Choreographing Relations

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Choreographing Relations
Practical Philosophy And Contemporary Choreography
in the works of Antonia Baehr, Gilles Deleuze, Juan Dominguez,
Félix Guattari, Xavier Le Roy and Eszter Salamon

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Introduction

"The peculiarity of our experiences, that they not only are, but are known, which their 'conscious' quality is invoked to explain, is better explained by their *relations – these relations themselves being experiences* – to one another."[1]

Choreographing Relations undertakes the experiment of a conceptual site development of contemporary choreography by means of practical philosophy. The book focusses on the singular relations that each choreography creates with the audience. This singularity is itself due to an assemblage of specific relations: relations to objects, to music, to bodies, relations between bodies, relations of visibility, relations between forces, relations of movement and rest, etc.[2] Only through the interplay of these relations in a choreographic assemblage can an audience be addressed in a singular way.

Relations are not describable as fixed or signified objects; rather, they are extremely subtle, changeable, they have different coexisting durations and themselves rely on a compound of other relations that can only be grasped from within a dynamic differential of the sensible.[3] As a challenge for thinking the performances of the empirical as differences that are shown whilst differing, these relations set choreography into an intriguing resonance with practical philosophy: according to the above quoted epigraph of William James's radical empiricism, relations are experiences that participate in the constitution of knowledge, but these relations are quite peculiar ones; they are difficult to seize since they also defy knowledge in forming, according to

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1   William James, *Essays in Radical Empiricism* (1912; Mineola and New York: Dover Publications, 2003), 13.

2   For the notion of assemblage, see chapter 1 Contamination, section 1.1 Opening – in vivo, 19.

3   Throughout this book the English term "sensible" will not primarily be used in terms of that which is reasonable but principally as that which relates to the work of the senses and to that which makes sense. This usage of the word "sensible" already implies the different distribution of the sensible that Jacques Rancière has conceptualized in his book *Le partage du sensible: Esthétique et politique*. In his translation *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible,* Gabriel Rockhill opts for the term "sensible" precisely with this meaning: "The 'sensible', of course, does not refer to what shows good sense or judgement but to what is *aistheton* or capable of being apprehended by the senses." Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible,* trans. and introduction Gabriel Rockhill, reprint (New York and London: Continuum, 2006), 85. Originally published as *Le partage du sensible: Esthétique et politique* (Paris: La Fabrique-Editions, 2000). The concept of articulation will propound this double meaning of the sensible as relation of sensation and of sense, see chapter 2 Articulation, section 2.2.1 How to Make Sense with Signs: Sensible Differences, 117–128.

Rodolphe Gasché, the most "minimal thing", the elemental matter of concern for any empiricism.[4]

Focussing relations means to allocate the singularity of a choreography not to its ingredients, but to account for the event of qualitative transformations within the relational assemblage of choreography. Rather than delimiting the field of choreography to a definition of what choreography *is*—definition which then functions as prescriptive exclusion of that which choreography can also be—this book attempts to stretch ontology to the capacity of choreography, which is expressed in the practical question: *what can choreography do?* By shifting the focus from an inventory of the empirically given to the potential of choreography, a potential which encompasses the capacity of creating new relations, a stable demarcation of the object of choreography can be deviated from. This is a key aspect to an onto-ethical agenda of choreography: to unfold with precision that which choreography actually *does* as a *can-do*-determination of what choreography *is*.

The question what choreography can do thus opposes the predetermination of choreographic operations and their generalization into a static and merely actual image of choreography's ontology.[5] A consideration of the ontological modes of existence of choreography requires an analysis of the specific procedures of choreographies whilst encompassing, simultaneously, the genetic conditions through which their "doing" comes into being and provides new options. Depriving the ontology of choreography of the ethical aspect of what a choreography can do means to subtract from choreography the power to let new relations emerge and to divest from philosophy the capacity to explain the conditions of the new.

A thought that tackles the question what choreography can do is profoundly indebted to Spinoza's *Ethics*, which characterizes the body not as something that would be given and explicable through its components, but according to its power to affect and to be affected.[6] The degree of the body's

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4   Rodolphe Gasché, *Of Minimal Things: Studies on the Notion of Relation* (Stanford, CA: Stanford Univ. Press, 1999), 4. For Deleuze's concept of relation see chapter 1 Contamination, section 1.3 Transcendental Empiricism: Deleuze and Guattari's Method, 71–76. For the impact of relations in Deleuze's reading of Spinoza, see chapter 1 Contamination, section 1.2 *Product of Circumstances* by Xavier Le Roy: A Critique of the Circumstances of Production, 53–54 and section 1.3 Transcendental Empiricism: Deleuze and Guattari's Method, 74.

5   The notion "actual" is here opposed to the virtual and not to the possible. For this difference in Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy, see chapter 1 Contamination, section 1.3 Transcendental Empiricism: Deleuze and Guattari's Method, 81–82.

6   Benedict de Spinoza, *Ethics,* ed. and trans. Edwin Curley, introduction Stuart Hampshire (London: Penguin, 1996); for the definition of the body as power to affect and to be

power to be affected and to affect determines whether its power to act is increased or diminished and thus indicates the limits of what we can do. In this fashion, Spinoza's body obliges thought to enquire about the pathways from passions and affections to an increase in action, a more powerful degree of participation, which is orchestrated through a multiplicity of relations.[7]

In his reading of Spinoza, Gilles Deleuze extends Spinoza's project of transforming ontology into an ethics by showing how the onto-ethical question what a body can do is immediately tied to the question of methodology.[8] In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Félix Guattari return to Spinoza's onto-ethics of the body's capacity to be affected and to affect:

> "We know nothing about a body until we know what it can do, in other words, what its affects are, how they can or cannot enter into composition with other affects, with the affects of another body, either to destroy that body or to be destroyed by it, either to exchange actions and passions with it or to join with it in composing a more powerful body."[9]

Accordingly, the collaborative concepts of Becoming and the Body without Organs (BwO) can be read as a direct response to the question what a body can do because they account for the qualitative transformations of bodies (becomings) and the creation of intensive zones of difference (BwO).[10]

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affected, see, for example, 70 (III, D3) and 569 (IV, 39 Proof). Concerning Spinoza's question, what the body can do, see Spinoza, *Ethics*, 495 (III, 2 scholium): "No one has yet determined what the body can do... For no one has yet come to know the structure of the body". Also see chapter 1 Contamination, section 1.2 *Product of Circumstances* by Xavier Le Roy: A Critique of the Circumstances of Production, 48–51.

7 For Spinoza's notions of adequacy and inadequacy see chapter 1 Contamination, section 1.2 *Product of Circumstances* by Xavier Le Roy: A Critique of the Circumstances of Production, 48; for Deleuze and Le Roy's use of it see the same section, 53.

8 Gilles Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, trans. Martin Joughin, 4th reprint (New York: Zone Books, 1990), 221. Originally published as *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1968): "Hence the properly ethical question is linked to the methodological question of how we can become active." See also the preceding pages in the book, which are laid out more precisely in chapter 1 Contamination, section 1.2 *Product of Circumstances* by Xavier Le Roy: A Critique of the Circumstances of Production, 54.

