VIOLENCE, LANGUAGE AND FASCISM: REPRODUCTIONS OF DISCURSIVE IDENTITIES [1]

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Abstract. *Violence is explored as a language mode by which one attempts to bring oneself forth in a world of transient meanings and uncertainty. Violence is problematised, not as a deviation from a norm of ordered identities, but rather as the norm of such identification itself carried to extremes. In this light, violence is posited as serving particular maintenance functions by means of which a fragile identification is sustained through the over-encoding of the differences expressed by the Other.*

1. INTRODUCTION: SPEAKING POSITIONS.

The issue of violence, especially violence as a directly interpersonal event as opposed to the more diffuse violence of warfare and social injustices, is a topic that tends to be understood almost exclusively as a pathology, a deviance from centred and unified normative psyches. By framing it as such, violence is then discussed in individual terms of causation, which adopt a retrospective view starting from the event of violence and working backwards in time to unfold its aetiology, as if merely to confirm that violence is an expression of some or other psychological sequela.

The perspective of the present writing will undertake to problematise the notion of violence as a deviance of ordered and unified psyches, proposing instead that violence be read as the construction of particular forms of identification *vis-à-vis* the social "other". Such forms of identification produced through violence will position violence itself as a *politics of coming-into-being in the context of others*. This requires a foregrounding of the processes by which identities are constructed and maintained, together with those modes of reality configurations that support such "styles" of identification. To accomplish such a task this writing will focus on the role of language in the production of both the real and the forms of identity with which the real is cohered. It will be developed that reality and identity are produced through a complex interplay of signs (words) which obtain particular currencies of power from repeated usage within a sociocultural context. That is, language will not be regarded as a passive medium of communication but rather as a form of *constitutive power*. One of the more well known proponents of this view, Michel Foucault, expressed this in the terse formula of "power/knowledge": this refers to the sociocultural process whereby what is "known" constitutes the privileging of one form of discourse over and above

another form, which results in the power of dominance with respect to the way the world is seen and participated in (Foucault, 1980).

From this perspective, the world is no longer a given in itself; it is produced by means of the dominance that some ways of seeing and participating in the world have obtained through usage and "authority". Maturana (1988) discusses this at length in terms of the ideas of "truth" and "reality" as constructs that obtain legitimacy with respect to certain criteria of validity in circulation within given language communities. In agreement with Barthes (1982), language will be understood here as not a medium through which experiences are communicated as such, but instead as a series of power operations which construct and determine the arrangements and limits of the world within which we find ourselves. Any insistence then on such categories as universal structures, determinate meanings and representations may be read as an operation of power/knowledge whereby the validity of these discourses obtains a privileged position through excluding alternate and rival possibilities from being entered into. Foucault's writings detailed many examples of such exclusionary power/knowledge operations whereby persons who violated the dominant discursive communities were systematically marginalised. In short, the emphasis here will be that "politics *precedes* being" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), in that the shape, form and opportunities for ways of coming into the world are the products of those discourses that permit some styles while excluding others.

In the spirit of Guattari (1984, 1996a), the ideas (concepts) used and offered here are *tools*, developed for a particular use, which is to plot out a topology of violence and some possibilities for intervention into conditions of violence. Writing from such a place is humbling indeed, for these pages map out an experiment in both thinking and intervention. It is hence offered not as *the* way, but rather as *a* way that, by utilising a different series of conceptual tools, alternate understandings of, and potential responses to violence might be developed.

2. LANGUAGE AND "REALITIES".
Maturana (1988) argues that "reality" is produced from particular criteria of accepting explanations to experiences that we, as human beings, find ourselves already engaged in. He goes on to differentiate two broad "explanatory paths" drawn upon to satisfy these criteria of explanatory validity. The first, termed "objectivity-without-parentheses", is "constitutively blind (or deaf) to the participation of the observer in the constitution of what he or she accepts as an explanation" (1988:29). The explanation is regarded as having come from a logical penetration into the heart of an independent and a *priori* objective reality. This path of objectivity-without-parentheses leads the observer to refute responsibility for the negation of other arguments and explanations because the validity of the arguments they claim to be valid does not depend on their participation for its validity to be assured. The consequences of this explanatory path is that "a claim of knowledge is a demand for obedience" (Maturana, 1988:29). Such a claim might be likened to the slogan of the "*X-Files*", that the "truth is out there", and we need only find it and then obey its unequivocal laws. In Maturana's schema, this explanatory path finds its most faithful expression in logical positivism, where the universe is said to unfold according to predetermined laws independent of any observer. The absence of parentheses in this explanatory path might then be equated to certainty and the absence of doubt.

