100). Opposed to any particular being or entity in the world, the revolutionary plane of immanence, according to Holland, is the 'principle of freedom in permanent revolution' (2006: 123).

Now, while I certainly think this reading is more faithful to the anti-representational dimension of Deleuze and Guattari's theory of revolution, I also want to steer clear of several dangers in this reading, as posed by recent critical scholarship. These dangers are worth recounting here at some length. Since 1997, three full-length books have been devoted to this critique: Alain Badiou's *Deleuze: The Clamor of Being* (1997, translated 2000); Slavoj Žižek's *Organs Without Bodies* (2004); and Peter Hallward's *Out of This World: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Creation* (2006). From these works, and several other critical essays, we can discern three distinct criticisms that, while perhaps not entirely fair to Deleuze (and Guattari), do outline several dangers posed by their philosophy: political ambivalence, virtual hierarchy and subjective paralysis.

(1) Political Ambivalence

'Affirming Difference in the state of permanent revolution,' as Deleuze says in *Difference and Repetition* (75/53), or affirming 'transformation as such' as a new revolutionary commitment that escapes the previous problems of vanguardism and the party-state poses the danger of becoming-ambivalent.[12] Such transformations *may* provide a new non-representational space of liberty, *or* it may provide a ruptured 'open' domain for a new discourse of rights and military occupation by the state, *or* it may merely reproduce a complicity with the processes of capitalist deterritorialisation necessary for new capitalist reterritorialisations. Slavoj Žižek, in particular, frequently attributes this capitalist ambivalence to Deleuze and Guattari's politics (2004: 184).[13] But to say that affirming the potentiality for transformation as such is to affirm a 'purely ideological radicality' that 'inevitably changes over into its opposite: once the mass festivals of democracy and discourse are over, things make place for the modernist restoration of order among workers and bosses', as Badiou and Balmès do, would be to overstate the problem (Badiou and Balmès 1976: 83).

Rather, it would be much more appropriate to say, with Paolo Virno, that 'the multitude is a form of being that can give birth to one thing but also to the other: ambivalence' (Virno 2003: 131). Accordingly, the affirmation of this ambivalence as a political commitment, and the 'politico-ontological optimism and unapologetic vitalism' it assumes in Hardt, Negri and Deleuze's work, according to Bruno Bosteels, remains radically insufficient (2004: 95). While the purely creative power of the multitude may be the condition for global liberation from empire, it is also the productive condition *for* empire as well. With no clear political consistency to organise or motivate any particular political transformation, such a 'vitalist optimism' can remain, at best, Bosteels argues, politically ambivalent, speculative and spontaneous. Showing the non-foundational or ungrounded nature of politics provides no more of a contribution for organised politics than does the creative potentiality of desire. 'A subject's intervention', Bosteels suggests, 'cannot consist merely in showing or recognizing the traumatic impossibility, void, or antagonism around which the situation as a whole is structured' (2004: 104), but rather, following Badiou, a 'political organization is necessary in order for the intervention, as wager, to make a process out of the trajectory that goes from an interruption to a fidelity. In this sense, organization is nothing but the consistency of politics' (Badiou

1985: 12). And insofar as Deleuze and Guattari, and those inspired by their work, do not offer developed concepts of political consistency and organisation that would bring differential multiplicities into specific political interventions and distributions, they remain, at most, ambivalent towards revolutionary politics.

(2) Virtual Hierarchy

In addition to the first danger, the problem of ambivalence, Deleuze's concept of revolution, according to Badiou and Hallward, risks a second danger, namely that of creating a political hierarchy of virtual potential. Badiou argues at length in *Deleuze: The Clamor of Being* that

> contrary to all egalitarian or 'communitarian' norms, Deleuze's conception of thought is profoundly aristocratic. Thought only exists in a hierarchized space. This is because, for individuals to attain the point where they are seized by their preindividual determination and, thus, by the power of the One-All – of which they are, at the start, only meager local configurations – they have to go beyond their limits and endure the transfixion and disintegration of their actuality by infinite virtuality, which is actuality's veritable being. And individuals are not equally capable of this. Admittedly, Being is itself neutral, equal, outside all evaluation . . . But 'things reside unequally in this equal being' (Deleuze 1994: 60/37). And, as a result, it is essential to think according to 'a hierarchy which considers things and beings from the point of view of power' (Deleuze 1994: 60/37). (Badiou 1999: 12–13)

The political thrust of this argument is that if we understand revolutionary change as the virtual or potential for change as such, and not merely change for or against certain pre-existing powers, then, contrary to any kind of egalitarianism, there will instead be a hierarchy of actual political beings that more or less participate in this degree of pure potential transformation. The more actual political beings renounce their specific and local determinations and affirm their participation in the larger processes of difference-in-itself, the more powerful they become. Thus, if the point of examining any local political intervention is in every case to show to what degree it renounces its concrete determinations and might 'become other than it is' (as a virtuality or potentiality), there seems to be a risk of hierarchy in such a relationship of potential.

  Similarly, Peter Hallward has argued that Deleuze's political philosophy is 'indifferent to the politics of this world' (2006: 162). Hallward claims that 'once a social field is defined less by its con-

flicts and contradictions than by the lines of flight running through it' (2006: 62 n16), any distinctive space for political action can only be subsumed within the more general dynamics of creation, life and potential transformation. And since these dynamics are 'themselves anti-dialectical if not anti-relational, there can be little room in Deleuze's philosophy for relations of conflict and solidarity' (2006: 162). If each concrete, localised, actual political being *is* only insofar as its actual being is subtracted from the situation into a virtual event, 'and every mortal event in a single Event' (Deleuze 1990: 178/152), the processional 'telos' of absolute political deterritorialisation is completely indifferent to the actual politics of this world (2006: 97). By valorising this pure potentiality for transformation as such against all actual political determinations, Hallward argues, Deleuze is guilty of affirming an impossible utopianism. 'By posing the question of politics in the starkly dualistic terms of war machine or state – by posing it, in the end, in the apocalyptic terms of a new people and a new earth or else no people and no earth – the political aspect of Deleuze's philosophy amounts to little more than utopian distraction' (2006: 162).