9 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, vol. 2, trans. and foreword Brian Massumi (London and New York: Continuum, 2004), 284. Originally published as *Mille Plateaux* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1980). For the whole chapter on the concept of Becoming, see 256–341.

10 For Deleuze and Guattari's reference to Spinoza in the chapter of the BwO, see also Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 170: "After all, is not Spinoza's *Ethics* the great book of the BwO? [...] Drug users, masochists, schizophrenics, lovers—all BwO's pay homage to Spinoza." For a reading of Deleuze equation of ontology with ethics, see Kathrin Thiele, *The Thought of Becoming: Gilles Deleuze's Poetics of Life* (Zurich and Berlin: Diaphanes, 2008), 26: "The equation of 'ontology = ethics' has to be seen as a re-formulation of the equational map that Deleuze draws out in his discussion of

At the same time that both concepts are immersed in the power of a body, they are themselves expressions of a concisely elaborated method of creating concepts.[11] This method relies on an uprooting logic, a methodology that Deleuze calls "transcendental empiricism".[12] This methodology, which is still rarely analyzed systematically, ploughs up the foundations of classical empiricism as well as that of transcendental philosophy by blazing the trail for a radical empiricism that is based on arepresentational processes of differentiation in intensity which force us to think what can only be sensed.[13]

The four choreographic "concepts" of this book—Contamination, Articulation, *Retenu* and *Dé-lire*—are practical movement-thoughts of the contemporary choreographies of Antonia Baehr, Juan Dominguez, Xavier Le Roy and Eszter Salamon.[14] Driven by the desire to bring to light these choreographic concepts, my book elaborates them on the basis of Deleuze and Guattari's methodology of transcendental empiricism. Saying that these concepts are developed on the basis of transcendental empiricism does not mean that this methodology could be merely applied or used; it rather renders explicit the philosophical implications which underlie the process of conceptualizating choreography. The implications of transcendental empiricism devise a shift in the differential relations of the philosophical image of thought, a shift in

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theory/thought and practice. In giving this equation the weight it deserves, in the course of the book we will develop the following claims: 1) in the affirmation of theory/thought as practice, ontology becomes a practical question, a task 'to create', while ethics becomes the affirmation of the world, as it is (radical immanent ethics) instead of the idealist rejection of this world; 2) Deleuze's ontology of becoming is, therefore, always already an active thought, which on the other side of the equation leads to the transformation of Ethics into the ethos of becoming that is best understood as a poet(h)ics of life as our argument will show; and 3) this leads to nothing but the re-formulation of the ethical question itself, which instead of being concerned with the essence of the world and its subjects—expressed in the imperative 'What ought to be'—can only ever expose itself to the most difficult task of 'What is to be done next'."

11   See chapter 1 Contamination, section 1.1 Opening – in vivo, 23–25.

12   My reading of Deleuze and Guattari's transcendental empiricism is analyzed in chapter 1 Contamination, section 1.3 Transcendental Empiricism: Deleuze and Guattari's Method, 67–93. It scrutinizes the implications of this methodology from a point of view of relations by starting with an explication of the exteriority of relations and going on towards Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy of differential relations.

13   This condensed formula of Deleuze and Guattari's transcendental empiricism anticipates Mark Rölli's concise formula for transcendental empiricism, which will be laid out more precisely, chapter 1 Contamination, section 1.3 Transcendental Empiricism: Deleuze and Guattari's Method, 67–93.

14   Connotating these practical movement-thoughts as "concepts" shall here stress their impact for a philosophy of concepts, instead of equating choreography to philosophy. In a certain way, my book thus attempts a parallel construction to Deleuze's cinema books, see Conclusion, 237.

which method appears no longer as overarching theory but as a singular procedure that is defined each time anew with each choreography and each new concept. As a consequence, it is in method, understood as a singular, material and experimental practice, that choreography and philosophy encounter each other, without concealing their profound differences.[15]

The choreographies that my book explores have been chosen as outstanding examples of choreographic method at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries. All of them were produced in Western/Continental Europe and all of them extended the understanding of what choreography can do, although at the time of their release they were commonly confronted with the judgement that they were negating or conceptualizing dance.[16] These choreographies are: *Holding Hands* by Antonia Baehr (2001), *All Good Spies Are My Age* by Juan Dominguez (2002), *Product of Circumstances* (1999) and *Self-Unfinished* (1998) by Xavier Le Roy and *What a body you have, honey* (2001) and *nvsbl* (2006) by Eszter Salamon.[17] Despite the fact that in the meantime the impact of these choreographies has been acknowledged, the qualitative transformations they conferred on choreography are still analytically underexposed, in particular in relation to their methods, that is, the way in which they create highly specific aesthetic regimes through movement.

The first two concepts of this book, contamination and articulation, transpose Spinoza's and Deleuze and Guattari's question of the body onto choreography by attempting to provide a methodological response to the question *what can choreography do.* The hypothesis that this text explores is that choreography contaminates and articulates.

The first concept, contamination, will examine the qualitative transformations which bodies are capable of with the example of the lecture-

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15 See also Alice Chauchat, "10 Statements On Choreography", http://www.everybodystool box.net/?q=node/131 (Accessed 2/2/2009): "Each work demands and defines itself through its own methodology."

16 For the discussion about "non-dance" and "conceptual dance", see chapter 3 Choreographing Relations of Contamination and Articulation, section 3.1 *Retenu*, 157–166; for Juan Dominguez's turn on this, see section 3.2 *Dé-lire*: Rereading the Production of Choreography, Choreographing the Force of Time: *All Good Spies Are My Age* by Juan Dominguez, 212.

17 In addition to the intriguing methods of the chosen choreographies, I have applied another condition for my selection, which is that of having attended each analyzed choreography at least twice. In this respect, the selection of works neither represents a historical period of dance, nor does it pretend to be exhaustive; it rather locates my own fields of interest and expresses my subjective possibilities of attending these performances between Paris and Berlin during these years. The present book thus intends to provide a methodological framework for conceptualizing what choreography can do in a necessarily open-ended set of specific methods of qualitative transformations.

performance *Product of Circumstances* by Xavier Le Roy.[18] This choreography analyzes Le Roy's biographical pathway from molecular biology to dance, which is characterized by a critical interrogation of the circumstances of scientific and artistic research on the body.[19] As does Le Roy's choreography, the first chapter thus investigates the body's capacity to enter into new relations and to come to an understanding of this capacity through the experiment of qualitative transformations. Therefore it will be explored how Le Roy constructs this change in relations through the specific assemblage of a lecture-performance, which implements the critique of the conditions of scientific and artistic productions already in its own procedure, namely, as the power to assemble.[20] Whereas molecular biology isolates bodily tissues from their circumstances and separates the scientific product from the process of research—the same as a dance performance becomes a product once it is shown—Le Roy's method reinserts the circumstances of his artistic production back into the product of his choreography. Contamination, so the argument of this chapter, is the body's power to assemble.