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The second explanatory path, termed "objectivity-in-parentheses", requires that "the observer has to accept as his or her constitutive features all constitutive features of living systems, particularly their inability to distinguish in experience what we distinguish in daily life as perception and illusion" (1988:29). However, the distinction between what constitutes a perception or an illusion is only made by reference to another distinction classified as perception or illusion. Referentiality is a closed loop, with no escaping to an independently existing reality that would act as the final measure of "true" perception. The classification of what constitutes perception and what constitutes illusion is not fixed in the experience: the nervous system is "informationally closed" (Maturana & Varela, 1992), and the sleeping body is just as involved in the reality of the dream as it would be when it is awake and involved in the reality of the perception. From the perspective of the nervous system, it is unable to distinguish which is which.[2] The distinction between reality (perception) and illusion is not given in the experience as such, but is constituted by the language communities which accept or reject, on the basis of particular criteria of validity, which experiences qualify as perceptual or illusory.

According to Maturana's second explanatory path then, reality is a construct of language that is meaningful only in and through language, and valid according to particular language communities where these distinctions obtain acceptability. Language is hence not a benign activity utilised simply to communicate information from one observer-describer to another. Rather, language is *performative* in that the realities that we describe in language are constituted in the manner of their description, and that the criteria of acceptability for the negotiation of these realities are themselves constituted in and through language domains. Language is therefore political in that it produces and sustains particular constructions of the world and its modes of productive (social) relations. These social performative productions are accomplished through "the transmission of order-words, either from one statement to another or within each statement, insofar as each statement accomplishes an act and the act is accomplished in the statement" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987:79). "Order-words" are not to be understood as simply commands or imperatives, but as "the relation of every word or every statement to implicit presuppositions [speech acts] that are, and can only be, accomplished in the statement" (1987:79).

Adopting the constitutive power of language, or Maturana's "objectivity-in-parentheses", images of and claims to an independent and universal reality undergo dramatic crises. Reality is discharged from its status as the ultimate plinth upon which all that is said and done and known rests, to the point that reality is constituted as the product of all that is said and done and known according to the degrees of validity available to that product within particular language communities. The role of language also shifts from the communication by representation of an independent reality, and becomes, in the words of Maturana and Varela (1992), the consensual co-ordination of (social) actions. Language, no longer limited to verbal utterances, is seen to construct, or produce, social topologies that conform to the set of implicit presuppositions and criteria of validity in circulation within specific language communities. These constitute what will later be referred to, following Guattari, as "power formations". To the extent that

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[2]. Lao Tzu is credited with the question as to whether he is a man dreaming of being a butterfly or a butterfly dreaming it is a man. There appears to be a family resemblance between this question and Maturana's objectivity-in-parentheses.

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identities can be read as social topologies of reference, then identities may also be considered as specific power formations, and both the manner or style of their constitution as well as their currencies of maintenance may be subjected to a critical analysis in terms of social production.

2.1. Identity, enunciation, and subjectification.

When psychology informed by an explanatory path of objectivity-without-parentheses is replaced with one informed by an explanatory path of objectivity-in-parentheses, one of the casualties of this shift will be the received certainty of identity. Gergen's (1991) articulate summation of the influences of this second explanatory path suggests that the construct of the self can no longer be held as a fixed and given structure. Emphasising the open-ended aspects of becoming, rather than the completed accomplishment of being, identity (self-hood, personality, personhood) may be regarded as a process continually underway, a task or a project that is "unfinalised" (Bakhtin, 1981). That is, identity is a work-in-progress rather than an achieved goal, an on-going flow of becoming rather than a fixed and determined being, constructed through complex processes of social production, a collective amalgamation of diverse and discontinuous shards of discursive currents, affects, semiotic materials, and existentialising sensations. To form an identity is to bring oneself forth through the selection of and extraction from particular transitory speaking positions, which coalesce as increasingly abstracted forms of reflexivity (meta- and meta-meta- perspectives) converged by socially validated frames of organisation (or "codes") that confer degrees of coherence according to discursive contexts of sensibility wherein such forms of organisation hold currency.

The micropolitics of identity production concern three main operations, namely collective assemblages of enunciation; segmentarity; and performance. Briefly, these can be explained with reference to the simple example of an everyday statement, such as "I am hungry".

