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## Encountering Deleuze

### Collaborative Writing and the Politics of Stuttering in Emergent Language

Hanna Ellen Guttorm, Krista A. Hilton, Gunnhildur Una Jonsdottir, Teija Löytönen, Liz McKenzie, Ken Gale, Jonathan Wyatt

**Abstract** The seven of us have never met; at least, our material bodies have not shared the same geographical space. We are a becoming-assemblage, drawn to write together through encountering Deleuze and others in collaborative writing workshops in the UK and the United States in 2010 and 2011. This paper explores, expresses and creates, through the trajectories and surprises of zigzagging nomadic inquiry, our continuing engagement with Deleuze and his collaborators' conceptualisations. In the stutterings of our emerging minoritarian language(s) we create and write ourselves into our assemblage in all our particularities, our differing and contrasting affective and geographical landscapes alive as our writing moves and flows: between each other; between the 'then' of the workshops and the 'now' of our lives since; between daylight and darkness; between summer and winter; and as we seek to disrupt these and other such binaries. In this paper, through the always zigzagging movements of our writings we explore and inquire within our different accounts of the workshops we each experienced and offer something that writes to and with what has emerged, and is emerging, for us as a consequence of engaging in them. We write with the paradox of a seven never having been in the same material space simultaneously and with intensive materiality, material and affective flows, with each other, with Deleuze, Deleuze and Guattari, Deleuze and Parnet, Deleuze and ... and ... —with Deleuze there is always 'and'—we open up (a) space(s) where we write between-the-seven.

*Keywords:* Zigzag, stuttering, becoming, assemblage, major/minor literatures.

## Introduction (Ken and Jonathan)

This paper is born of the encounters that the seven of us have had with Deleuze at workshops on collaborative writing at three different conferences, one in the UK<sup>1</sup> and two in the United States.<sup>2</sup> We (Ken and Jonathan) ran the workshops and the rest of us were participants: Krista and Teija at ICQI, 2010, Hanna at ICQI, 2011, and Gunnhildur and Liz at BERA, 2010.

It is too simple to attribute the writing that follows to a neat, singular encounter with Deleuze. Each workshop was an encounter with the place, the time of day, the other bodies in the room, as well as with Deleuze and his myriad collaborative writers. They were “pedagogical encounters” in the sense in which Davies and Gannon coin the term, where space is “active in shaping what is possible” (Davies & Gannon, 2010, p. 8) toward an open, responsive, creative, life-affirming, folding and unfolding of life, thinking, and practice. As Liz reflects on her day’s ‘encounter’ in September, 2010, in Warwick, UK:

‘I have memories of the light from the window. I faced the window and could see the changing weather outside. I have a strong memory of buildings, but also of autumn leaves. Was there a tree outside? I’m not sure, but light and autumn colours are in my head.... There was something, something that was us that morning, a moment in time, a capsule separated from the rest of the conference and the rest of the world—is that *haecceity*?... I can’t remember all the details, but I have a strong ‘sense’/‘sensation’ of the experience as a whole—rather as words are lost but deeper meanings are retained in memory. I felt though that we were only dabbling our toes in the water, feeling it flowing around us, linking all of us, perhaps being floated a little away by it, but not being carried to all the places it might take us. I was aware of much more that we could explore if we let ourselves be carried by the currents beyond the confines of that morning session. (Liz in Gale et al., 2010, p. 17)

In this paper we all, in a sense, respond to Liz’s curiosity, letting ourselves become “carried by the currents” beyond the confines of the workshops.

The purpose of the workshops that we offered was to enable participants to engage in and reflect upon the use of collaborative writing as method of inquiry, drawing from some of the principles and ideas of the late 20<sup>th</sup>-century French philosopher, Gilles Deleuze. Participants in each of the workshops came from a variety of settings, all expressing an interest in using narrative and collaborative approaches

to inquiry and in applying innovative and creative aspects of Deleuzian thought to their own professional practice.

The workshops begin with an introductory exercise—the *zigzag*—a motif that becomes the structure and style of this paper as we write and that offers an immediate opportunity to become immersed in Deleuze and collaborative writing. The exercise runs as follows: Each person introduces himself or herself to one other member of the group, across the circle, with the rest as witnesses; ‘respondents’ listen, allowing thoughts, feelings, and connections to emerge before, in turn, introducing themselves to another member of the group. When the spoken introductory zigzag is complete, each writes a response to the other’s introduction. Writings are passed to the respective ‘introducer’ (a second zigzag moment, as people stand to give in one direction and receive from another), and these writings are responded to with further writing which, once complete, is passed back in further zigzagging.