In view of this constitutive capacity of the body, the concept of contamination questions the idea of the immune (that which is exempted from assemblage) that Donna Haraway has early criticized as being based on a logic of belonging which gives rise to binary oppositions between Self and Other, the normal and the pathological.[21] Contamination is pathological, a logic of pathos, if pathos is no longer misconstrued as disease or as pity, but understood in its positivity, that is, as a passion that sets in motion, perforates pre-established terms and permeates bodies through its power to assemble. As the most advanced methodology to account for such processes of assemblage, Deleuze and Guattari's transcendental empiricism shall be examined subsequent to Le Roy's assemblage *Product of Circumstances* in order to show

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18   See chapter 1 Contamination, section 1.2 *Product of Circumstances* by Xavier Le Roy: A Critique of the Circumstances of Production, 32–66, as well as the additional material in the Appendix, A.4–A.5, 248–249.

19   For a synopsis of *Product of Circumstances*, see chapter 1 Contamination, section 1.2 *Product of Circumstances* by Xavier Le Roy: A Critique of the Circumstances of Production, 36–43.

20   Ibid., 19.

21   Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (London: Free Association Books, 1991), 204: "My thesis is that the immune system can be considered as an elaborate icon for principle systems of symbolic and material 'difference' in late capitalism. Pre-eminently a twentieth century object, the immune system is a map drawn to guide recognition and misrecognition of self and other in the dialectics of Western biopolitics. That is, the immune system is a plan for meaningful action to construct and maintain the boundaries for what may count as self and other in the crucial realms of the normal and the pathological."

right from the outset of the book how choreography and philosophy can resonate together precisely in their difference of method.[22]

The second concept of my book explores choreography as articulation.[23] The concept of articulation is key for any methodology of choreography since it accounts for the qualitative transformations in sense. This chapter will refute the implicit assumption of many methodological approaches that choreography would or should resemble language. Instead, the chapter develops a definition of articulation as a practice that entails a double and simultaneous movement of composition and differentiation.[24] From the viewpoint of such a compositional and differential practice, language appears only as one specific mode of articulation. By claiming that language presupposes an articulatory practice rather than the other way round, the concept of articulation levels any hierarchy between textual and non-textual practices and thereby first and foremost allows for an encounter between philosophy and choreography on an equal basis.

In order to account methodologically for the manner through which a choreography makes sense, the concept of articulation requires a closer investigation of sign concepts. It will be shown how the signifying sign of Saussure differs from Deleuze's intensive sign, in particular with regard to the implicated concept of difference.[25] In a second analytical step, Deleuze and Guattari's notion of double articulation shall be outspread together with their concept of incorporeal materialism.[26] It will be shown how the double articulation of Deleuze and Guattari actually draws on the mutual interplay of content and expression and, furthermore, how this distinct relationship involves their assemblage theory. This articulation will be adopted for choreography because it foregoes any likening of the elements of movement, physical acts, signs, durations and theatrical conventions to either

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22 See chapter 1 Contamination, section 1.3 Transcendental Empiricism: Deleuze and Guattari's Method, 67–93.

23 See chapter 2 Articulation, 95–143.

24 See chapter 2 Articulation, section 2.1 Articulatory Practice – in situ, 102–104; for Le Roy's use of the double movement of articulation, see 104.

25 See chapter 2 Articulation, section 2.2.1 How to Make Sense with Signs: Sensible Differences, 117–128.

26 For Deleuze and Guattari's notion of double articulation and Le Roy's use of it in *Product of Circumstances*, see chapter 2 Articulation, section 2.2.2 How to Make Sense with Differential Compositions: Towards a Topology of Articulations, 129–132; for the incorporeal materialism, see the same section, 134–137.

semiological approaches or to acts of signification. These elements, instead, become differential compositions which relate to the intensity of sensations.[27]

In a last step, and in order to circumnavigate the pitfall of reproducing binary oppositions between movement and language, the concept of articulation will be established as a topological concept; for nothing is gained if articulation merely figures as physical counterparadigm to language. Alternatively, topology enables the description of dynamic spaces whose forms might vary, albeit without losing their characteristic determination.[28]

The two methodological concepts contamination and articulation thus attempt to help specify, on the one hand, the way in which a choreography assembles bodies, participates in their qualitative transformations and is able to convey the force of its singular assemblage. On the other hand, the concept of articulation allows to refine the manner in which movements, body images and physical acts can make sense by differentiating a set of heterogeneous parts through their connection.

The third chapter investigates two further choreographic concepts, the *retenu* and the *dé-lire*.[29] The *retenu* names the choreographic creation of an aesthetic regime that highlights processes of continuous transformations in which movement and perception cannot be separated.[30] As a matter of kin-aesthetics, the *retenu* is intimately connected with questions of time-perception so that an examination of Husserl's notion of retention and Bergson's notion of duration will prove necessary.[31] The movement of the *retenu* will then be analyzed in detail by following two different aesthetic regimes to which it gives rise: first, the cinematic *retenu* of the choreographies *Self-Unfinished* by Xavier Le Roy and *What a body you have, honey* by Eszter Salamon, where the qualitative transformations produced through kinetic means concern body images.[32] Second, it will elaborate on the cine-

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27   See chapter 2 Articulation, section 2.2.2 How to Make Sense with Differential Compositions: Towards a Topology of Articulations, 132–134.

28   Ibid., 138–142.

29   See chapter 3 Choreographing Relations..., section 3.1.1 Cinematic *Retenu*: *Self-Unfinished* by Xavier Le Roy and *What a body you have, honey* by Eszter Salamon, 167–187 and 3.1.2 Cine-emotional *Retenu*: *Holding Hands* by Antonia Baehr, 188–208.

30   For the French notion of the *retenu*, see chapter 3 Choreographing Relations..., section 3.1 *Retenu*, 153, fn 365. See also the excursion to Henri Matisse's linography *Le Retenu*, 145–149.

31   For Husserl's notion of retention and Bergson's notion of duration in relation to the retenu, see chapter 3 Choreographing Relations..., section 3.1 *Retenu*, 154–157.

32   It is in this context that the performance *nvsbl* by Eszter Salamon will be discussed: as an intriguing limit-point for the continuous transformations of the *retenu*, see chapter 3

emotional *retenu* of *Holding Hands* by Antonia Baehr, where the qualitative transformations concern the continuous transformation of sensations.[33]

The last concept, *dé-lire*, is established in the performance *All Good Spies Are My Age* by Juan Dominguez.[34] This choreography 're-reads' (*dé-lire*) the process of its own fabrication and presents this 'reading' as a performance. The aesthetic regime of this choreography consists primarily of the semio-logical moves of a screened text which brings a complex structure of temporal layers to the fore. Five techniques shall be analyzed by which Dominguez implements the temporal effects of his silent narration-strip as a choreography of time.[35] A second strand will delve into the way in which Dominguez' narration associates its composition of time with the "delirium" of making sense. It will be necessary for this second part to invest in Bergson's concept of "fabulation" and Deleuze's concept of "the powers of the false".[36] Approaching Dominguez' display of text-cards as a text-movie will then connect the choreography with Deleuze's concepts of the movement-image and the time-image, and it will be shown how *All Good Spies Are My Age* compellingly interweaves these two concepts.[37]

A short remark on the circumstances of this book shall conclude this introduction: this book has been written in English by a non-native English speaker and, although my text was revised in respect to grammar, locutions and readability, no effort was made to conceal this fact. Rather than effacing the transcultural circumstances of my research, they shall explicitly be affirmed as necessary conditions for this research, including, thereby, the risk of certain redundancies.[38]

Choreographing Relations..., section 3.1.1 Cinematic *Retenu*: *Self-Unfinished* by Xavier Le Roy and *What a body you have, honey* by Eszter Salamon, 186–187 and Conclusion, 241. See Appendix, A.8, 250.