By stating that "I am hungry", the utterance or statement is the product of converging, or bringing together, a diverse collection of sensations (affects and intensities) which are organised according to dominant frames of reference by which these sensations are understood as meaningful and through which they can be expressed. These frames of organisation by which the sensations are cohered as meaningful do not belong to any one person: they are culturally determined habits and traditions that are themselves cohered according to the dominant forms of discourse. That, in expressing these sensations in these cohered ways, I locate them as occurring within that frame of reference which I term *my* body, is to locate them as my sensations, which means that the I that speaks has conflated a non-localisable speaking perspective with a localisable body which I now describe as constitutive of the me that speaks. In other words, the I that speaks has occupied a "band width" of sensations (which are degrees and qualities of intensity) and identified this band width as of me, belonging to the me that speaks. In this way, I have therefore localised a body as the site through which intensities pass and have occupied this site as me, thereby identifying myself with *this* body at *this* time with *these* intensities. An affect arises from "intensive and intentional categories, which correspond to an existential self-positing" (Guattari, 1996b:159). The body and its flux of intensities has therefore been possessed as descriptive and constitutive of the temporalised embodiment of my consciousness. However, to do so, each time I make an utterance from this occupied site that localises my consciousness

with this body that speaks at this time, the I that speaks recoils not only into this body, but also into the subject of the statement that is uttered. I am the I that says "I am hungry". I, as a subject, am simultaneously the object of the statement that I speak in my own name. The personal pronoun "I" is a "terminal" held together and localised by the Proper Name of identity and is thus an "assemblage", a site of relative but open-ended coherences of referentiality, affects, sensations, and intensities. The form and dimensions (topologies) of this assemblage are sustained through habits of repetition, coalesced and maintained within discursive and narrative environments. It is from such fluid and circulating milieus that identity is obtained by means of selection, extraction and (temporary) occupation of discursive and narrative threads.

Denied now of an inherent or innate stable sense of self, it is only the Proper Name that prevents a "schizophrenic" collapse of reference: if I am the speaking subject of the utterance which renders me the object of that which I say, then the condition of my occupation of this site of expression is transitory and indeterminate. The object of the utterance continually escapes the closure of the objectification that is performed by my being simultaneously the subject of that statement. My identity is ensured only to the extent that the world within which I make my utterances coheres to the conflation of my speaking position such that the subject and object of my utterances converge. That is, my world as the domain through which I speak my self must cohere and endorse the self that is spoken in a one-to-one determination. However, at the heart of the utterance is a silent emptiness into which all meanings collapse as if into a black hole.[3] Around the circumference of the black hole at the centre of language, specific utterances, direct discourses tend to pick up speed, caught on the event horizon, and sense becomes a stop-gap to the endless relay of significations which perpetually threaten to escape along lines of flight until they lodge themselves into these black holes. It is in this sense that identity must continually be performed for it to retain meaning, since it is but one "stutter" away from a schizophrenic slide (Deleuze, 1990; Deleuze, in Boundas & Olkowski, 1994). But meaning is not a given in itself: it is always communal, social, a coupling between the utterance specifically coded in the social semiologies of a given place and time and the referent with which its relation finds a communal validity. For it to have meaning, personal identity must be confirmed and validated, and may be seen then as a bridge, a set of semiotic scaffolding, that spans the black holes of language, one that is tested daily and must be confirmed through every action. Diverse universes of reference, heterogeneous shards of polyvocal materials, anonymous semiologies, existential affects, intensities, rhythms and ritornellos, are the raw materials by which identities are composed as they are swept along with respect to temporal modulations and socio-spatial configurations. They gain and sustain coherence and validity (meaning) by virtue of their "fit" with the socially constructed shore-line against which the waves of subjectivity flow. Our self performances are seldom more elaborate than an existential improvisation however, confounded and interrupted, supported and modified by everyone else similarly engaged in their own projects of self-improvisation. Self is a performance as much for ourselves as for others: alone upon the boards with the stage lights in our eyes, we are called upon to perform our scripts that we are

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[3]. Examples of this black hole are found in the "stutter" of language, the shift in the flow of a conversation that leaves a particular utterance hanging in the air like a strange forlorn echo, the statement out of context that sounds like gibberish, the joke that is past retirement and falls flat, the neologisms and grunts of a private language as in so-called "twin-speak". These black holes are demonstrated by the endless signifying chains where signs are only meaningful in reference to other signs, and so on.

continually in the process of writing. This process of performing or producing an identity is termed "subjectification", for it concerns the processes by which we express our subjectivity in the instant of our coming-into-being-with-others. Identity is a production, constituted in and through the "collective assemblage of enunciation [that] gives [a] discourse its unity, its gesture, its meaning, as the seat of its coherence" (Guattari, 1996b:180).