(3) Subjective Paralysis

The differential reading of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of revolution may be able to avoid the problem of representational subjectivity: that it can reject or affirm particular desires but never change the nature of the 'self that desires'. But it does so finally, only at the risk of diffusing the self into an endless multiplicity of impersonal drives: a self in perpetual transformation. This leads to the third danger, that of subjective paralysis. Firstly, to read Deleuze and Guattari's theory of revolutionary subjectivity as the 'simple fact of one's own existence as possibility or potentiality' (Agamben 1993: 43) or, as Paul Patton calls it, one's 'critical freedom' – the freedom to transgress the limits of what one is presently capable of being or doing, rather than just the freedom to be or do those things' (2000: 85) – suggests, as Bosteels' previous critique implies, an ambivalence. It is both the capacity for emancipation and the potentiality for enslavement.

Secondly, without a pre-given unity of subjectivity, how do agents qua multiplicities deliberate between and distinguish between different political decisions? Without the representational screen of reason, or the state-guaranteed grounds of political discourse, what might something like a dispute or agreement look like? If 'becoming other is not a capacity liberated individuals possess to constitute themselves

as autonomous singularities' but 'what defines "autonomy" itself', as Simon Tormey argues (2006: 146), then the political danger, according to Hallward, is that the subject is simply replaced by the larger impersonal process of transformation as such: 'pure autonomy'. The radical affirmation of the ambivalent and unlocalisable processes of subjective potentiality (qua pure multiplicities) seems then to have nothing to contribute to an analysis of the basic function of participatory democracy and collective decision-making, which remains at the core of many of today's radical political struggles (see Starr, Martinez-Torres and Rosset 2011). Insofar as a theory of subjectivity is defined only by its potential for transformation, it is stuck in a kind of paralysis of endless potential change no less disempowering than subjective stasis. Or, as Hallward frames this criticism, Deleuze 'abandons the decisive subject in favour of our more immediate subjection to the imperative of creative life or thought' (2006: 163).

Deleuze, Guattari and Constructivism

While this ongoing debate over the implications of Deleuze and Guattari's political philosophy, and in particular their concept of revolution, continues to be a productive one, I propose a third reading of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of revolution that does not fall prey to the dangers of the two previous ones. I term this a 'constructivist' reading, in a sense borrowed from Deleuze and Guattari's own writings. To explain this alternative reading, I proceed in three steps: first, I show how the concept of constructivism emerges in Deleuze and Guattari's work; second, I differentiate this approach from the previous two readings; and third, I demonstrate its significance for the thesis of this book.

Deleuze and Guattari's first major attempt at the creation of a concept of revolution came after the events of May 1968 in France. Their first book together, *Capitalisme et schizophrénie: L'Anti-Oedipe* (1972), set out as a critique of both psychoanalysis and Marxism in order to develop a new concept of revolutionary desire that was indexed neither to primitive, state or capitalist power (in all their familial and oedipal formulations), nor to class analysis or the vanguard party apparatus 'modelled after the state' in Marxism. Schizophrenia was their name for this new concept of revolution. These efforts were, however, subject to significant criticism. Critics immediately charged that Deleuze and Guattari had been too optimistic about the potentiality of art, 'minimalized the role of class

struggle', 'militated in favour of an irrationalism of desire' and 'iden-tified revolutionaries with schizophrenics' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 455/379). After its publication the authors expended no small effort clarifying and even modifying the concepts proposed in *Anti-Oedipus* (later, even criticising them). Revolutionaries are neither 'insane' nor self-marginalised, they insist:

> Some have said that we see the schizophrenic as the true revolution-ary. We believe, rather, that schizophrenia is the descent of a molecular process into a black hole. Marginals have always inspired fear in us, and a slight horror. (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 167/139)

Desire is neither irrational nor without determination in a particular political arrangement:

> We say quite the opposite: desire only exists when it is assembled or machined. You cannot grasp or conceive of a desire outside a determinate assemblage, on a plane which is not pre-existent but which must itself be constructed. (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 115/96)

Revolutionary desire does not just blow apart the social into a pure flux:

> It is in concrete social fields, at specific moments, that the comparative movements of deterritorialization, the continuums of intensity, and the combinations of flux that they form must be studied. (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 163/135)

Despite these qualifications, the concept of revolution in *Anti-Oedipus* remained admittedly underdeveloped. How were these lines of schizo-flight to provide a stable alternative to the history of representational politics (primitivism, statism, capitalism)? How were these 'desiring machines' to be assembled into a revolutionary movement? And what are some of its concrete characteristics? A crucial shift, though, took place in their political writings between *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980). The move from emphasising the unrestrained deterritorialisations of desire to the careful and more sober transformations of the concrete political arrangement (constructivism) became decisive.

Eugene Holland was perhaps the first to highlight this shift in Deleuze and Guattari's political philosophy:

> In as much as deterritorialization designated the motor of permanent rev-olution, while reterritorialization designated the power relations imposed by the private ownership of capital . . . deterritorialization looked 'good' and reterritorialization looked 'bad' . . . but in *A Thousand Plateaus*,

both de- and re-territorialization appear in a very different light. (Holland 1991: 58–9)

Aside from removing the last traces of humanism and anthropo-centrism from the 'psycho-social' machines of *Anti-Oedipus*, *A Thousand Plateaus*, Holland claims, introduces three kinds of deter-ritorialisation – relative, absolute negative and absolute positive (1991: 62). *A Thousand Plateaus* no longer valorises the uncritical excitement for absolute deterritorialisation or potential creativity found in *Anti-Oedipus* (and in Deleuze's previous works) but instead develops what they call the more sober task of a logics or construc-tivism of political assemblages. While Holland notes the 'less revolu-tionary and less romantic' character of *A Thousand Plateaus* (1991: 63), he also suggests that 'any lingering suspicion of an earlier exag-gerated or uncritical enthusiasm for "schizophrenia" should now be dispelled by the very cautious, nuanced treatment of deterritorializa-tion and the body-without-organs' (1991: 63).