The exercise draws on Deleuze’s use of the zigzag, which, he says, illustrates bringing “singularities into relationship” (Boutang, 1996). The process, with each member of the group connecting with others, also illuminates the Deleuzian notion of *assemblage*, which Deleuze used to challenge the scientific reductionism emerging from the Enlightenment thought that perpetuates the ascendancy of neo-liberal individualism. Deleuze argued that whilst we can talk of singularities of self, we need to do so in relation to *multiplicities*.

Following time spent considering key Deleuzian figures, such as *nomadic thought*, *smooth* and *striated* space, *the rhizome*, and *territorialisation*, Ken and Jonathan offer a short reading of their collaborative writing to which they invite the group (including themselves), with those figures in mind, to write in response. The workshop finishes with readings and witnessings of this writing.

Gunnhildur noted of her experience of the workshop:

We spoke of the *smooth* and the *striated* and how the nomad leaves a trail in the desert, even without it being visible... and it is with her feet that the nomad leaves the trail... the path, the ... I’m not finding the right word in English:... rákina, farið, slóðina. Even though we were not travelling over the desert, nor being particularly nomadic in that physical sense, we did indeed make a journey of a sort, this morning.

My journey was inwards. I was pleasantly surprised of how much of the Deleuzian words were familiar. I thought I had forgotten it all, *Thousand Plateaus*... we read it... me and my fellow first year students. The act of writing

together at the [workshop] in Warwick moved my journey back to that time and place. It created the space to dwell in, this shared experience created with words, which I so often seek in my writing, telling, drawing, recording and playing. I am amazed at the strength of this space; it was almost visible... touchable? I was aware that it was created with everyone's mutual effort, words from each of us... yet I was not so much aware of the being of the others... just that we were there together... the togetherness of it... yes, I think that is the feeling that remains with me. (Gunnhildur in Gale et al., 2010, p. 16)

Journeys, place, and language became motifs in the writing that the seven of us created in this continuing desire to “dwell in this shared experience created with words.” We all wrote, between-the-seven, drawing on Gale and Wyatt (2009), Wyatt et al. (2010), and so forth, writing via emails and their attachments, between July and December 2011, picking up on the invitation to see where the experience of the encounters we'd had with Deleuze and others at our respective workshops took us.

We each use our first names to indicate whose singular voice is being offered, being folded into the assemblage. Mostly, we take turns; however, in the following section, the first of the sequences of writings, Krista starts, then Hanna, indicated by bold and italicized text, and Liz, in text boxes, “fold” (Deleuze, 1993) their writing into and onto Krista's.

## Stutterings

### Musings (Krista)

Along this journey, of Deleuze **musings**,<sup>3</sup> my body becomes more and more of a shell (perhaps a *body-without-organs* [Deleuze & Guattari, 2004]?) that houses the illusions of my becomings. I lose myself in Deleuzian texts (that is, JKSB<sup>4</sup>), **drift off** to dreamscape lines of flight, where I traverse smooth spaces so real yet distant that I can see, feel, smell, even taste it, they, them. I wake, the intersecting lines and **plethora of nodes** that constitute me on this plane crash back in to my shell. The more I **viscerally** feel, fall deeper in/to, collide with and between my musings, *the less individualized*<sup>5</sup> I feel.

Liz: I'm amazed how I feel part of this group, although we have not all met, yet I feel a sense of belonging and that I can offer my thoughts, my writing, exposing my inner self in ways which I would not normally do so readily. There is a strong sensation of being part of a group, maybe it is the presence of minds on a similar flight, interesting to think of appropriate collective nouns, flock, pack, not herd or pride, charm perhaps? I've had to cheat and look them up—maybe a colony, or a muse (is that too pretentious?), there is even a flight as a collective noun! A cluster, or even a journey (of giraffes, apparently). So many possibilities to encapsulate the experience, perhaps just one is insufficient to capture the experience, maybe we'll begin as one and grow and transform into others, could there be a discovery or an exploration as well as an exultation?

Especially when surrounded by minds on a similar Deleuzian flight—my **flock**, my pack. *Not sure if we're wolves or rats but who needs such details.* It's when I appear organized in my body, when others appear to want to connect but my words, my musing language, create gaping holes for which they won't reach out a hand to grab my quickly falling body, and the words **spewing** from my mouth to explain my euphoria are so incredibly foreign to them that they turn around, and I fall. Faster. Further. Away. Do I stutter, or are my words, often both and, as well as circular, incoherent stutterings?