2.2. Segmentarity, performance and expression.

Identity is thus a performative politics which imbricates the available discourses of a given cultural context, allowing particular forms of subjectification to be expressed. For example, in patriarchal cultural contexts up until relatively recently, a woman was unable to perform an identity of herself as a career person without meeting and experiencing (as she still often does) hostility from all fronts, and the marginalisation of her career as somehow secondary to her attributed "destiny" of motherhood. Such marginalisation is not only a result of the discourses that specifies the roles and opportunities for women, but also a result of the manner in which the social field is segmented, or cut across with "lines" which divide and fix relations (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). The segmentary line in this case is a binary line that specifies either-or divisions in an endless mutual exclusion: man/woman, young/old, rich/poor, white/person of colour, urban/rural, etc. These lines criss-cross the social field and form dimensions of power, specifying by means of inclusion and exclusion who can say/be what and when and where. Identity, as a collective assemblage of enunciation, emerges through these divisionary lines, imbricating or enfolding them as components of production, which provide supports for particular performances of the self. Identity therefore obtains coherence only to the degree that it is brought forth congruent to these lines of segmentarity.

But because identity is unfinalised or an on-going process of production, its coherence in terms of self-reference and the validity it obtains with respect to its expression requires that the world into which it is brought forth is organised in a manner that is congruent with such enunciation. Yet, as discussed above, the world itself is a process of production and not a given, and hence any coherence between identity and the world is itself a matter of degree. Broadly speaking, a couple of alternatives may be considered with respect to an ethics of subjectification. Drawing from the explanatory path of objectivity-in-parentheses, a person might acknowledge and live within the context of uncertainty, transparency and indeterminateness with the recognition that one's own identity is an open-ended condition of multi-dimensional perspectives in relation with the alterity of other identities similarly engaged in processes of becoming, each drawing on partial knowledges. Alternately and drawing on the explanatory path of objectivity-without-parentheses, one might insist that the world be congruent with the map of one's identification as a being-in-the-world, and exclude those differences, uncertainties and fluctuations that do not cohere according to one's map of identity. The first option, bereft of certitude and transcendent organisational closure and coherence, does not guarantee an ethical positioning vis-a-vis the other however. Indeed, it may even be the lack of identificational certainty and closure that propels some persons toward the most atrocious of action as if in a frenzied attempt to fix themselves in place, to plug up and to seal their own lines of flight which threaten to carry the codes of identity away. An example of this course of action will be examined later with reference to the serial violator. It may also be such uncertainty and indeterminateness that might lead one to desire to be led in an effort to obtain a degree

of certainty through recourse to an authority. It might also situate one to pretend that one is not responsible for one's project of becoming, which leads to what Sartre (1959) calls "bad faith". However, objectivity-in-parentheses might also position one to engage in one's project of becoming *with* others in a manner which respects that s/he is doing so with others who are so engaged also. This latter option might be called "ethics", "love" or even "community".

Nor is an identity informed by objectivity-without-parentheses any better positioned as a guarantee of an ethical project of identification, and may even lead to complacency, racism, arrogance and superiority, hostility, and the negation of the other who expresses difference. As is well-documented in modern history, it has most often been the recourse to such independent and transcendent authorities and received truths that has culminated in genocides, colonisation, religious persecutions, racial and sexual fascisms, and the multitude of national and international warfare. In itself, objectivity with or without parentheses does not describe the ethical quality of one's coming-into-being. It does however, foreground the moment of social production with respect to the constitutive powers of language and discourse, how the world (including our own identity) is brought forth, and what such productions themselves engineer and make possible. At a minimum then, what distinguishes between oppressive and liberative forms of identity is less the identity itself, but rather what it brings forth, what it allows to pass through itself as if a conduit of the possible.[4]