 A Thousand Plateaus also marks a shift away from Deleuze's earlier solo works, self-defined as the 'merger of philosophy and ontology' (1990: 201/179). While I disagree that Deleuze's previ-ous works can be characterised as entirely 'apolitical', as Badiou has argued (2009b), Deleuze had in fact developed very few political concepts, usually favouring more ontological or aesthetic ones. By contrast, *A Thousand Plateaus* clearly prioritises politics over ontol-ogy. Against accusations of 'ontological vitalism' and 'other-worldly politics' made by Peter Hallward, *A Thousand Plateaus* claims (1) to overthrow ontology: to replace the logic of the 'is' [*est*] with the logic of the 'and' [*et*]; and (2) that 'politics precedes being' [*avant l'être, il y a la politique*] (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 37/25, 249/203). *A Thousand Plateaus* should therefore be read more primarily as a political text than an ontological one, thus distancing it significantly from Deleuze's earlier solo works as well as from much of Badiou, Hallward and Žižek's critical commentary that tends to focus almost exclusively on his pre-*A Thousand Plateaus* writings. While this by no means allows us to ignore the political dangers Badiou and others outline, it is important to recognise that the constructivist turn that occurs in Deleuze and Guattari's political philosophy has yet to be taken seriously (against the continuity thesis, for example, that is argued for explicitly by Hallward and implicitly by many others: that a single central thought guides all of Deleuze's work, such as imma-nence, the virtual, life and so on).

More recent scholarship on Deleuze and Guattari's political philosophy, though, has begun to shift more notably in the direction of the political constructivism begun in *A Thousand Plateaus*. Many scholars have noted the existence and importance of the constructivist (also called diagrammatic, pragmatic or cartographic) turn in Deleuze and Guattari's later work. The terrain, according to Alberto Toscano, 'seems to have shifted considerably with respect to the earlier [pre-*A Thousand Plateaus*] preoccupation that seemed to afford a certain continuity with naturalised or materialist accounts of ontogenesis' (2006: 176).[14] Eugene Holland speaks of the 'importance that *A Thousand Plateaus* ascribes to devising planes of consistency or composition where lines of flight can intersect and become productive instead of spinning off into the void' (1998: 69). Eduardo Pellejero emphasises that the 'creative articulation of the lines of flight in assemblages that allow them to mature is not just possible and desirable, but constitutes the constructivist vector of this new militant praxis' (Pellejero 2010: 108). Bonta and Protevi, too, have emphasised the centrality of having a 'working cartography . . . to experiment with real intervention' (2004: 23). Not only do Deleuze and Guattari 'give us a theory of assemblages' (Patton 2006: 35) that 'would map out the complex terrain and conditions in which new modes of existence appear' (Smith 1998: 264), according to Paul Patton and Dan Smith, but even Bruno Bosteels has admitted the political importance of the 'basic scaffolding' of 'a formal and political theory of cartography' (1998: 150) developed by Guattari. We can even find the admission by Hardt and Negri, in the final chapter of *Empire*, that 'recognizing the potential autonomy of the mobile multitude, however, only points toward the real question. What we need to grasp is how the multitude is organized and redefined as a positive, political power' (2000: 394, 398). So the real question is not simply that of deterritorialisation over reterritorialisation or creative life versus the dead hand of capital, but rather the *constructive* ways revolutionary action takes on a consistency, a commitment and an organisation, and what forms of antagonism and relation it produces in a specific struggle.

Thus, while there may be politically dangerous tendencies in Deleuze and Guattari-inspired political philosophy, more or less emphasised in certain works, it is clearly inaccurate to say that Deleuze and Guattari and their readers after *A Thousand Plateaus* are not aware of the dangers of naively 'valorising the potentiality' of revolutionary deterritorialisation.[15] Revolution may, of course,

move too quickly, too much, or end up in a black hole (marginality) with no consistency or connection at all. Contrary to the claim of *Anti-Oedipus* that 'We can never go too far in the direction of deterritorialization' [*Jamais on n'ira assez loin dans la déterritorialisation, le décodage des flux*] (458/382), *A Thousand Plateaus* warns us that we can in fact go too far and so must approach revolutionary struggles with sobriety, caution and construction.

But scholarly awareness, promising gestures and scaffolds hardly constitute a fully developed constructivist theory of revolution. Aside from the fact that no full-length work until now has been dedicated to developing Deleuze and Guattari's constructivist theory of revolution, there is a problem with such a project. Éric Alliez, in his essay 'Anti-Oedipus – Thirty Years On', has been the most emphatic about the political importance of Deleuze and Guattari's later constructivist text *What Is Philosophy?* (against the Badiouian charges of political spontaneity) (2006).[16] Yet the problem is that *What Is Philosophy?* does not even give politics its own proper register, like art (percepts), philosophy (concepts) or science (functives)! Accordingly, Alliez's book *The Signature of the World*, devoted to Deleuze and Guattari's constructivism, contains absolutely no discussion of politics.[17]

Even Manuel de Landa, who may have gone furthest in developing the details of such a social logic or what he calls a 'theory of assemblages' in *A New Philosophy of Society*, has expressed concern with such a project. 'The relatively few pages dedicated to assemblage theory in the work of Deleuze and Guattari hardly amount to a fully-fledged theory,' he says. And 'even in those cases where conceptual definitions are easy to locate, they are usually not given in a style that allows for a straightforward interpretation. This would seem to condemn a book on assemblage theory to spend most of its pages doing hermeneutics' (de Landa 2006: 3). But while de Landa's solution to this problem is, as Alberto Toscano says, to '"naturalise" the theory of multiplicities by recasting it as an ontology of models, much as if Deleuze were the heir of Husserl's metatheoretical project, now applied to the theory of complex systems' (2006: 86), the current work will not follow suit. The central concern of this book is neither social nor ontological, but political and constructivist, interested explicitly in the revolutionary transformation of existing society.[18] But this section has only framed the emergence of a constructivist turn in Deleuze and Guattari's work. The question now is how to define 'constructivism' as a meaningful interpretive category against

the previous two, and to show how it contributes to a philosophical return to the concept of revolution.