Liz: I can connect to this, to my feeling of the swirling currents, of being pulled this way and that, not able to decide which way to go—but my image of the figure in the water is rising upwards, not falling down, not being dragged down, but expanding, growing strong and rising up surrounded by a brightness amid the darker green. Perhaps I feel a coherence emerging from the stuttering? A direction from the different pulls on me.

I (re)remember my first day of college, a speaker noted that by going to college (especially if you are a first generation student) you would push yourself further away from your family. Perhaps they wouldn't understand your educational growth, they may feel 'lesser-than' you, not as 'smart as' you, or even feel like they have less and less in common with you—all the while being proud of your accomplishments.

I feel this happening again while (finally?) experiencing theory viscerally. *My circles of conversation get smaller and smaller, while my passion continuously grows.* I finally feel the artist/writer/theorist within me blooming oh so beautifully, but at an addictive cost. While my love for my work grows, loved ones fall off, fragments of me, of who I thought I was, break off with them. *Pained, joyous, skipping from cloud to rock to cloud, conflicted in the space between...*

Enthusing and Holding Back, and... (Hanna)

*I Encountering Krista's Mail, (Why Didn't I Send This Right Away...?)*

Stuttering,  
oh yes, Krista,  
both pained and joyous  
words getting new meanings, or uses,  
being, becoming, loving, having passions  
sentences getting free and lost  
open and rhizomatic  
so long and so short

yes, they don't always understand me (they shouldn't either..)  
as it's not me, not-me, (E)llen<sup>6</sup> ('if I'm not, if I don't')

Some weeks ago I already started to write with you all in my mind (in this lovely holiday season, in this time where thoughts, ideas, passions keep traveling—and not) in my notebook by a small river near to our home:

*"Thank God I've got blues,"* sang Big James at a blues club in Chicago after the ICQI conference. *Thank God* I've got voice I had just written in the workshop on collaborative writing in Illinois (by Ken and Jonathan). *Thank God* and Deleuze ...and and and... I've got writing, collaboration, becoming, rhizomes, haecceity... To put to work, to use, to live and love with. To write with the percepts, affects, concepts and with the thisness of this thisness/haecceity. To write from and with here and now. To write about this river, or would this maybe get called a stream, I don't know. To write about and with the wind, which is taking my hair, letting it "hulmuta,"<sup>7</sup> be taken with the wind.

Tuuliviiri—a wind vane—I want to be(come) a wind vane. You know, that kind of people who are told (by others, mostly) to change their minds easily, through and after talking with other people, after thinking once again, or who just change their mind, without any 'excuse' or explanation...



The kids have found some mud on the beach. They make signs, models, paintings on the body and then wash it away. They go swimming and start to play again. Ilmari brings a sand cake to me for to taste. Leo puts a mud candle on it. And now they want to put the cake in the oven. Logic of sense? Logic of becoming. Yes. Always becoming. Changing. Moving. Changing 'their' 'minds.' Going 'further,' playing 'back.' Soon I'll take the kids and the bought and machine made toys and towels with me, and cycle home to cook lunch for them. So, yes, this is a holiday time. A day without... 'A body without organs.' A day without time, a time without past and coming.

*Thank God* (and Deleuze...) I've got you to write to and with.

The chocolate cake tastes delicious also after baking in the oven too. 😊

### ***II Writing Today***

Autumn is coming/here,  
work, writing is beginning again.

Happy to write this.

Already so much thought.

You and Deleuze encountering.

Deleuze and his collaborative writers,

who opened the/a/multiple/n-1 way(s), path(s), line(s) of flight  
in between (named things)  
out of (categories, boxes)

To

become,

change,

be silent,

say, write, speak out of the line,

in between the categorical (writing) styles.

We/they/(no-one) like(s) to 'know'

what we/they/(no-one) are speaking, writing, thinking about  
*about*—it has to have some 'name' on it always

(last days, weeks they've been thinking about how to name

'Anders Behring Breivik,' as if it were not enough as such,

but in which category to put him and his act, his story)

No name. *Once upon a time...*

No category. *there was a boy.*

That was not what I planned to write about...

I wanted to write more about my second name, Ellen.

As very Deleuzian in Finnish,

as a line of flight:

*'If I'm not, If I don't'*

Hanna Ellen,

I'm Hanna, if I'm not,

I'm a feminist, and if I'm not.

If I'm not a researcher.

If I'm not a teacher.

If I'm not.

I am (if I'm not) becoming.

Leaving, fleeing, 'dying' (as Cixous, 1991, would/could say it) for 'me,'

or for 'my' 'subjectivity,' for 'my' 'achievements'...

Letting go.