33 See chapter 3 Choreographing Relations..., section 3.1.2 Cine-emotional *Retenu*: *Holding Hands* by Antonia Baehr, 188–208. See also Appendix, A.1–A.2, 247.

34 See chapter 3 Choreographing Relations..., section 3.2 *Dé-lire... All Good Spies Are My Age* by Juan Dominguez, 209–234. See also Appendix, A.3, 248. The French neologism *dé-lire* is explained, 210, fn 483.

35 See chapter 3 Choreographing Relations..., section 3.2 *Dé-lire...*, subsection Performative Matters of Time, 218–226.

36 For Bergson's concept of "fabulation" and Deleuze's "powers of the false", see chapter 3 Choreographing Relations..., section 3.2 *Dé-lire... All Good Spies Are My Age* by Juan Dominguez, 229–234.

37 See chapter 3 Choreographing Relations..., section 3.2 *Dé-lire...*, subsection Double *Dé-lire*, 227–234.

38 The titles *retenu* and *dé-lire* cannot be separated from the sociological, cultural and eco-nomic circumstances in which these choreographic concepts became possible and also available for myself. Translating these captions would mean to eradicate these traces of the circumstances of production.

Issues of translation appeared throughout my work, and since concepts are not merely a matter of terms, these issues of translation do not only concern linguistic translations of French and German notions into English, but rather involve very particular cultural traditions and social practices. In his translation of Jacques Rancière's *Distribution of the Sensible*, Gabriel Rockhill has expounded this view of translation as a relational reconfiguration of meaning:

> "In short, translation is neither based on universal criteria nor is it condemned to a solitary encounter with the intractable original. It is a historical practice that always takes place - implicitly or explicitly - within a social framework. This means that translation, as I propose to understand it under the current circumstances, is not simply a form of mediation between two distinct languages. It is a relational reconfiguration of meaning via a logic of signification that is rendered possible by a socio-historical situation."[39]

It is for this reason that this book also witnesses to the highly fertile production and distribution circuits of contemporary choreography between Berlin and Paris at the turn of the twenty-first century. Without the extremely prolific artistic and conceptual encounters in Paris and Berlin that preceded my research in London, this book would probably not have been possible.

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[39] Gabriel Rockhill, "Translator's Preface: The Reconfiguration of Meaning", to *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible* by Jacques Rancière, reprint (New York and London: Continuum, 2006), viii.

CHAPTER 1: Contamination

Qualitative Transformations Of Bodies:
The Power To Assemble And To Be Assembled

Fig. 1: *Product of Circumstances* by Xavier Le Roy, photo: Katrin Schoof.

"Can the production of a dance piece become the process and the production in itself, without becoming a product in terms of performance and representation? What kind of organization for which body? For which process of work? For which performance? Is it possible to work on all these parameters at the same time? What is performance? What is representation? Is the human body an extension of the environment or/and the environment an extension of the body?"[40]

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40 Xavier Le Roy, "Product of Circumstances", in *Performance: Positionen zur zeitgenössischen szenischen Kunst* [Positions for Contemporary 'Scenic' Arts], ed. Gabriele Klein and Wolfgang Sting (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2005) 91. For the printed documentation of *Product of Circumstances* with photographs of the performance, see Le Roy, "Product of Circumstances", in *Laboratorium*, ed. Hans Ulrich Obrist and Barbara Vanderlinden (Cologne: Dumont; Antwerpen Open; Roomade, 2001), 191–199. In comparison to the documentation, the more recent text version has been slightly modified and will be referenced throughout this chapter.

1.1 Opening – in vivo

Choreographing Relations aims to investigate the qualitative transformations that are at stake in contemporary choreographic practices. These qualitative transformations essentially concern the relations with the audience that each performance creates in a specific way. To relate in a specific way to the audience implies a particular commitment to the issue of participation in theatre practice, a commitment that critically questions and reassesses what can be shared through choreography. Accordingly, the first two chapters of this book, "Contamination" and "Articulation", attempt to provide an answer to the question of what choreography can do. They will explore the hypothesis that choreography involves participation through the double procedures of contamination and articulation. Both concepts are inseparably interwoven and reciprocally determined.[41] They attempt to establish a new methodological framework that is able to account for the singularity of choreographic performances by identifying the specific manners and ways to contaminate bodies and to articulate sense.[42]

In this chapter, the encounter with choreography shall be examined as qualitative transformation that concerns bodies. The chapter argues that the conceptualization of bodily transformations still marks a theoretical dark zone which, when being conceptualized, tends to separate the effects of a transformation from its very process.[43] The term contamination crucially indexes this problem of conceptualizing change solely through its negative effects. Contamination ordinarily designates the infection of a body by a (contagious) disease, a radioactive radiation and, in a larger sense, an impurification able to seriously impair corporeal functions. Against these purely pejorative assignations, signalling a danger zone that one is better off not crossing, this

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41   See Conclusion, 240.

42   Chapter 3 will examine these singular ways to compose choreography with contamination and articulation, focussing on the choreographies *Self-Unfinished* by Xavier Le Roy, *What a body you have, honey* and *nvsbl* by Eszter Salamon, *Holding Hands* by Antonia Baehr and *All Good Spies Are My Age* by Juan Dominguez. It will elaborate how the *Retenu* combines the continuous transformations of kinetic movements with the cinematic and cine-emotional regime of duration, and how the *Dé-lire* composes and de-composes semiological relations with the multiplicity of immanent times, see chapter 3 Choreographing Relations of Contamination and Articulation, 145–234.

43   For recent research about changes in the role of the spectator, see Jan Deck and Angelika Sieburg, *Paradoxien des Zuschauens: Die Rolle des Publikums im zeitgenössischen Theater* [Paradoxes of Watching: The Role of the Spectator in Contemporary Theatre] (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2008).

chapter intends to elaborate a concept of contamination in its positivity, in which the implicated qualitative transformations are not misconstrued from the outset as exclusively harmful effects which the contamination might provoke. A mere inventory of substrates or agents, taken as a conceptual snapshot of change, cannot account for these qualitative transformations. Instead one needs to examine contamination as that which forces the body to open up to other bodies, to enter different relations and to change qualitatively.

Thus countering a reactive discourse on change, this chapter will explore the qualitative transformations of bodies, their capacity to relate to an outside and to partake in milieus as that which is first and foremost constitutive of any sort of life. According to this vivacity, contamination shall be defined here as the power to assemble and to create new relations, curious alliances.[44] This power applies to the living matter of bodies and their performances. Saying that a choreography contaminates means determining the force of its singular assemblage and showing the manner in which it allows for specific encounters and becomings of all kinds.