Towards a Constructivist Theory of Revolution

By 'constructivism', I do not mean what is traditionally understood as 'social constructivism' in sociology and philosophy, namely, that revolutions are by-products or 'social constructs' produced by human minds, language, institutions, historical contexts, cultural values and so on. Such theories presuppose what needs to be explained in the first place: mind, society, culture and history themselves. Deleuze and Guattari rather define their philosophical method as constructivist in the sense that it is about the creative diagnosis and assembly of heterogeneous elements into a plane of consistency (see Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 93/73).[19] But given such a broad definition and the often scattered appearance of this method in their later work, one is almost forced to make, as de Landa correctly observes, some kind of interpretative or extractive move. I will thus make two: firstly, I limit my own methodological work with this concept to a strictly political interpretation, and in particular its revolutionary dimension; secondly, I break this constructivist method down into what I see as its four distinct yet coherent philosophical activities and try to reassemble them into four strategies paralleled by Zapatismo.

Asked succinctly, the question of this book is 'what would it mean to return to revolution today?' Answered succinctly, I argue that Deleuze and Guattari offer us several helpful concepts that respond to the four problematics of revolution mentioned previously. In response to the question of how to understand the dominant relations of power that revolution overcomes, they propose the concept of 'historical topology'. In response to the question of how to transform those relations of power, they propose the concept of 'deterritorialization'. In response to the question of what we can build instead of these power relations, they propose the concept of 'political consistency', and in response to the question of who belongs to the struggle, they propose the concept of 'nomadic solidarity'. Their constructivist theory of revolution is, thus, neither a utopian programme laid out in advance, the effect of 'social constructs', the capture of state power, an evolutionary development or the potentiality for revolutionary change as such, but rather the committed arrangement and distribution of heterogeneous elements or singularities without vanguard, party, state or capital: it is a politics based on autonomy and the

self-management of political problems (see Deleuze 1994: 206/158; Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 588/471).

Much closer to what Badiou, Hallward, Toscano and Bosteels claim to be looking for in political concepts like 'consistency', 'intervention', 'commitment' and 'solidarity', the constructivist theory of revolution I am proposing is based on connecting the contingent and heterogeneous political practices that have broken free or been uprooted ('deterritorialised') through political crisis *to each other* to theorise the current revolutionary sequence (however nascent it may be) (see Žižek and Douzinas 2010). The current revolutionary sequence, and here I am in agreement with Toscano, has 'sketched out new regimes of organisation, new forms of subjectivity at a distance from the accepted forms of mediated representation. [Groups like] the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional in Mexico . . . [prompt us to] begin to think beyond the intra-State logic of representation' (2004: 224). Thus, the valorisation of 'lines of flight', 'rupture' and 'heterogeneity' as they break free from or within power, without a positive account of how such lines compose a new consistency of their own, are – and here I am in agreement with Badiou and others – 'the concrete definition of revolutionary failure', since revolutionary struggles cannot be sustained beyond the scope of isolated outbursts against or within power. Without a cohesive theory of how to diagnose, transform and create new political bodies connected through mutual global solidarity, I argue, we cannot hope to understand the philosophy of the present revolutionary sequence.

Thus, in my reading, the political project of *A Thousand Plateaus* is to develop such a positive account of how 'revolutionary consistencies' function and are sustained in the context of coexistent dangers. This positive account will address the following four questions: in what sense do the processes of representation pose dangers for revolutionary struggles? How do revolutions intervene politically in such situations? How are their conditions, elements and agencies arranged and distributed? How do they connect up to different struggles around the world? Drawing primarily from *A Thousand Plateaus* and *What Is Philosophy?*, I propose a constructivist theory of revolution that answers these questions without submitting revolution to an inevitable political representation or merely affirming a political potential to become-otherwise. But the philosophical elaboration of these concepts in Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy is not sufficient for developing the four revolutionary strategies I am outlining. What needs to be shown is their common but parallel

development in the realm of political practice, specifically with Zapatismo.

Zapatismo and Representation

Just as there are different ways to read the concept of revolution in Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy, so there are different ways to interpret the Zapatista uprising. Leaving aside all of those who reject the Zapatistas' struggle for dignity, land and democracy outright, readers of the Zapatistas fall more or less into two camps. On the one hand, there are those who see the uprising as an incomplete or failed struggle, insofar as it failed to mobilise the Mexican people to overthrow and capture the Mexican state (or even win significant representation for the indigenous of Mexico). This view can be found in the work of Argentine political theorist Atilio Boron (author of *State, Capitalism, and Democracy in Latin America*, 1995) and British Pakistani political analyst Tariq Ali in his 2004 essay 'Anti-neoliberalism in Latin America'. Boron argues that the postmodern celebration of diversity and local autonomy around Zapatismo is symptomatic of the Left's general retreat from class struggle. For Boron, popular movements, like Zapatismo, cannot afford the luxury of ignoring the struggle for state power and representation, especially in Latin America, where direct or indirect forms of US imperialism have so often undermined national sovereignty. To the degree that the Zapatistas have made no real gains for class struggle or state representation, they have failed (see Boron 2003: 143–82).

Similarly, Ali argues that the Zapatistas' slogan – 'we can change the world without taking power' – is a purely moral slogan with no real revolutionary teeth. As Ali says,

> I have to be very blunt here – [the Mexican State] [does not] feel threatened because there is an idealistic slogan within the social movements, which goes like this: 'We can change the world without taking power.' This slogan doesn't threaten anyone; it's a moral slogan. The Zapatistas – who I admire – when they marched from Chiapas to Mexico City, what did they think was going to happen? Nothing happened. It was a moral symbol, it was not even a moral victory because nothing happened. (Ali 2004)

There is certainly some truth to these claims: the Zapatistas (in their 1994 First Declaration from the Lacandón Jungle) did declare

war on the Mexican state but failed to mobilise the Mexican people, and they were technically unable even to win the reformist San Andrés Accords with the Mexican government. Such criticisms are not wrong so much as they reduce the criteria of revolutionary success to the very narrow categories of state representation and class struggle. Firstly, if we are going to analyse what the Zapatistas have done, we must consider all the different dimensions on which their struggle has taken place (media, solidarity, local autonomy, democracy, gender, race and sexual orientation, as well as political economy and the state). The Zapatistas have won some things in some places but very little in others. Secondly, these narrow criticisms cover over one of the most original political contributions of the Zapatistas: not how they have been able to influence politicians and the state externally, but how they have created internally a new type of political consistency that has coherently organised a society of over 2,200 communities (over 200,000 people). These communities are federated into thirty-eight 'autonomous municipalities', each grouped into five local self-governments called the *Juntas de Buen Gobierno* (JBG) or Councils of Good Government (Ross 2006: 194). Thirdly, although perhaps one can judge the immediate effectiveness of a given slogan, it would be naive to think that slogans or symbols as such are not able to mobilise millions of people around the world, because they have, and they do so now more than ever. And as far as slogans go, 'change the world without taking power' has become a global one whose effects, I argue, have yet to be fully deployed. Regardless of its immediate effects, this slogan continues to express an emerging desire for a new politics without states. Perhaps the force of this slogan is best felt, for reasons that I will explain, in the future anterior.