### Opening Spaces (Teija)

Since your invitation all of you have been in my mind: who are you, what will this be, am I able to? I am slow in becoming with. Thinking you all the time in Finnish, (some days some words in English), writing momentarily during days with the help of a translator, sending just now.

I was so excited when you asked us/me to join in this piece of collaborative writing. I do not understand how all of this has come into being, writing with you oceans apart. Where are you, how is it there? Well, Hanna is quite near, or Ellen or HannaEllen. But anyway, we just suddenly encountered each other last spring in an informal workshop with only five of us talking *about* writing, *about* researching, exploring ways of knowing, *and or about something else—naming?* While throwing ideas I mentioned the collaborative writing workshop I had participated in Illinois with Jonathan and Ken. Hanna then replied she had been in England taking part in a similar kind of workshop. At that moment we also realized that we both were going to Illinois this year 2011. These paths to Illinois, to Hanna, to you? Astonishingly happy, amazingly empty I knew/know I was/am hooked into this collaborative writing, into something to become, with you. And Krista, I just realized we both took part in the same workshop with Jonathan and Ken in Illinois last year, 2010. I remember you, your face and our short dialogue *about something, about us*. Hanna noted naming—naming as a mask to know?

(Deleuze, 1992, p. 15). My very first day in Illinois, and the Illini building with birds and flowers on the walls. The air conditioning, the slowness, the silence. At last after the whole year being at work, being work. A few of us sitting in a circle, getting *to know* each other, getting *to know* how to not-know, wanting to and not-wanting to become...in relation with each other, taken care of by Ken, Jonathan and Deleuze. Writing with each other, care-fully.

This week I have been in the woods picking blueberries, a tradition I had to follow when I was a child, but now I am eagerly waiting to get there, alone into the woods. From necessity to necessity. August, the month of ripe berries and mushrooms waiting to be picked.

While sitting and picking the berries I had the feeling that Deleuze, along with you, was lurking behind my back, all the time, seducing me to write with you and amongst you. Wanting me to throw myself into the not-knowing, into uncertainty, into collaboration, into difference. For quite some time I have been passionately interested in these phenomena within the practices of pedagogy, tired of the notions of knowledge, and the certainties of best practices. I wanted to free my pedagogy into something not yet known: to cover, uncover, discover, and recover pedagogy as Ken in one of his papers describes (Gale, 2010). I wanted *to understand* pedagogy in a new light, with the (loved) ones I am collaborating with. And now I am about to cover, uncover, discover, and recover me in a new light with you (wanting and not-wanting):

Who am I  
 now  
 to write  
 to teach/research?  
 How am I to write/teach/research?  
 Who/how/why am I to tell about other people's lives?  
 my life?  
 Who writing/ teaching/research is for?  
 What for?  
 Who am I to become?  
 With you?

When following these lines of interest I have come to encounter Deleuze over and over again, but often through somebody, through your body. He is speaking or rather whispering to me through you. I have your writings beside me, your books, articles and texts to get an idea of what this might be. The necessity of knowing? To

pick only ripe berries. It is in my flesh! But your books are also flesh, lived and living, alive, passionate. Writing alive with passion?

### Flying (Gunnhildur)

I am still breathing.

This night... I drove towards my home, at ten in the evening, and admired the beautiful blue dusk as the streetlights sensed that daylight was playing its *diminuendo* and slowly lit up...one by one...

I am filling a schoolbag with lovely colours and lined writing books. I am reorganizing the children's bedroom back to mutual, because it turns out that my oldest one got lonely in the private room we prepared for her this summer. I listen to my two-year-old explain her dreams; she patiently tells me that: "NO, mommy, not birds!!! ... YOU, it was you, you and daddy, flying... like this:... .." And she re-enacts my flying in her dream.

I used to write about flying in my dreams.

I used to interview people about flying in their dreams.

It never occurred to me that one day, a little person would tell me about my own flying ... in her dream.

I wonder if I flew in the same manner in her dream as I do in mine.

I will write something less disconnected soon.

Just wanted to send a little hello. I will need you when the darkness settles.

And I will also enjoy to write with you before that happens. And read and react...

I am here.

### Naming in This Space (Jonathan)

A wooden table on a cool autumnal evening, at home, inside, the lights low.

Writing promised many times in emails

"I'll write, I'll write soon, Writing on its way."

The first time I said this, in southern France, many weeks ago,

The sun glimpsed through the window one early morning.

Another place. Another country. Another language.

The river out of sight in the valley below.

I long to find a different technology for our writing: I want to write *with* each of yours, or *alongside*. Make comments. Add my texture to it. Thicken, perhaps. Like

Hanna Ellen has done with Krista's, add to the *agencement* of this writing. But, instead, I write after yours; sequential, linear.