In opposition to medical discourse, theatrical discourse has conceptualized the qualitative transformations of performance as catharsis.[45] The

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44 The word "to assemble" is here used in Deleuze's sense as an *agencement*, which designates the gathering of heterogeneous parts in a multiplicity, itself constructive. See Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues II*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, preface Deleuze (London and New York: Continuum, 2006), 52. Originally published as *Dialogues* (Paris: Flammarion, 1977). "What is an assemblage? It is a multiplicity which is made up of many heterogeneous terms and which establishes liaisons, relations between terms, across ages, sexes and reigns – different natures. Thus, the assemblage's only unity is that of co-functioning: it is a symbiosis, a 'sympathy'. It is never filiations which are important, but alliances, alloys; these are not successions, lines of descent, but contagions, epidemics, the wind." It has furthermore to be noted that in *A Thousand Plateaus* the term assemblage substitutes Guattari's earlier notion of the "desiring-machines", because its conceptualization in *Anti-Oedipus* had given rise to many subjectivist misinterpretations, see ibid., 75 and also Brian Massumi, *A User's Guide to Capitalism and Schizophrenia: Deviations from Deleuze and Guattari* (Cambridge, MA and London: The MIT Press, 1992), 82. See also Manuel DeLanda, "Assemblages Against Totalities", in *Deleuzian Events: Writing/History*, ed. Hanjo Berressem and Leyla Haferkamp (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2009), 35-38, and, see chapter 2 Articulation, section 2.2.2 How to Make Sense with Differential Compositions: Towards a Topology of Articulations, 132–134.

45 The Aristotelian concept of catharsis relies on merely two bequeathed passages, see Aristotle, *Poetics*, ed. and trans. Stephen Halliwell (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard Univ. Press, 1995), 1449b, 47–48 and id., *The Politics and the Constitution of Athens*, ed. Stephen Everson, trans. Jonathan Barnes (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1996); Book VIII: "Education in the Ideal State", 1341b–1342a, 204–205. In the introduction to the *Poetics*, the translator Stephen Halliwell resituates catharsis in the realms of pleasure and comprehension, see Stephen Halliwell, "Introduction", in *Aristotle: Poetics*, 19: "While, in the absence of an Aristotelian elucidation of the term for tragedy, the significance of catharsis cannot be conclusively established, we are more likely to approximate to the

opposition to contamination could not be more obvious, since a catharsis testifies to a purification, a cleansing release of damaging affects, and to a feeling of interior redirection. Similar to the medical discourse on contagion, the theatrical discourse thus isolates the qualitative transformation from its effects, but in quite a different way: where medical discourse is focalized around the negative results, catharsis appears to imply only positive effects; it provides the feeling of change by leaving the subject, its psyche and body, generally intact.[46]

The concept of contamination poses the issue of catharsis anew, though neither in terms of the psychological reorganization of a preceding subject,

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truth if we keep in view the ethical importance of emotions for Aristotle, the *Poetics'* treatment of tragic pity and fear as the basis of a special form of pleasure (53b10–13), and, finally, the wider principle that the pleasure derived from mimetic works of art rests on an underlying process of comprehension." See also how Richard Schechner compares the predominance of the Aristotelian tragedy model in Western theatre with the Indian Natya-sastra by Bharata-muni, see Richard Schechner, *Performance Theory*, reprint of the rev. and exp. 2nd ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 333–339. For the liminal status of catharsis, see Victor Turner, "Variations on a Theme of Liminality", in *Secular Ritual*, ed. Sally Moore and Barbara Meyerhoff, 36–57 (Assen: Von Gorcum, 1977), and also Erika Fischer-Lichte, "Der Körper als Zeichen und Erfahrung: Über die Wirkung von Theateraufführungen" [The Body as Sign and Experience: On the Reception of Theatre Perfomances], in *Theater im Kulturwandel des 18. Jahrhunderts. Inszenierung und Wahrnehmung von Körper-Musik-Sprache,* ed. id. and Jörg Schönert, 53–68 (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 1999). For another approach to catharsis as kinaesthetic sensation and 'sympathetic' response, see the performance *Holding Hands* by Antonia Baehr as analyzed see chapter 3 Choreographing Relations..., section 3.1.2 Cine-emotional Retenu: Holding Hands by Antonia Baehr, 203–208.

46 According to Erika Fischer-Lichte, catharsis implies the possibility of a "restitutio in integrum" of the subject, see Erika Fischer-Lichte, "Zuschauen als Ansteckung" [Watching As Contagion] in *Ansteckung. Zur Körperlichkeit eines ästhetischen Prinzips* [Contagion. On the Corporeality of an Aesthetic Principle], ed. id., Mirjam Schaub and Nicola Suthor, 49 (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2005). This idea, however, of a person suffering theatrical virulence simply in order to emerge from it as integrally reconstituted subject or as educated citizen must itself be questioned, since it more resembles reports of mysterious healing than a serious argumentation of affective and physiological processes. It seems more plausible to explain the idea of a catharsis as "restitutio", considering the historical decline of physiological aspects within the discourse of affects. As Fischer-Lichte and also Richard Kuhns expound, from the 18th century onward the affect got mainly relegated to the interior of a psyche and was envisioned as spiritual rather than as physiological force. In this way, affects were interiorized and subjectified, see Erika Fischer-Lichte, "Zuschauen als Ansteckung", 42. According to Richard Kuhns, the "powerfully plurisignificative" connotations of the ancient Greek word *catharos*, i.e. clean, unsoiled, underwent a significant change into depoliticized psychological transformations. Richard Kuhns, "katharsis/ catharsis", in *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics*, ed. Michael Kelly, vol. 3 (New York and Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1998), 62-63. Concerning the affect theories of early modernity, see Johann Anselm Steiger, Ralf Georg Bogner, Ulrich Heiner, Renate Steiger, Melvin Unger and Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, *Passion, Affekt und Leidenschaft in der Frühen Neuzeit* [Passion, Affect and Fervency in Early Modernity], vol. 2 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2005), in particular section 3, 687–875.

nor in terms of a tangible effect without consequences. Instead contamination ties the disruptive effect of catharsis back to the transformations through which it emerged. It indicates the manner in which the spectators are involved and affected—even at the threshold of perception—without being effected, without having to undergo any imposition of a specific mode of behavior.[47] As the power to assemble, contamination is the intrinsic relation to an exteriority; it constitutes a middle, a milieu, which undoes the dichotomies of the internal and the external, the productive or receptive, and the material and the immaterial. In his *Relational Aesthetics*, Nicolas Bourriaud accounts for this power of the artistic assemblage to spread:

> "The contemporary artwork's form is spreading out from its material form: it is a linking element, a principle of dynamic agglutination."[48]

Contamination perforates the centralized abyss of dichotomies, their splitting up into mutually exclusive or contradictory entities, and corroborates their coexistence in a state of becoming. It accounts for a dynamics that can neither be examined adequately in terms of static and punctiform analysis, nor through the filter of preexisting categories. It follows that a contamination essentially concerns method.

Method as Singular, Material and Experimental Practice

In contrast to an understanding of method as an abstract procedure that could apply to a previously separated material, this book conceives method as singular, material and experimental practice. In choreographic practices, the method used to carry out a corporeal movement converges with the bodies involved. The movement is irreducibly linked to the body; likewise, it is inseparable from its particular exposure through lighting, spacing, timing, costumes, etc. Choreography thereby evidences the inseparability of method and material without, however, undoing the distinction between the body and the performative method.