Zapatismo and Difference

On the other hand, there are readers who argue that the Zapatistas' most important contribution is their strong suspicion of all forms of political representation (patriarchy, statism, capitalism and so on) and their affirmation of a political community and solidarity based on difference (across race, gender, class, sexual orientation, geography and so on). Although perhaps the majority of scholarship on the Zapatistas falls generally under this category (even though most disagree about how far the Zapatistas go in achieving this goal), I want to look at two of its more philosophical proponents: Simon Tormey and

John Holloway. Tormey's 2006 article '"Not in my Name": Deleuze, Zapatismo and the Critique of Representation' argues,

> The stance and philosophy of the Zapatistas is . . . remarkable in itself, but also symptomatic of a more general shift in the underpinnings of the political 'field', one that problematises and points beyond 'representation'. This is a shift that first announced itself in relation to philosophy, ethics and literature some decades ago, in turn spreading to black studies, feminism, queer and lesbian studies, and latterly to postcolonial and subaltern studies. It can now be felt and heard in what is sometimes termed 'the new activism'. (138)

But for Tormey, who draws theoretically on Deleuze's earlier work *Différence et répétition* (1968), the Zapatistas, 'as a group that insists that it is "exercising power" not on *behalf* of the people of Chiapas . . . but *with* the people of the Chiapas,' not only articulate a *demand* against all forms of political representation, but they, like Deleuze, also 'recognise and celebrate difference, not as negation . . . but as an affirmation, as something valued in itself' (2006: 142). Marcos, for example, does not represent the Zapatistas, but is himself a multiplicity; he 'is gay in San Francisco, a black in South Africa, Asian in Europe, a Chicano in San Isidro, an anarchist in Spain, a Palestinian in Israel . . . Marcos is every untolerated, oppressed, exploited minority that is resisting and saying "Enough!"' (Marcos 2001b: 101–6). Difference-in-itself, according to Tormey, is also realised in the internal organisation of the Zapatistas, whose form of direct democracy 'goes well beyond Marx's 'Paris Commune' model of immediate recall and rotation to embrace the demand that delegates listen to each and every "*compañero*" who turns up' (2006: 148).

Similarly, Holloway, in his 2002 book *Change the World Without Taking Power: The Meaning of Revolution Today*, argues that one of the most central contributions of the Zapatistas was to express a 'scream' of negation, dissonance and frustration with the present neoliberal system of political representation, which Holloway calls 'Fetishism' (2002: 1). The Zapatistas' struggle is one not only against the state and capital but against the entire system of political classification/representation as such. As Holloway puts it,

> We do not struggle as working class, we struggle against being working class, against being classified. Our struggle is not the struggle of labour: it is the struggle against labour. It is the unity of the process of classification (the unity of capital accumulation) that gives unity to our struggle, not our unity as members of a common class. Thus, for example, it is the

significance of the Zapatista struggle against capitalist classification that gives it importance for class struggle, not the question of whether the indigenous inhabitants of the Lacandón Jungle are or are not members of the working class. (2002: 88)

But Zapatismo is not just a rejection of representation; it is an affirmation of the potential to recover a new means of living, a 'power-to' or capacity for new action. As Holloway says,

It is not enough to scream. Negativity, our refusal of capital, is the crucial starting point, theoretically and politically. But mere refusal is easily recaptured by capital, simply because it comes up against capital's control of the means of production, means of doing, means of living. For the scream to grow in strength, there must be a recuperation of doing, a development of power-to. That implies a re-taking of the means of doing. (2002: 127)

While I remain, for the most part, sympathetic to this kind of reading and to Tormey and Holloway's readings in particular, I think that their points of emphasis are not so much wrong as they are philosophically and politically incomplete or insufficient. It may be true that, with a few exceptions, the Zapatistas are critical of the dominant structure and categories of political representation (including narrow class analyses based on industrial development and factory labour) (see Kingsnorth 2004: 29).[20] And it is also true that the Zapatistas, to some degree, affirm and respect the multiplicity of differences that make up the global opposition to neoliberalism. However, the rejection of representation and the affirmation of difference or potential for 'power-to' tell us almost nothing about what positive philosophical and political alternatives the Zapatistas propose. Both Tormey and Holloway spend only a few short pages theorising the internal political organisation of the Zapatistas (direct democracy, consensus, rotational self-government, subjectivity, global solidarity and so on), and when they do, their conclusion is that these types of organisation (internal as well as global networks and so on) all simply express the Zapatistas' rejection of representation and affirmation of potential transformation (difference). But a pivotal question remains: how is this new type of post-representational politics constructed? How does it work? In what ways does it offer us a real political alternative to capitalist nation-states? What new types of political subjectivity does it create and how do they work? If the Zapatistas are not just practical examples of the philosophical insight that 'political representation has failed us, and we must become other

than we are', then what do they offer us instead, philosophically and practically?