I want to write in Finnish. And Icelandic. I want to hear the sounds, feel my lips, tongue, and teeth move around the words.

I am back in a room with each of you, thinking about naming. We travelled around/across the rooms we were in, naming ourselves to someone and to all, calling forth both ourselves and each other. Deleuze and Parnet (2002) don't like the words 'travel' or 'voyage,' preferring 'flight': with flight, one does not need to move, they say. Flights are delirious, demonic even (p. 30). We, in that zigzag process, were in flight. Does that seem/feel right?

And here, in our writing and our discovery of each other and our names, this feels like flight. I feel light, airy, as I write.

My middle name is 'Gunning.' I usually keep quiet about it, as it seems, well, funny. Different. It needs explaining. (I never have used the initial 'G' in publications.) Maybe I should reclaim it. Maybe, at the next workshop, in the zigzag, I shall say, "My name is Jonathan Gunning," and see where that takes me/us.

I, too, have flying dreams. I haven't had one for a while, but I love them when they appear.

## Languages Coming Alive (Ken)

And Ken...

And here...

And now...

And this...

And coming to this writing late...

And in a repetition of this self I see that old difference becoming me again. In this I love all the ambiguities, the nuances, the tau(gh)t inflections, the impossibilities of translations that we stutter with. So as we all trick our selves that we can enter the *major* language of English (what *is* that?) carrying with us those hege- monically premised, discursively constructed myths that tell us that there is some thing there to aspire to, to look up to, to become, we overlook Deleuze and Guat- tari's simple and direct assault on language imperialism when they say, "There is no mother tongue, only a power takeover by a dominant language within a political multiplicity" (1988, p. 7).

I love the potential that exists in the poetic interplay of our *minor* languages as we stutter and dance one with the other, zigzagging one from the other, in the

constant, incurable delirium of variation, subtlety and disidentification. What delights me are the possibilities that live within the singularities and peculiarities of our minor languages and dialects as they move, articulate and fill the spaces that they live in and create. As we work one with the other in these collaborative pathways and alleys, on these flights, soars and dives, we have something at our fingertips, in our hearts, always just out of our grasp; thoughts, feelings, perceptions, senses and so on that are always morphing in different assemblages.

It seems to me that the potentialities of this are what keeps our minor languages alive, what keeps us breathing in fluid and flowing transformation and transmutation, always being at the cusp of something else whilst remaining always true to the singularity we can loosely call self. I feel proud to be Cornish (Kernewek) and a son of Cornwall (Mebyon Kernow); the call to action of the Cornish, One and All (Onen hag Oll) talks to me of singularity and assemblage. I think of my self travelling the world and in so doing seeing that self always changing into some self else, what Foucault calls “getting free of one self” (1992, p. 8) and at the same time being true to the mysteries, the feelings, the myths and the truths of Cornish origins and genealogies and in my becoming in these worlds seeing my self as also changing and having an effect on these worlds.

We can begin to talk of our collective selves, our singularities, as assemblage: it is fascinating to see the way that haecceities already abound! It seems as we have a sense of the thisness of the spaces we are opening here, we are not de-personalising and in so (not) doing we seem to be nurturing rhizomatic growth all over the place. I love the way in which in Deleuze and Deleuze and Guattari *assemblage* (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988) seems to take many forms; it is always shifting, new senses seem to be folded in, a new intonation seems to unfold.

And so.

There seems to be *assemblage* where singularities are ‘assembled,’ where forces are at play and where energies both germinate and explode, bodies live and die in relational space as their organs become rhizomatically organised and the space then somehow becomes smoothed again. Here I sense transversality and organisation, all very fluid and energetic.

There seems to be *agencement* where we might gain a sense that the body does perhaps have organs, albeit in intensive, molecular and not extensive molar time; that agency exists, perhaps, in the capacity of force and function, where the assemblage acts and does something.

There seems to be *arrangement* where a sense of order, if only transitory and temporary, comes to life, where in the morphings of the body without organs, the

pulsing, visceral and amorphous spaces take on brief molar forms and then dissemble as molecular intensities throb, shake and vibrate them into ever new shapes and transmutations.

And so.

All of these senses of assemblage can, of course, come together in an assemblage and ... and ... and ... let's start in the middle and see what we get!!