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47 It is crucial to underline one aspect, namely that the form of the audience's behavior remains undetermined and allows for heterogeneous and individual expressions. In contrast, for example, to stand-up comedy, where the moment of laughter is precisely calculated into the dramaturgical timeline, the contemporary choreographies that this text will examine address the spectators in a particular manner without implying a general image of reaction.

48 Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, trans. Simon Pleasance and Fronza Woods with the participation of Mathieu Copeland (Paris: Les Presses du Réel, 2002), 21. Originally published as *Esthétique relationnelle* (Paris: Les Presses du Réel, 1998).

This inseparability of a body and the various methodological ways to examine it through movement builds the key subject matter of the performance *Product of Circumstances* by the French dancer and choreographer Xavier Le Roy.[49] With the format of the lecture-performance, this choreography reconsiders the connections between the body as raw material, as Becoming of biographical and theoretical matter, and as agent for methods of transformation. As an outstanding example of choreographic method that critically questions the conditions and procedures of scientific and artistic research methods, *Product of Circumstances* will function as this chapter's point of departure.[50] The chapter will reveal how the performance explores

49 *Product of Circumstance*s was produced in 1999 by in situ productions and Le Kwatt and coproduced by Podewil Berlin, Tanzwerkstatt Berlin and by the Senat of Berlin (Department for Science, Research and Culture), see Appendix A.5, 249. The choreographic works and collaborations of Le Roy encompass the triptych *Narcisse Flip* (including *Things I Hate To Admit* 1994, *Zonder Fact* 1995, *Burke* 1997), the recreation of Yvonne Rainer's *Continuous Project-Altered Daily* (1970) and Steve Paxton's *Satisfying Lover* (1968), both in collaboration with the Quatuour Albrecht Knust; *Blut et Boredom*, a collaboration with Laurent Goldring and Le Kwatt, 1996; *Das To.Be. Project*, a collaboration with Alexander Birntraum, 1997; *Self Unfinished*, 1998, the collective research project *namenlos*, 1998, *Product of Circumstances*, 1999; the conception and realization of a piece by Jérôme Bel entitled *Xavier Le Roy*, 2000; together with in situ productions the organization of the event *E.X.T.E.N.S.I.O.N.S.# 2.7 Berlin*, 2000; *E.X.T.E.N.S.I.O.N.S. # 3.2 Utrecht*, 2001 and the piece *tricoter (titre provisoire)*, 2001; *Giszelle*, a solo for and with Eszter Salamon, 2001; *Project*, 2003. In 2003 he staged, directed and choreographed the opera *Theater der Wiederholungen* by Bernhard Lang, followed in 2005 by a part of *Seven Attempted Escapes from Silence* and the concert evening *Movements für Lachenmann* with music by Helmut Lachenmann; in 2006 he staged the *Theater der Wiederholungen* in Paris as well as *Ionisation* with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. In 2007 the solo *Sacre du Printemps* was created, and in 2008 *More Movement für Lachenmann*. For more detailed information about Le Roy's choreographic works as well as corresponding literature, see http://www.insituproductions.net, under "Productions"/ "Bibliography".

50 For Le Roy's own writings and interviews, see in particular Xavier Le Roy and Jan Kopp, "Dialogue", *Art Press* 23, special issue "Medium: Danse" (Paris, November 2002): 98–102; Jacqueline Caux" "Penser les contours du corps" [Thinking the Contours of the Body], interview with Xavier Le Roy, *Art Press* 266 (March 2001): 19–21; Myriam von Imschoot, "Correspondence with Xavier Le Roy", in *Pratiques, figures et mythes de la communauté en danse depuis le XXe siècle* [Practices, Figures and Myths of the Dance Community from the 20th Century Onward], ed. Claire Rousier and Christophe Wavelet (Pantin: Centre National de la Danse 2003), 335–366; Bojana Cvejic, Xavier Le Roy and Gerald Siegmund, "To end with jugment by way of clarification", in *It Takes Place When it Doesn't: On Dance and Performance since 1989*, ed. Martina Hochmuth, Krassimira Kruschkova and Georg Schöllhammer, preface Sigrid Gareis (Frankfurt a.M.: Revolver, 2006), 49–58; Thomas Hahn, "Der Subversive: Xavier Le Roy. Bilanz und Selbstkritik acht Jahre nach E.X.T.E.N.S.I.O.N.S.: Wie schwierig ist es für den Pionier des 'Konzepttanzes', das alte Schema von Kreation und Produktion zu unterlaufen? Ein Gespräch mit Xavier Le Roy" [The Subversive Xavier Le Roy; Bilan and Self-critique Eight Years after E.X.T.E.N.-S.I.O.N.S.: How Difficult it is for the Pioneer of 'Concept Dance' to Undermine the old Schema of Creation and Production?"], *Ballettanz* (August–September 2007): 47–51. For the contextualization of Le Roy's works, see Boyan Manchev, *The Body-Metamorphosis*

the problem of contamination as a qualitative transformation of bodies through encounters. The performance shows the body as dynamic interface of a mode of existence, a mode of experimentation, and a mode of production, the becomings of which risk being dismantled once their processes are extracted as consumable products.

A second strand is necessary in order to outline the chapter. The consideration of method as singular, material and experimental practice has been a major issue for the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and his collaborative writings with Félix Guattari. As experimental method, their philosophy has become a key reference that exemplarily undertakes the challenge to bind theoretical constructions back to the empiricist problems of life, while accounting for potentials of transformations that allow for the creation of new relations. According to Deleuze and Guattari, the task of philosophy consists in the creation of concepts, engaging in conceptualization as the result of an encounter and as practice of intervention:

> "Empiricism is by no means a reaction against concepts, nor a simple appeal to lived experience. On the contrary, it undertakes the most insane creation of concepts ever seen or heard. Empiricism is a mysticism and a mathematicism of concepts, but precisely one which treats the concept as object of an encounter, as a here-and-now, or rather as an *Erewhon* from which emerge inexhaustibly ever new, differently distributed 'heres' and 'nows'. Only an empiricist could say: concepts are indeed things, but things in their free and wild state, beyond 'anthropological predicates'. I make, remake and unmake my concepts along a moving horizon, from an always decentred centre, from an always displaced periphery which repeats and differenciates them."[51]

Deleuze and Guattari's understanding of concepts as philosophical creations is of crucial importance for the method of this book and, thus, shall be briefly outlined. According to *What is philosophy?* the concept is described as

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(Sophia: Altera, 2007); Patricia Brignone, *Ménagerie de Verre. Nouvelles pratiques du corps scéniques* [*Menagerie de Verre:* New Practices of the 'Scenic' Body] (Paris: Al Dante, 2006); and Rose Lee Goldberg, *Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present*, rev. and exp. ed. (London and New York: Thames & Hudson, 2001), 179–180. A more detailed overview over the works specifically refering to *Product of Circumstances* will be given in the next section, see 1.2 *Product of Circumstances* by Xavier Le Roy: A Critique of the Circumstances of Production, 32.

51 Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton, 2nd reprint (London and New York: Continuum, 2001), xix. Originally published as *Différence et répétition* (Paris: PUF, 1968).