Perhaps many of the same criticisms addressed to 'differential readers' of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of revolution equally apply here: political ambivalence, virtual hierarchy and subjective paralysis. These are, in part, some of the Badiouian-inspired criticisms laid out by Mihalis Mentinis in his book *Zapatistas: The Chiapas Revolt and What It Means for Radical Politics* (2006). After moving through Gramsci, Laclou and Mouffe, Hardt and Negri, and Castoriadis, Mentinis argues for a Badiouian-inspired theory of militant subjectivity previously lacking in Zapatista scholarship. Despite providing an otherwise excellent survey of radical political theory and Zapatismo, Mentinis fails to reconcile his position with Badiou's explicit ambivalence towards Zapatismo as a truly universal event, and thus as having no real politically faithful subjects.[21] Some underemphasis on Zapatista constructivism in the scholarship may be simply historical, since it has taken the Zapatistas many years to develop a relatively distinct form of internal political organisation. But this does not explain more recent scholarship still committed to defining Zapatismo by its 'ontological priority of difference' (Evans 2010: 142). In any case, to sum up, difference-in-itself or the potential to develop our 'power-to' tell us very little about how to build a revolutionary strategy, or what concepts the Zapatistas offer for the reorganisation of political life.

Zapatismo and Constructivism

Subsequently, I propose, as I did in the case of Deleuze and Guattari's work, a constructivist reading of the Zapatistas that recognises not only their antagonism towards representation and their affirmation of political difference as the precondition for a radically inclusive global revolutionary movement, but, more importantly, what they have created in place of representation and how they have reassembled or built a maximum of political difference into their political practice. To be clear, this does not mean that I am proposing to use Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical method of constructivism to understand the Zapatista uprising, despite the strong similarities between the two methods of construction. What I am proposing instead is that the Zapatistas have invented their own political constructivism. While philosophy creates concepts, politics creates practices.

Between 8 and 10 August 2003, almost ten years after the 1994 uprising and almost twenty years after Marcos and company's first descent into the Lacandón Jungle, the Zapatistas announced a new direction in their struggle with the birth of the *Juntas de Buen Gobierno* (JBGs), or Councils of Good Government. Whereas their political energies and critiques had previously been focused on battling and negotiating with the Mexican government, paramilitary forces and corporations (rejecting the forces of political representation) and on affirming their autonomy and enlarging their global visibility through alternative media and global gatherings of heterogeneous struggles (affirming political difference), the birth of the JBGs marked a significant turn towards the *creation* of something new. While the Zapatistas certainly did not call this turn 'constructivist', I use this term to emphasise their turn towards creating new political practices, like building and sustaining their own autonomous municipalities of self-government, cooperative economics and environmental stewardship. It is in this turn, I argue, that we can learn the most from Zapatismo.

It is also during this time that one can see in the Zapatistas' communiqués, for the first time since the failure of the 1994 First Declaration to start a war against the Mexican government, a critique of themselves as they tried to build the world they wanted to see, in front of the world. It was announced that the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN), the Zapatista Army of National Liberation, was overstepping its decision-making power in the municipalities and local governments, women were not being treated equally in terms of participation in the JBG and other areas, the environment was being harmed, drugs were being grown, human trafficking was taking place through Zapatista territory, and the five *caracoles* (regions of Zapatistas' territory, literally 'snail shells') were developing unevenly (Marcos 2006). Accordingly, the Zapatistas had to expand and multiply their analysis of power within their own territory: in terms of gender, the environment, local law, cooperative production and so on.

In undertaking this massive project of 'learning how to self-govern', the Zapatistas focused less on political reform with the state and more on creating a prefigurative politics: without overthrowing the state, they wanted to achieve a maximum of autonomy within it (and with others outside it). But one of the most difficult aspects of this was inventing a political body that would allow for the maximum inclusion of participation and autonomy with a minimum of exclu-

sion and representation. This was created using a mixture of indigenous tradition, popular assemblies, consensus decision-making and rotational governance (positions changed every fifteen days to make sure everyone learned how to govern equally). In a word, they created a generalised direct democracy based on a maximum feedback loop of political participation. While certainly a work-in-progress, these were its practical horizons (see Marcos 2006).

But the Zapatistas have never been satisfied with local revolts, no matter how successful. While it may have appeared that during these years the Zapatistas became focused 'inward', one of the central purposes of this constructivist turn (not to be mistaken for an inward turn) was to be able to sustain a certain level of cooperative productive development based on common property (not private or public) and to share it with others, not just within the *caracoles* but with the world. Since 1994, the Zapatistas had been on the receiving end of international aid, but after 2003 one can see in their communiqués a sustained and novel effort to provide material and political support to struggles around the world against neoliberalism (textiles, dolls, maize, public endorsements, coffee and so on) (see Marcos 2006). Where previous concepts of solidarity had all been, for the most part, one way in direction (Soviet internationalism, Third World solidarity, international human rights and even material aid in the case of natural disasters and so on), the Zapatistas invented a whole new model of *mutual* global solidarity by sharing and encouraging others to mutually share support and aid, even in cases where they have very little (as the Zapatistas did). This kind of mutual support has resulted in a host of interesting solidarities, both political and economic (see Walker 2005).

These years leading up to *La Otra Campaña* (The Other Campaign), from 2003 to 2006 and beyond, have been misunderstood as 'years of silence' and under-theorised, in part due to a dearth of empirical research (compared to pre-2003 studies), but also perhaps in part because of a waning of interest in the 'newness' of Zapatismo. But it is from 2003 onwards, in my view, that the Zapatistas have the most to contribute to a philosophical investigation into how a revolutionary alternative to neoliberalism will have been built. I argue that the Zapatistas offer us several helpful concepts that respond to the four problematics of revolution mentioned previously. In response to the question of how to understand the dominant relations of power such that revolution is desirable, they propose the practice of what Marcos calls a *diagnóstico del sufrimiento* (a diagnostic of suffering)

documented in *Beyond Resistance* (2010: 11). In response to the question of how to transform those relations of power, they propose the practice of building the autonomous *Juntas de Buen Gobierno*. In response to the question of what kinds of institutions we can put in their place, they propose the practice of *mandar obedeciendo* (leading by obeying), and in response to the question of who belongs to the struggle, they propose the practice of the global *Encuentro* (the encounter). In sum, their constructivist theory of revolution is quite similar to that of Deleuze and Guattari's: neither a utopian programme laid out in advance, the effect of 'social constructs', the capture of state power, an evolutionary development or the potentiality for revolutionary change as such, but rather the committed arrangement and distribution of heterogeneous elements or singularities without vanguard, party, state or capital. This politics, like that championed by Deleuze and Guattari, is based on autonomy and the participatory self-management of political problems.