## Underwater Flows

### Memory Folds (Liz)

Encountering Deleuze ... The workshop seems such a long time ago—and I suppose it was, because the conference is on again now, so that's a whole year that has gone by. It was such a great experience at the time, I felt so enlightened, so empowered by it, and I could see so many ways in which I could use Deleuze to develop my own thinking, my own experience and yet, here we are, a year later and what have I done? Apparently nothing, though it's hard to know, since I can't say how the last year would have been without that experience. There's Ken and Jonathan's book, too,<sup>8</sup> which I read, couldn't put down and yet, I remember so little of it, Ken's piles of books, the snail metaphor—can that be all I gained from it? And yet, there's more, Deleuze creeps into my life, making a cake now always reminds me of Deleuze—the fold—as I fold the flour into the mix, so the influence is there, that's one awareness, but how many others have there been which I'm less conscious of?

When I was thinking back, trying to remember the workshop and reawaken my experiences I remembered light streaming through the window; I remembered I found all the pieces of writing moving, but particularly Gunnhildur's when she wrote then the images of water. Being underwater is not something I like. I'm not keen on swimming at all, but her writing made it seem a good place to be, somehow, and I could feel the power of moving through water, the smooth, gliding through water.

Funny how Gunnhildur's underwater description came to mind, maybe because as I start the new year after the summer vacation I feel a little bit swamped by all the emails and demands on me. But also the water contains shadows, hints of other things that I am trying to grasp as they float and wave in the currents. Is that me trying to grasp at previous hazy memories of Deleuze as I try to re-orient myself into work mode? The underwater scene is darkly greeny blue, with light filtering down, but somehow it has become overlaid with a brighter, greener picture that my father painted. There was a figure in the centre, something tells me it was a

mermaid—or am I constructing that to make sense of it? I don't remember, but maybe I feel like that figure in the centre of the hazy, swirling currents, being pulled in different directions, not knowing which way to go. It's also what I've been trying to do about Deleuze, to remember, as I've seen the emails arriving in my inbox, knowing I needed to make my contribution, too, wanting to, and yet not feeling ready, leaving them unopened to allow my mind to follow its own wandering, develop its own patterns, then once I've explored my own thoughts, then I'll be ready to read others' contributions.

As I write this I stop to ensure I save the document, don't want to lose these thoughts, but where to save it? Where does it go? Where in my orderly files and folders? There are so many places I could put it, so which to choose? In the end I settle for 'miscellaneous,' while I decide—maybe I should create a new folder all its own? Or maybe I should save it in multiple locations to reflect the different lines of flight?

### Writing Pictures? (Teija)

I have been carrying your printed e-mails with me for days, weeks. I guess I wanted to have the possibility to read them wherever I was, in the café, in the bus, in my "office," the new study at work. I'm there/here now. It is quite an empty room with large windows opening to the woodish scenery. It is raining, pouring, making this dropping sound on the eaves (*räystää*). Water (*vesi*). Silence (*hiljaisuus*). I love having Finnish here. What are the languages we...use, write, speak, inhabit, embody...?

There are so many things I want to engage with: language, names and naming, writing *with* and *alongside*, *water*, *flying*... *and... and... and*. I am pulled and pushed, and I don't know where to go. Still I feel stillness. You, too, have been here and there, *not knowing which way to go*. Comforting.

*And so. Let's start in the middle and see what we get.* Thank you, Ken. And yet, I want to thank you all.

I have a picture in my mind, actually two, rising from your writings. Can I attach them here? Or is this about writing, only? What about unfolding images, albeit not mine? I am afraid of doing something that I am not supposed to do. Yet I want to try a flight (from what?). My heart is *jyskyttää*/throbbing—is this the right word, I don't know. Is this a line of flight? Is this the way it feels like? Not knowing, being afraid, becoming vulnerable, becoming trouble, troubling. Something seems to be happening here...

Here is one of them...

Inspired by Liz:





...but my image of the figure in the water is rising upwards, not falling down, not being dragged down, but expanding, growing strong and rising up surrounded by a brightness amid the darker green...

Susanna Majuri: *Waterfall*, 2009

My middle name is Hannele. Hann/a/E/l/le/n. I have never felt about it as I do now. It was just the other or second name (toinen nimi) as we call it in Finland. Now it feels as if you have provided me an encounter with becoming other...*hints of other*. Part of HannaEllen in me, me in HannaEllen. My skin feels thinner, like a *shell*... but I am here... *still breathing*. And asking again, am I now a body without organs. Is this what it feels like—embodily encountering Deleuzian concept? *Flights are delirious, demonic even*.

Thoughts are not mine. Images are not mine. But *I am still breathing* in the middle of *swirling currents*, naked.

This writing is so different...this is not the writing I know...it is being within thisness. Is this haecceities?