"sensibilia" that require the philosopher's taste, whose signature it is.[52] This concept possesses an autopoietic character, which is portrayed to advance like a meteorite. Its complexity is determined by its manifold and intensive components that define its irregular contours. The relation between the components are processual and modulatory variations of neighbourhood. That is the reason why Deleuze and Guattari's concept is a fragmentary whole with an endo-consistency (which is the inseparability of its components) and an exo-consistency (which lies in the relations to other concepts). Brian Massumi resumes the relation of the concept to its outside as a communicable force of a set of circumstances:

> "Because the concept in its unrestrained usage is a set of circumstances, at a volatile juncture. It is a vector: a point of application of a force moving through a space at a given velocity in a given direction. The concept has no subject or object other than itself. It is an act."[53]

Vital for Deleuze and Guattari's epistemology is that each concept indexes a problem and has a proper becoming. A persisting problem, as such, it condenses its own components as intensive ordinates (rather than spatio-temporal coordinates). Consequently, each concept can be understood as a heterogenesis with an ordinal 'intension' that traverses its components in a mode of survey without distance. Nevertheless, and this is most important for the present context of choreography, it does not fuse with the material in which it realizes itself.[54] As an intensity, it says the event instead of

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52 The following summary of the main characteristics of a concept refers to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (London and New York: Verso, 2003), 5–34. Originally published as *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie,* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1991).

53 Massumi, *A User's Guide,* 5–6. For clarity, the passage right before the quote shall be reproduced: "The concepts [a nomad thought] creates do not merely reflect the eternal form of a legislating subject, but are defined by a communicable force in relation to which their subject, to the extent that they can be said to have one, is only secondary. Rather than reflecting the world, [the concepts] are immersed in a changing state of things. A concept is a brick. It can be used to build the courthouse of reason. Or it can be thrown through the window. What is the subject of a brick? The arm that throws it? The body connected to that arm? The brain encased in the body? The situation that brought brain and body to such a juncture? All and none of the above. What is its object? The window? The edifice? The laws the edifice shelters? The class and other power relations encrusted in laws? All and none of the above. 'What interests us are the circumstances'."

54 This distinction between the concept and the non-conceptual is crucial for Deleuze's philosophy of difference, since it allows thinking an exteriority as difference, without subordinating this difference to the concept. As opposed to a logic of representation, difference for Deleuze is no longer subordinated to the identity of the concept so that the concept becomes a creation and the repetition a difference without concept; see in particular the "Introduction" of Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 1–35, here 334:

representing the essence of a subject, encompassing thereby an incorporeal and a material dimension.[55] Described by Deleuze and Guattari as a surface and absolute volumina, the concept is relative and absolute at the same time: relative to its components and absolute in its density. Or put differently: infinite in survey and finite in the movement of the contours of its components. A concept is self-referential and imposes itself via creation. This self-positing character of the concept as experimental multiplicity tailors the event it is and makes it irreducible to an experience.[56] Precisely by engaging thought, from the outset, with the sensible, Deleuze and Guattari's concept provides real resonances with the choreographic work.

Following Deleuze and Guattari's definition of the concept as object of an encounter, this book will explicate the encounter between choreography and philosophy through the four concepts of Contamination, Articulation, *Retenu* and *Dé-lire*. This work claims an intrinsic affinity between the philosophical works of Deleuze and Guattari and the choreographic works of Antonia Baehr, Juan Dominguez, Eszter Salamon and Xavier Le Roy. This affinity, however, is not grounded in any prospect that Deleuze and Guattari may have conceptualized dance or that Le Roy might stage a Deleuzian concept.[57]

"When difference is subordinated by the thinking subject to the identity of the concept (even where this identity is synthetic), difference in thought disappears. In other words, what disappears is that difference that thinking makes in thought, that *genitality* of thinking, that profound fracture of the I which leads it to think only in thinking its own passion, and even its own death, in the pure and empty form of time. To restore difference in thought is to untie this first knot which consists of representing difference to the identity of the concept and the thinking subject." See also section 1.3 Transcendental Empiricism: Deleuze and Guattari's Method, 75–78.

55 "Incorporeal materialism", a concept that Deleuze and Guattari develop from the Stoics and Foucault, concerns the relation between bodies and the event of sense, see chapter 2 Articulation, section 2.2.2 How to Make Sense with Differential Compositions: Towards a Topology of Articulations, 132–134. In the *Logic of Sense*, Deleuze examines the incorporeal transformations of bodies alongside the sense-events of Carroll's Wonderland, see Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester, with Charles Stivale, ed. Constantin V. Boundas, 3rd reprint (London and New York: Continuum, 2004), e.g. 108–109. Originally published as *Logique du Sense* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1969). In *A Thousand Plateaus*, he elaborates together with Guattari the irreducible dublicity of the incorporeal and material dimension of bodies in the context of the performative, where this dimension is distinguished as machinic assemblage of bodies and as collective assemblage of enunciation, see Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 97–98: "On the one hand it is a machinic assemblage of bodies, of actions and passions, an intermingling of bodies reacting to one another, on the other hand it is a collective assemblage of enunciation, of acts and statements, of incorporeal transformations attributed to bodies."

56 The implications of this irreducibility of experience are discussed more closely, see section 1.3 Transcendental Empiricism: Deleuze and Guattari's Method, 74 and 79.

57 Contrary to his numerous writings on art and literature, Deleuze has never written about dance as a subject matter unto itself. Nevertheless, his works and also the collaborations

One cannot but highlight this aspect, since such a representational transfer from philosophy to choreography and vice versa simply does not work; it never makes a singularity. *Choreographing Relations* claims instead that the affinity between Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy and the choreographies by Baehr, Dominguez, Le Roy and Salamon lies precisely in their respective elaboration of method as singular, material and experimental practice. Considering this practice, one can only emphasize their differences: whereas choreography creates relations with the audience through the dynamic assemblages of movements, signs and qualitative transformations that intermingle bodies, the philosophical concepts of Deleuze and Guattari process the immanent coherence of semiotic and abstract machinic bodies in motion through writing. Yet, precisely because of their difference, both methods echo each other strongly in the struggle for an arepresentational process which undermines the separation of bodies and their circumstances by highlighting their complex and immanent interplay, their mutual extensions and their diagrammatic transversality.

This understanding of method shall be investigated in this chapter. Accordingly, the choreography *Product of Circumstances* by Xavier le Roy shall be examined in view of its method which proceeds as an immanent critique of the circumstances of the production of qualitative transformations. On the other hand, Deleuze and Guattari's "transcendental empiricism" shall be

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with Guattari demonstrate not only a permanent preoccupation with movement, bodies and sensation, but they perform precisely a differential production of dynamics on the level of concepts. They do not aim to represent movement, but rather to set things in motion and to make movement itself a work. In this sense, the references to dance and choreography, be it for example Fred Astaire or Busby Berkeley, are less interesting for the present research than the conception of difference and repetition that Deleuze develops in his book on theatre and by which he counters the logic of representation, see Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*. The same is valid for the choreographies examined in this chapter: they do not stage Deleuzian concepts (even if they might be informed by Deleuzian ways of thinking) just as they do not perform concepts in general. Their work does not consist in representing movements, but in choreographing movements, which means creating them. Whether these movements are directly embodied or evoked through differential moves in a choreographic set of circumstances remains an artistic issue which arises only through a specific assemblage. Nonetheless, their medium is the same for all, it is a performance. And precisely because it is a performance that uses techniques and tools that differ from the conceptual ones, one has to mention the *Theatre of Repetitions* (*Das Theater der Wiederholungen*), a music/theatre piece, composed by Bernhard Lang, that Le Roy directed and choreographed in 2003. It quotes Deleuze's struggle against representation by the means of repetition and consequently repeats the musical part in its difference as choreography, see the website by Xavier Le Roy http://www.insituproductions.net/_eng/frameset.html/, under "Productions" and "Theater der Wiederholungen").

analyzed as a method that takes into consideration the implicit assumptions of empirical analysis and develops the immanent field of a logic of relations.