III. Overview

Guided by the methodology of conceptual assemblage and the intervention of a constructivist reading, this book proposes to draw on the work of Deleuze, Guattari and the Zapatistas in order to extract a new political philosophy of revolution helpful for understanding and motivating the present, although perhaps young, revolutionary sequence. In particular, it proposes four specific revolutionary strategies or 'tactical pointers for the conditional imperative of political struggle': (1) a multi-centred diagnostics, (2) a prefigurative transformation, (3) a participatory process and (4) mutual global solidarity. Accordingly, the chapters of this book will propose and defend each of these strategies in turn. Additionally, each chapter is composed of three major subsections. The first section critically distinguishes the proposed strategy from two others: one based on political representation and the other based on political differentiation without construction. The second section then draws on at least one major idea from Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy to help assemble the strategy proposed in the chapter, before the third section draws on at least one major political practice from Zapatismo to help assemble the proposed strategy.

    Chapter 1 argues that the return to revolution located in Deleuze, Guattari and the Zapatistas can be characterised by a diagnostic strategy of using history motivated by the relative rejection of all

previous forms of historical representation (patriarchy, racism, statism, capitalism, vanguardism and so on) and a concern for their immanent diagnosis. Although this claim clearly rejects the representational readings of Deleuze, Guattari and Zapatismo, it is obviously quite similar to the philosophy of difference described earlier in this chapter. As such, it may seem relatively uncontroversial. But my argument includes three crucial and underemphasised dimensions of this rejection: firstly, that it is a *relative* rejection, meaning that political representation always plays a more or less active role in political life even if only in the mode of 'being warded off' by more participatory practices. That is, even in its relative absence, it still exerts force as an immanent historical potential of any political practice. Secondly, I argue that political representation is not a homogeneous philosophical category, since there are several distinctly different types of representation. These differences are found not only in terms of content, such as race, class, gender, economics and so on, but also in formal structure, such as coding, overcoding and axiomatisation. Thirdly, I argue that these types of relative representation always intersect and coexist with each other to different degrees in every political situation. Against the *necessary* historical emergence of these different types of political representation, but also against their *merely contingent and coexistent* emergence, I argue instead, drawing on Deleuze and Guattari's historical topology and what the Zapatistas call their diagnostic of suffering, that their return to revolution is characterised by their use of these types of representation as a way to understand the political dangers and opportunities presented in the situation to be transformed. But how then can one escape this matrix of political power and representation?

In Chapter 2, I argue that this return to revolution found in the work of Deleuze, Guattari and the Zapatistas is also characterised by a prefigurative strategy of political transformation aimed at constructing a new present within and alongside the old. Opposed to achieving revolutionary transformation by an evolutionary process of transition, progress and reform in representation, or achieving it simply through a spontaneous rupture with the present, prefigurative political transformations emerge as what will have been under way alongside the dominant political reality. Drawing on Deleuze and Guattari's theory of deterritorialisation and the Zapatistas' practice of the *Juntas de Buen Gobierno*, I argue that prefigurative revolutions are thus those types of transformation that are able to sustain the creation of a new present and connect it up to other struggles

happening elsewhere. This type of political revolution is thus neither tied entirely to the determinations of its past (with its pre-given possibilities) nor to the potentialities of its future always yet-to-come. Rather, it is constructive of a new present that transforms both the past and the future. But how then can these revolutionary transformations be sustained beyond their relative autonomy and prefiguration?

In Chapter 3, I thus argue that we can locate in Deleuze, Guattari and the Zapatistas a participatory strategy for creating a revolutionary body politic that is able to sustain these prefigurative transformations. A participatory body politic does not simply establish new conditions for political life based on a 'more just' sphere of political action whose foundational principles are still controlled by political representatives. Nor does a participatory body politic merely aim to establish anti-institutions, whose sole purpose is to undermine all forms of representation and await the possibility that something new, and hopefully better, may emerge. Rather, a participatory and revolutionary body politic is built and sustained through an expressive process whose founding conditions are constantly undergoing a high degree of direct and immanent transformation by the various practices and people who are also transformed, to varying degrees, by its deployment. In particular, I argue in this chapter that this participatory 'feedback loop' can be located in Deleuze and Guattari's concept of consistency, found in *A Thousand Plateaus* and *What Is Philosophy?*, and in the Zapatistas' political practice of 'leading by obeying' (*mandar obedeciendo*). I argue that, in order to understand the structure and function of this consistency and of leading by obeying in this new body politic, we need to understand how their conditions, elements and agencies work differently than in representational and anti-representational institutions. I argue this by drawing on three concepts in Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy that correspond to the conditions, elements and agencies of consistent revolutionary institutions: the abstract machine, the concrete assemblage and the persona.[22] Just as these three concepts immanently transform one another in a relationship of 'order without hierarchy',[23] according to Deleuze and Guattari, so does leading by obeying provide the egalitarian framework for the revolutionary institutions of the Zapatistas (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 87/90). But the participatory nature of a revolutionary body politic still leaves the question, 'how will these new political bodies be able to connect up with each other across their radical differences?'

Thus, Chapter 4 draws on all the previous chapters in order to argue that we can locate in Deleuze, Guattari and the Zapatistas a strategy of revolutionary political affinity based on the mutual global solidarity of such participatory political bodies. Revolutionary political affinity, I argue, is not simply a matter of integrating marginalised demands back into the dominant territorial-nation-state apparatus based on modifying specific criteria for citizenship or aiding those who need help. Nor is it a matter of recognising the universal singularity of all beings to become other than they are. Rather, revolutionary political affinity is a matter of solidarity: when revolutionary political bodies, namely those who remain unrepresented or excluded from dominant forms of political affinity, find in each other, one by one, the transuniversality and mutual aid of each other's singular struggles. Singular-universal solidarity is thus not a matter of recognition, charity or even radical difference, but rather a mutually federated difference or 'contingent holism' of heterogeneous singular-universal events in worldwide struggle. The task of this chapter is thus to avoid the dangers of exclusion and universal singularity and to propose a theory of political solidarity instead, drawn from Deleuze and Guattari's concept of nomadism and the Zapatistas' global practice of *Encuentros Intercontinentales*. In particular, I argue first against the concepts of 'citizenship' and 'difference' as desirable models of political belonging insofar as the former is structurally exclusionary and the latter is unable to theorise any concrete relations between multiple coexistent conditions. Secondly, I argue that, opposed to these two dangers, revolutionary solidarity should be defined instead by the federated connection between multiple singular-universal conditions without totality.