Some weeks ago I read all that we had been writing so far. Liz wrote about an image that somehow captured your memories on Deleuze, maybe. It was an image that, maybe, your father painted, “*a mermaid in the centre of the hazy, swirling currents, being pulled in different directions, not knowing which way to go.*” This image was very powerful to me, and captured my feelings of my writing. I want to be with you, write with you, but I feel like a mermaid sitting on the rock, wondering. How to go on writing?



...something tells me it was a mermaid... but maybe I feel like that figure in the centre of the hazy, swirling currents, being pulled in different directions, not knowing which way to go....

Elina Brotherus: *Baigneuse, orange montant*, 2003, from the series *The New Painting*. Chromogenic color print, 70x79cm. Courtesy of the artist. [www.elinabrotherus.com](http://www.elinabrotherus.com)

Me becoming a mermaid, wanting to be with the loved one/s, you, having to lose some of her tongue. I have never used images before in my writings, but now it seems they capture something more than I ever could express in English. You are calling forth my imagination in images that I have encountered/am encountering.

## Wondering, Wandering

### Writing Now? (Hanna)

Smiling here and there and with you. Keeping wondering and wandering with you. Me, too.

So, yes, hello you/us/becomings!

Still the question here: what to write next? To tell that I also already wanted to write, many times, already after Ken's previous writing. That I wanted to write, that I'm also a proud (but also shy) Sámi:<sup>9</sup> my father was born in Lapland, spoke Sámi as his mother tongue, but never taught us children his language. We only heard him speaking an incomprehensible language on the phone, every here and there a Finnish word like 'puhelin' (phone) or 'televisio' (TV), which he not yet had heard in Sámi. I lived with a language, which I never understood. Later at the university I took an intensive course on Sámi and learned interesting things: That I could still be named with a name Bárssi-Sammol-Hanna (Bárssi as the place where my father came from, Sammol as the Sámi name of my father Samuel/Sami/Sam—yes, he also had many names...). Or that Sámi has in addition to singular and plural a dual: we-two, you-two, they-two and the verb with different endings. Or that it matters whether the sister or brother of my father is younger or older than my father. I have (a) line(s) in/between/besides 'me,' which is/are still unknown.

I could also write about getting (un-)certain, while trying to find a way to do things differently with teachers—teachers who sometimes tend to perform themselves as experts in 'Good Practices' and 'sure because of the experience' and as people with strong human knowledge. How I try to "get free of myself" (Foucault, 1998) and other 'selves,' but get required for clear methods and outcomes. How I find (and not) a line of flight. How I fall down, how I almost take the compatible, always interacting/-ve and goal-oriented subject as mine, start to execute that. And then almost "get free of myself": into a role, a role of co-ordinator (of a peer-mentoring project), looking for good practices, research-based most preferably. And how I then remember you all and Teija. And the line of flight opens up there somewhere. And I can breathe again, for a while.

Or, I could write about the stuttering, the heartbeats, the hesitant mode of going back to the earlier written text of mine, wanting to take away something, to smooth, to strike through, to delete the repetitions at least. And besides/in-between the airy abandonment, “getting free of myself,” just fleeing and letting the becoming words and sentences go around, slip and flee, not frozen, not stay in one meaning or understanding.

Ha! Always becoming, in-between, in the middle.

And now, yes, I'll push the send-button.

But/or/how/yes-but/mm/maybe-still.

Just a look?

No, not anymore.

Fiuu.

### Living with Words (Krista)

Greetings from here, there, and everywhere in between!

I feel like I'm (int)errupting the dialogue by inserting 'hello' as I carry all of you with me, daily. While an intimacy of writing is, has, continues to become, there is a feeling of love-loss as I couldn't pick many of your gorgeous souls out in a crowd. Or could I?

Today is Tuesday, October 25th, and my intentions are to write, to become (Gale & Wyatt, 2009). I often struggle with allocating time in this linear space to write. If the amount of time I spend thinking about writing, about Deleuze, about encountering him with/through/between you translated to tangible pages, I'd have a library full of writings. Each tick of the clock is a folding back on my corporeal shell—my body howls (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988). I am so humbled, so grateful, for this 'encountered' space to (co)create and (co)write. Having spent the past few months delving in to *Anti-Oedipus*, this writing, collaboration, experimentation via endless cyber nodes brings me back to the body without organs, its utterances, and how we continue to push/(re)create the limits of what scholarly writing can/does look like especially among the striations (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004). Our rhythmic languages and exchanges viscerally move me, and flow so beautifully through/between/among the ever-changing space(s) within which we (re)write.

Desiring love and peace...

## Writing into the Light (Jonathan)

Encountering you all; encountering Deleuze.