The concept of contamination reflects on the way in which both methods pose a difference to the philosophical and choreographic territories of bodies, how they inject change into the geo-philosophy of movement-thought and how they distribute different zones of commitment. Both of them are dynamic charts swarming with movements. Consequently, this chapter will lay open how both methods resonate with one another and how their respective procedures actually create a highly dynamic assemblage in itself, an assemblage composed of heterogeneous processes which, when being reduced one to the other, simply cease to resonate and cohere. Before examining the method of Le Roy's *Product of Circumstances* and Deleuze and Guattari's relations, it is necessary to outline the methodological gap in the reception of choreographies, since it specifies the problems associated with the deliberation of concepts of choreography.

The Methodological Gap in the Reception of Choreographies

Over the last three decades, the implications of the body as a speaking and resistant feature at the intersection of culture and biology have been discussed broadly in philosophy and theories of the performing arts.[58] The importance of the shift in paradigm termed "the performative turn" cannot be overestimated, for it permitted the temporalization of social, cultural and artistic conventions

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58 For some exemplary philosophical approaches to the body, see Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'* (New York and London: Routledge, 1993); Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1994); Michel Feher, Rawna Naddaf and Nadia Tazi, eds., *Zone 3–5. Fragment for a History of the Human Body*, 3 vols. (New York: Zone Books 1989); Donna Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*; Jean-Luc Nancy, *Corpus* (Paris: Editions Métailé, 1992); Cathérine Gallagher and Thomas Laqueur, eds., *The Making of the Modern Body: Sexuality and Society in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1987); Michel Bernard, *Le corps* [The Body], 3rd ed. (Paris: Seuil, 1995); for an overview see also Mariam Fraser, Monica Greco, eds., *The Body: A Reader* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005); Donn Welton, ed., *The Body: Classic and Contemporary Readings* (Oxford and Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 1999). For approaches to the body in relation to dance, see Susan Leigh Foster, *Corporealities: Dancing, Knowledge, Culture and Power* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996); Gabriele Brandstetter and Hortensia Völckers, eds., *ReMembering the Body: Körper-Bilder in Bewegung*. With STRESS, an image-essay by Bruce Mau and texts by André Lepecki (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz, 2000); Sabine Huschka, *Merce Cunningham und der moderne Tanz. Körperkonzepte, Choreographie und Tanzästhetik* [Cunningham and Modern Dance: Body Concepts, Choreography and Dance-Aesthetics] (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2000).

as recurrent mise en scène of a practice and, by highlighting in this way the processuality, it could unravel a potential for change through a different repetition of habits and conventions.[59]

Nonetheless, the reception of choreographies remains caught between two poles: whereas the first pole is characterized by a phenomenological terminology focusing on the kinaesthetic experience and the perceptible modes of a living or "fleshy" body in its transformations, the second pole is characterized by a theoretical terminology focusing on the significant performativity of a specifically contextualized semiotic body.[60] Frequently,

59 For the notion of the performative turn see Erika Fischer-Lichte, "Vom 'Text' zur 'Perfor-mance'. Der 'performative turn' in den Kulturwissenschaften" [From 'Text' to 'Perfor-mance': The 'Performative Turn' in Cultural Studies], *Kunstforum International* 152 (2000): 62; Id., *Ästhetische Erfahrung: Das Semiotische und das Performative* [Aesthetic Experience: The Semiotic and the Performative] (Tübingen and Basel: A. Francke, 2001), 9–21; Id., *Ästhetik des Performativen* [Aesthetics of the Performative] (Frankfurt a.M: Suhr-kamp, 2004), 9; Dieter Mersch, "Ereignis und Aura. Radikale Transformation der Kunst vom Werkhaften zum Performativen" [Event and Aura: Radical Transformations of Art; from the Work to the Performative], *Kunstforum International* 152 (October 2000): 100; Uwe Wirth, ed., *Performanz. Zwischen Sprachphilosophie und Kulturwissenschaften* [Per-formance: Between Language-Philosophy and Cultural Studies] (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhr-kamp, 2002), 262.

60 In recent years, academic publications on choreography and dance have exploded; ergo, a general overview of the current status of research cannot be provided. Instead, a restricted field of research shall be outlined with some examples from Europe and abroad, examples which concern either the choreographic works discussed in this thesis or the theoretical scopes of dance and performance. Ann Cooper Albright, *Choreographing Dif-ference: The Body and Identity in Contemporary Dance*, (Middletown: Wesleyan Univ. Press, 1997); Gabriele Brandstetter, *Bild-Sprung:TanzTheaterBewegung im Wechsel der Medien* [Image-Leap: Dance-Theatre-Movement in the Changeover of Media] (Berlin: Theater der Zeit, 2005); Erika Fischer-Lichte, *The Transformative Power of Performance: A New Aesthetics*, trans. Saskya Iris Jain (London and New York: Routledge; Chapman & Hall, 2008); Mark Franko, *Dancing Modernism/Performing Politics* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1995); Adrian Heathfield, ed., *Live: Art and Performance* (London: Tate Publishing, 2004); Gabriele Klein and Christa Zipprich, eds., *Tanz, Theorie, Text*, Jahr-buch Tanzforschung 12 [Dance, Theory, Text] (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2002); André Lepecki, *Exhausting Dance: Performance and the Politics of Movement* (New York and London: Routledge, 2006); André Lepecki and Sally Banes, eds., *The Senses in Per-formance* (New York and London: Routledge; Taylor & Francis, 2007; Laurence Louppe, *Poétique de la danse contemporaine* [Poetics of Contemporary Dance] 2nd compl. ed. (Brussels: Contredanse, 2000); id., *Poétique de la danse contemporaine – la suite* (Brussels: Contredanse 2007); Randy Martin, *Critical Moves: Dance Studies in Theory and Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke Univ. Press, 1998); Helmut Ploebst, *No Wind, No Words: New Choreography in the Society of the Spectacle; Nine Portraits: Meg Stuart, Vera Mantero, Xavier Le Roy, Benoît Lachambre, Raimund Hoghe, Emio Greco/PC, João Fiadeiro, Boris Charmatz, Jérôme Bel* (Munich: Kieser, 2001). For an important inter-cultural and constantly evolving online platform on choreography and dance, see the Austrian internet journal *Corpus*, http://www.corpusweb.net/; for new publications in English, German and French, see also the specialized online bookshop *Books On the Move* by Agnès Benoît-Nader at http://www.booksonthemove.eu