2.3. Semiology and power.
Semiology is usually described as the study of the signs involved in particular language systems. However, upon closer examination, semiology as a system of signs is not merely a benign system of referents and significations. Nor, for that matter, is semiology a unified field of study, but rather itself breaks up into diverse series of semiolog*ies*, where each semiology concerns the manner of coalescences at multiple levels of organisational redundancy. The diverse array of "sclerotic encodings" (Guattari, 1996b), or conjugated meanings, repeat power formations according to the dominant type of semiotisation in a pragmatic field. Such power formations activate complex assemblages, to the point that "the signifying power of national languages and the multi-form power of States and of the network of collective assemblages tends to coincide" (Guattari, 1996b:144). That is, semiotics includes the resonances among forms of power in State operations, the languages in circulation and the social realities of persons. Semiotics, as operations of power, are installed within languages as "normatising agents of production", preceding the actual acquisition of language-rules by individualised speakers-listeners where the rule acquisition constitutes the relative positioning of the speaking-listening person within society and its modes of production (Guattari, 1996b), giving rise to the segmentarities that divide the urbane speech from the multiple patois and the attributions attendant thereto. In their guise as agents of production, the signs given in a language constitute power centres, areas of resonance, "*ritornellos*" or rhythms and refrains, that carry along diverse heterogeneous matters allocating these to relative positions along syntagmatic chains. These chains, now composed of heterogeneous materials and diverse semiologies held together by

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[4]. This subverts the usual dichotomy between ends and means, because there are now no ends per se - everything is positioned upon a horizontal plane of production. Ethics thus refers not to goals or intentions, but rather to what each component in an (ideally) infinite chain of production itself produces, and what a particular product is, in turn, available to produce.

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"sclerotic encodings", themselves become power centres for multiple levels of redundancy and signification: not only is signification inseparable from a power position, but the meanings available are themselves determined by concrete formations of social power (Guattari, 1984). In short, semiology refers not merely to the study of signs in circulation within a given language, but must also include the study of the power acquired by and conflated within those signs, and how they come to acquire sufficient consistency so as to reproduce themselves in diverse social fields, marking and maintaining distinctions - segmentarities - among groups of persons with respect to inclusion and exclusion from participating in forms of power. When power is read as constitutive, then semiology refers specifically to the study of what realities signs produce and maintain and what they subjugate. To the extent that identity may be read as a signifier, so too must its modes of production be interrogated in terms of the social worlds that such signification converges in terms of the possibilities for both the subjectifying self as well as for the other. It is here that violence as a mode of languaging oneself begins to emerge.

3. A MODELISATION OF VIOLENCE AS LANGUAGE.

In this writing about violence, especially the issue of men's violence against women in relationships, I take as my point of departure an opinion expressed by Michelle Bograd (1992: 252): "Male violence in families takes us to the limit of our models [of therapy]. We can either detoxify male violence so that it fits more comfortably into our familiar models and practices, or we can struggle with how to *extend or rework popular theories and strategies*". The feminist analysis of male violence takes the perspective that violence concerns issues of power and control, the "goal" of which, expressed succinctly by Caputi and Russell (in Radford & Russell, 1992:14), is "to preserve male supremacy". There is an apparent confluence between the operations of language discussed above, and the operation of violence obtained from a feminist analysis, in that both language and violence concern matters of power, control, and dominance. Power refers to the construction of social arrangements such that these arrangements produce particular options and forms of relations; control refers to the manner by which these arrangements are preserved; and dominance refers to the unlocalisable authority which legitimates such arrangements and relations, and the methods by which these are sustained.

In this article I intend to take this apparent confluence between language and violence further by proposing that *violence is a language which constructs social arrangements and relations in a way that will preserve and maintain the identity of the enunciating subject*. Before proceeding further, it is worthwhile unpacking this thesis in order to highlight some of the implications. The idea of language as a process of construction rather than as a means of communicating that which already exists has been discussed in previous paragraphs. The notion of social arrangements and relations refers then to the power operations brought forth through the process of languaging the world and which are constitutive of "reality" to the extent that this description obtains the power of validation within particular language communities. It is important to note however, that "[d]espite appearances, in a pragmatic capitalist field the different social categories of an identical linguistic community - men, women, children, the elderly, people in rural areas, immigrants, etc. - *do not speak the same language*" (Guattari, 1996b:145). That is, as discussed above, different social categories of identity and subjectification operate in different language communities, which construct different qualities and coherences of realities, without the intercession of an independent and final authority.

These different languages "collide" and enter into relations of co-operation and negotiation, or struggles for competing validity.