Finally, I conclude with a reconstruction and reflection upon the relative accomplishments of the chapters and the argument of the book as a whole. In particular, the conclusion addresses the problem remaining at the end of the book: how can mutual global solidarity take on a decision-making power such that the world's organised struggles against neoliberalism can form an acting counter-power without private property, necessary political exclusion, economic exploitation or a centralisation of this counter-power itself? While Deleuze, Guattari and the Zapatistas provide excellent resources for constructing a new political philosophy of revolution, they are only able to lay the groundwork to deal with this problem that has also yet to be resolved in the present revolutionary sequence at the level of the World Social Forum. This is a significant barrier to a real

transition away from global capitalism and requires a further philosophical investigation into the currently emerging forms of political and philosophical experimentation that contribute to this problem's resolution.

Notes

1. By 'strategy' I mean something composed of both philosophical concepts and political practices.
2. It is important to mention here that Guattari has written several books, which more directly address the concept of revolution. However, Guattari's writings on politics and revolution are best understood, I believe, within the larger philosophical framework developed in Guattari's work with Deleuze. Nonetheless, Guattari's books *Molecular Revolution: Psychiatry and Politics* (1984), *Molecular Revolution in Brazil* (2008) and his short book with Antonio Negri, *New Spaces of Liberty, New Lines of Alliance* (1990), all offer invaluable contributions to the philosophy of revolution that I develop in this book.
3. The Occupy movement and the alter-globalisation movement have both been characterised as leaderless and horizontal movements (Hardt and Negri 2011). For an explicit strategic connection between these three movements see Klein 2011; Rodríguez 2011.
4. The return to revolution here should be understood as a differential return, a return that takes up again the charge of creating a new world but does so with entirely different strategies.
5. There are, however, a lot more influences on today's radical Left than the Zapatistas.
6. To be clear, I will not be drawing on my own empirical research (ethnographies, interviews and so on) of the Zapatistas. Rather, I will draw on the vast empirical research already produced by those more qualified in ethnography than myself.
7. In addition to all of the literature on the alter-globalisation movement cited in this book, I am indebted to the following articles that argue that a new revolutionary sequence has already begun: Harvey 2010; Graeber 2002; Grubacic and Graeber 2004.
8. The World Social Forum's *Charter of Principles* also supports several of the strategies I propose in this book (World Social Forum 2001).
9. Evans claims to offer 'a Deleuzian reading of the Zapatista experience'. He also claims that 'Deleuze provide[s] us with a meaningful basis for political action' (Evans 2010: 142).
10. This is what Deleuze and Guattari, following Rémy Chauvin, would perhaps call 'the *aparallel evolution*' of theory and practice (1987: 18/10).
11. 'In all cases, [Deleuze] presents a world understood as a complex of

interconnected assemblages (earth, territory, forms of deterritorialization and reterritorialization), where the overriding norm is that of deterritorialization.'

12. 'Overturning all orders and representations in order to affirm Difference in the state of permanent revolution which characterizes the eternal return' (Deleuze 1994: 75/53). 'To make the simulacra rise and affirm their rights' (Deleuze 1990: 303/262).

13. 'There are, effectively, features that justify calling Deleuze the ideologist of late capitalism' (Žižek 2004: 184).

14. Being is no longer naturally emergent, as in early works, according to Toscano. In *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari now claim that political strategy precedes Being and that multiplicity must be constructed.

15. Except Nick Land, who affirms deterritorialisation as absolute escape without consistency; see Land 1993.

16. 'Desire is always assembled and fabricated on a plane of immanence or composition which must itself be constructed at the same time as desire assembles and fabricates' (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 125/103). 'A tool remains marginal, or little used, until there exists a social machine or collective assemblage which is capable of taking it into its "phylum"' (1987: 85/70; see also 115/96).

17. *The Signature of the World* deals with ethics, not politics.

18. In this way my approach is similarly distinct from Hanjo Beressem's approach in 'Structural Couplings: Radical Constructivism and a Deleuzian Ecologics' in *Deleuze/Guattari and Ecology* (2009). While Beressem does gesture to a radical constructivism of some kind, he does not understand it in the truly political and overtly revolutionary way that Deleuze and Guattari do. 'When I use the term "radical ecology" or "radical philosophy" these do not immediately concern what is generally considered a "radical ecology" or "radical philosophy" or a "radical politics"' (Beressem 2009: 58). A radical constructivism that does not immediately concern what is generally and actually considered radical politics is counter to the aims of the current book and to the aims of Deleuze and Guattari's revolutionary strategy more generally.

19. Constructivism is the concept Deleuze and Guattari mobilise against accusations of political spontaneity. 'In retrospect every assemblage expresses and creates a desire by constructing the plane which makes it possible and, by making it possible, brings it about . . . It is in itself an immanent revolutionary process. It is constructivist, not at all spontaneist' (Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 115–16/96).

20. 'We are not a proletariat, our land is not your means of production and we don't want to work in a tractor factory. All we want is to be listened to, and for you big-city smart-arses to stop telling us how to live. As for

your dialectic – you can keep it. You never know when it might come in handy' (Kingsnorth 2004: 29).

21. 'The examples of popular organization we know today are, therefore, either extremely experimental and localized (like the Zapatista movement) or theologico-political (like Hezbollah)' (Badiou 2008a: 656). 'Through a combination of constructions of thought, which are always global or universal, and political experiments, which are local or singular but can be transmitted universally, we can assure the new existence of the communist hypothesis, both in consciousness and in concrete situations' (Badiou 2008b: 117).

22. There are many types of abstract machines according to Deleuze and Guattari. In Chapter 1 I elaborate three kinds of abstract machines (territorial, statist, capitalist) but in Chapter 3 the concept of the abstract machine, concrete assemblage and machinic persona should be understood as referring only to the 'consistent' type of machines.

23. 'Pas hiérarchique, mais vicinal' (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 87/90).