The struggle for language dominance is a struggle for reality. To the extent that someone is able to convince another of the validity of their language, that person thereby sustains the organisational coherences of their world within which their identity is brought forth. To the extent that an identity construction relies on the coherence of the worlds within which it emerges, it becomes a matter of primary importance that the coherences of that world are themselves maintained. Identity and its coherence as a coming-into-the-world considered in this light must make recourse to "objectivity-without-parentheses" as the final limit that would stop the schizophrenic slide into uncertainty and indeterminacy. Such recourse may be effectuated by attempting to develop compelling arguments according to discourses of male privilege, the male sex-drive discourse, the container modelisation of irrepressible rage, a grand narrative of an ultimate truth or law, etc., which would negate the rival alternative reality constructions, or it may be effectuated by recourse to brute force. After a certain point, the precise path one adopts does not matter, for both result in the same outcome: the negation of difference as expressed in, by and through the other who is engaged in their own project of coming-into-the-world as a coherence in the context of a language community.

4. FASCISM AND THE (RE)PRODUCTION OF IDENTITY.

When violence is viewed as the negation of difference with respect to alternate reality constructions that would undermine the certainty of one's project of subjectification as a social identity, we find a particular resonance between the logic that would "justify" such manoeuvres and the logic of Hitlerian fascism: "*What we must fight for is to safeguard the existence and reproduction of our race and our people, the sustenance of our children and the purity of our blood, the freedom and independence of the fatherland, so that our people may mature for the fulfilment of the mission allotted it by the creator of the universe*" [Hitler, 1974:195]. We find here all the usual elements of fascist hegemony: the idea of an external threat that will disrupt the security of a position, an identity; the glorified and self-confirmed righteousness of that identity; and the recourse to the final authority of God (or Truth, Law, etc.) that validates that position. These elements constitute a framing of the world in terms of rigid lines that divide those who are on-side from those whose difference constitutes a threat to that "chosen" order. Elsewhere I have discussed these operations of fascist construction in terms of six dimensions that govern the organisation of social-cognitive components of production (Favell, 1998). What is relevant here however, is that fascism does *not* take place at a State-organisational level, but rather concerns the micropolitics of social arrangements that take place at the multiple intersections of segmentary lines. Fascism, while often found in governmental activities (for example, the exclusion of women from positions of political relevance in male centred power hierarchies), concerns not the policies and numerous Acts that governments produce, but rather fascism is to be found operating in the multiplicity of localised spaces, the interactions between customer and shop keeper, the gossip of neighbours about a new arrival, the thuggery of some soccer fans, the date-rape in the quiet suburban lanes, the petty tyranny of father on a Saturday night. Fascism then is not a politics of governance,

although it will obviously shape and inform the concrete products of governmental operations; *fascism is first and foremost a micro-politics of relational identities.*[5]

Not all fascism breeds violence however. The point here is that fascism operates as the *logos* of violence, or depending on the perspective, violence is the *logos* of fascism. In any event, fascism provides the structural conditions expressed as violence, for fascism concerns the preservation of specific languaged realities that validate and substantiate particular forms of subjectification and identity production. In 2.1. above, subjectification was discussed in terms of the occupation - the existentialising self-positing - of "band-widths" of affects and intensities. Such occupation amounts to the process of *composing a territory*, where a territory may be understood as an "ensemble of projects or representations where a whole series of behaviours and investments can pragmatically emerge, in time and in social, cultural, aesthetic and cognitive space" (Guattari, 1995:24).

Composing a territory is the selection by means of extraction of band-widths of intensities and affects, the grouping and the organisation of these up to particular limits of coherence within which limits the projects converged in subjectification endure. To put this in the terminology of discourses, a territory can be understood as the direct discourse which is a "detached fragment of a mass [...] born of the dismemberment of the collective assemblage [indirect discourse]" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987:84). However, they continue, "the collective assemblage is always like a murmur from which I take my proper name, the constellation of voice, concordant or not, from which I draw my voice" (1987:84). Hence, a territory is itself an assemblage, converging and combining diverse fragments of semiotic materials, existentialising affects, and multiplicitous intensities. These diverse arrays are organised and held together at the limits at which they would escape along "lines of flight" by codes, frames of coherence, which are themselves extracted from indirect discourse in the manner described above as order-words. That is, the codes by which a territory is cohered obtain degrees of rigidity and suppleness, density and porosity, but nevertheless are continually intermingling with other territorial arrangements.

Subjectification is hence the composition of a territorial arrangement such that the project of coming-into-the-world is made possible. To the extent that such a project is held together by recourse to independent absolutes ("objectivity-without-parentheses"), it claims to itself the absolute right to exist as such, as a given in-itself. Anything that "speaks" a different language, and in so doing presents/constructs alternate configurations of reality, is seen to undermine the certainty with which the first territorial identification is cohered. In order for the first territorial identification to be sustained, the rival other must be negated, its difference that it presents must be muffled by way of power/knowledge operations of marginalisation and subjugation (i.e. developing a water-tight "compelling argument"), or through the brutality of enforced submission to the autarchy of the first assemblage that now - from its perspective - quite simply over-

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[5]. Such a statement begs the necessity of considering our own fascisms, one clue to which might be the degree of openess or closure to alterity, including the alterity of ourselves. When everything is production, what distinguishes fascism from non-fascism or communalism resides in whether particular forms of identity simply reproduce itself in series, finding only itself and those who are not-it, or does an identity couple with and be augmented by differences. I suspect, and to put this simplistically, that the degree of fascism may be inversely correlated to the degree of identificational porosity or openess.

encodes the differences of the other such that the other now functions as itself in extension: "From the viewpoint of racism, there is *no exterior*, there are no people on the outside. There are only people who should be like us and whose crime it is not to be. [...] Racism never detects the particles of the other; *it propagates waves of sameness until those who resist identification have been wiped out*" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987:178).

It is here in these micropolitical spaces of territorial identifications that we find emerging the most diabolical of activities - racism, sexism, violence, genocide, femicides and homicides, exclusions and marginalisations - understood here collectively as fascist. There is no room for negotiation or for compromise, but only the brutality by which a territorial identification, "*fanatically convinced of its own right*, [...] *intolerantly imposes its will against all others*" (Hitler, 1974:318). Wherever fascism exists it finds only resonating shards of itself: the other, with all of its differences and rival reality constructions and subjectifications is ultimately invalid, and its invalidity is the measure of its potential to become merely material components by which the fascist structure re-produces itself in an hegemonic overdetermination of its absolute and final authority as the expression of the single reality it alone embodies.

5. VIOLENCE AND IDENTIFICATION: MORE OF THE SAME.

The fascist subjectification ensures its perseverance and endurance by annulling difference and alterity, by expanding from a central point out across the territories of the other and making these submit to the codes and organisational coherences by which that subjectification persists. The potential for violence in any fascist construction is crystallised because, unable to recognise difference as valid, it finds only itself and that which is not it; lacking now the opportunity to connect and augment itself with positive and affirming difference, it collapses into a black hole of abolition, suicide, and destruction. Violence is the means whereby the other is brought into line with the performative scripts of the perpetrator, made to operate as if an extension of his own centralised script that "evicts" the others' performance. Violence is the writing of oneself in place - both in place of anothers' performances (re-*place*-ment) as well as in the places upon another's body in the form of bruising and bloodshed - a form of graphology. It is this graphology that identifies the extremes of a serial killer's "signature". Such "writing" oneself in place is the production of identity. Violence, as a means of writing oneself into existence, is accomplished through the muffling of others' performances such that a greater coherence is assured, such that one's own performative improvisation is made more stable through the subjugation of others' performances to fit the sclerotic power centre of one's own matrix of signification. We continually write others into our own performances; violence however refuses to recognise the divergences of others' scripts, and instead mutes these differences to fit the requirements of one's own performance. Violence, while directed at the other, is an attempt to smooth out any divergences and differences that may be encountered between one's performances of self and the shore-lines of the other, simply to ensure the continuity of one's own flows.

In fascism - whether racial fascism, gendered fascism, socio-economic fascism, ideological fascism - and in violence, the social topology is over-encoded so as to fit the sclerotic shape of one's identity, which now operates as a power centre. We find this in the all-too-familiar murder-suicide brought about by the husband whose wife threatens to leave, to which he responds by declaring that if he can't have her then no-

one can (Campbell, in Radford & Russell, 1992), the savage rampages of serial killers such as Bundy who wanted to "*possess*" his victims, or Kemper who "evicted" his victims from their bodies so that he could "*have*" them, and the petty tyranny of the abusive man who over-encodes "his" woman such that she becomes a person-for-him rather than a person in her own right. The man who assaults an intimate partner does not encounter his partner as legitimately different from himself, but rather sees her as stealing *his* legitimacy in the processes by which she engages in her own project of becoming a person; the sex offender does not see his victim as viable in her/his own right but rather as the source of a thrill which he can obtain from the risk and the pleasures that are always a currency of intensities, an intensification of himself, his experiences, such that the victim is little more than a vehicle. The shoals and reefs of the social topologies are thereby made to fit an identity-in-progress. Violence (and its fascist identification) is a process of emptying the Other of alterity, and subsequently coming to possess that attributed difference in the process of establishing oneself as the violating body. Violence is the "coming-into-body" (encorporeality or existentialising) of the enunciating threshold-subject: it is a risk, a gamble, undecided until that threshold-subject *en*corporealises as victor or vanquished, acquiring its identity from the product of its coming-into-being. Is this what Ted Bundy had in mind in his conversations with Michaud and Aynesworth (1989) when he unfolded his model of violence as a "sub-theme" of "depersonalisation", of literally not being a person? Violence as a vehicle of self-production, an autopositing or even autopoiesis. As Seltzer (1998:274) summarises: "The stakes of the murder are [...] not finally the possession of an object of love or pleasure but *self*-possession: the repeated, and repeatedly failed attempt, to pass through identification to identity". Violence can be considered a particular way of coming into the world through the denial of the rights of others to construct and exercise their own maps of coherence, especially when these maps are at odds with the maps with which the offender constructs his worlds. Through violence, the offender over-encodes the worlds within which he finds himself so that these worlds are made to resonate at the same tempo by which his identity is maintained. Bundy (Michaud & Aynesworth, 1989) speaks repetitively of "possession" - possessing items he had stolen and "graduating" to violence and murder as a "means to an end - that is, of accomplishing ultimate possession of the victim" (1989:128).

Violence, at its extreme of murder, is the dissolution of borders between the self-referential universes of the perpetrator and the limit points of the victimised other, and it is the dissolution of these borders which releases the thrill of escape from one's own limits and the simultaneous panic of engulfment. Again, Bundy speaks of thrill, of intensity, of "an almost frenzied desire", "a high degree of anticipation, of excitement, of arousal" (Michaud & Aynesworth, 1989:78), where the desire to kill "came as a rise in intensity" (133). The dissolution of these border-spaces might produce a productive coupling in some contexts (the fusions of love), or it might produce a reproductive sterility through an over-encoding of the limit points of the other and a possession of those spaces which now are made to march to the tempo of the aggressor's organisational refrains. As Bundy comments to FBI Agent Hagmaier (in Geberth, 1996:752): "You feel the last bit of breath leaving their body [...]. You're looking into their eyes. A person in that situation is God! *You then possess them and they shall forever be a part of you*".

In this manner, the perpetrator no longer struggles with the becoming-other of himself, for he makes the world over in his image and becomes the central player in the scripts

that he writes for others to enact. Those who refuse to play their part in his drama destabilise the desperate certainties with which he braces himself against the super-gravity that snaps at his heels, always threatening to pull him into the abyss he tries to deny. The world within which an offender lives is inevitably one wherein he is the lynch-pin, the sun in a heliocentric cosmos, and which substantiates and justifies the use of force and brutality when the shape of this cosmos shifts according to the alterities of adjacent subjectifications. He embodies "objectivity-without-parentheses", a chilling certainty that brooks no question that he is right while everyone else is wrong, that their feelings and meanings are mostly irrelevant to the extent that they are even considered at all.

6. CONCLUSIONS.

This thesis is offered as a tool with which to reconsider violence no longer as a pathology of ordered and enclosed identities, but rather as a language mode through which an identification is reproduced in series. By considering violence simply as a pathological condition, a certain degree of closure on thinking about violence is effected; moreover, as many of the contributors to Radford and Russell's (1992) volume have indicated, such pathologisation of male violence denies the connections and the contextual conditions of misogyny, sexism and femicidal orientations that underscore much of what passes for "normative" socio-cultural constructions of (male) identity. It is the normative condition that is itself suspect and is to be re-considered: to the extent that violence may be understood as a "language", or means, by which identity is sustained through the over-encoding of the world such that the semiologies of identity and the world conflate, then the issue of normative identity is itself also open to critique. This writing has attempted to draw out what it is that violence does and some of the features of its modes of operation. It has been developed that violence serves a particular function of constructing and preserving identity where identity is understood as a social construction made possible only through language.

Violence must be politicised for it is only ever expressed in the context of a relationship with others. Violence may hence be seen as one mode of coming-into-the-world-with-others, where the other is over-encoded and their differences or alterity is evacuated by the violating subject's production and preservation of identity.

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