This writing is not orderly but a blizzard, our words meeting each other loose and free, our skin softening as the imagined clear, sharp delineations between me/you/us fade. Nodes, as Krista offers.

Y/our words never and always are interruption.

'I am becoming other as I read/write, alone in a Berkeley hotel looking out of my window onto dawn's transforming light and the emerging unfamiliar street scenes. I am with Hanna in breathing again, in/through uncertainty.

## Together in Distance (Teija)

Travelling with you,

These airports in between, being in the no-mans-land, which, is, however, territorialized, yet being re- and de-territorialized all the time... Mind your step... mind your step... mind your step, again and again and again...(wounded territories)...

I am now sitting in the train from Amsterdam Schiphol to Nijmegen, late Wednesday night. It is so dark and foggy. I cannot see anything outside, just lights passing by. I do not know where I am in this dark empty space, hanging on to you, Jonathan, in Berkeley watching the dawn's transforming light. And Krista in your library full of writings on encountering Deleuze. This in-between space, a smooth space, for becoming live.

The train trip from Schiphol to Nijmegen is short but still I have the time to read a philosophical journal, and the theme is affects and emotions. Unexpectedly, I encounter an article, in Finnish, about dance and Deleuze and molecular becoming in the midst of dance improvisation. This is a very embodied encounter with molecular becoming, how small, tiny encounters with differing things (differentiation) affects my becoming. Me becoming an unabled dancer, my finger becoming the dancing body. Moleculars (hiukkanen) between us affecting our becoming (Väättäinen 2007). Here is one molecular affect, moving and moved.

## The Politics of Our Stutterings? (Ken)

This writing has reminded me of the wonderful deterritorialising potentialities of language that Deleuzian concept, affect and percept alert us to. I am with Deleuze and Guattari when they say: "(T)here is no language in itself, nor are there any

linguistic universals, only a throng of dialects, patois, slangs and specialised languages. There is no ideal speaker-listener, any more than there is a homogenous linguistic community" (1988, p. 7).

I am seduced by the political style, nuance and radical implication of this. I am excited by the possibilities that are offered by stuttering in the language, not as a struggle *within* a language, rather by the excitement that comes from breaking away, creating rupture and of taking lines of flight. Not a stuttering in the language that allows for territorialisation and the insidiously discursive systemic mechanisms that work to striate space in reflexivity resisting ways, rather one that opens up changing relations of movement and transmutation, that creatively allows contingency, heterogeneity and complexity: language that works on and with the body. In this sense we have a notion of stuttering that is not based upon impediment or lack of ability but upon the practice and style of a creative force. In this sense language is, for Deleuze, an assemblage, and it has struck me in these nascent writings that we have been sharing here that in our encounterings with and of Deleuze we have, through the reterritorialising practices in which we have begun to engage, opened all kinds of new becomings.

In their writing on Kafka, Deleuze and Guattari offer the possibility of a "minor literature" which is based upon the notion of linguistic action, whereby we write to and as experiment, where we take on the dominating forces of the "major literature" that works to produce the canon and the normative force of the privileged practice style and where the living, embodied, performative action of our words and sentences challenges and takes on the coercive and colonising effects of the regulating logic, the traditional grammar and stylistic preferences of the dominant majoritarian form. So I am growing to love the material and discursive becoming that is the performance of our exchanges. In our writing there seems to be variation, interaction and contextual complexity that all have the potential to challenge the constants, the rules and the set definitions that are invariably set by the hierarchies of traditional power relations. I like the possibilities that we have already begun to open up here that offer challenge to the material and discursive imperialism of *English* with its array of attendant inflexible rules that try to tell us that this is the way it is done, this is the correct mode of expression and this is the structure that needs to be used.

All our different countries, our different cultures and the diversity of our little plots of land: such multiplicity! All I see at the moment are the transgressive and creative possibilities that such differentiation potentially allows. With Deleuze, stuttering puts matter and language into use, allowing us to work with phrases, to alter patterns, to invent meanings and to revel in all forms of linguistic and material

variation. So this morning as the rain pours out of a grey leaden Cornish sky and manic gusts of wind rattle my window frame I am feeling excited by the deterritorialising politics of this writing adventure with you and with Deleuze.

## Notes

1. British Educational Research Conference, Warwick, UK, September 2010.
2. International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, Urbana-Champaign, United States, May 2010 and May 2011.
3. The words that I have emboldened I have searched in the dictionary. Just to be(come) vulnerable or to give you a trace of my becoming-English. See more about 'becoming-English' in Guttorm, 2012. (HG).
4. Wyatt et al., 2010.
5. The italicized words and phrases I resonate deeply with, fall deep in to... (HG).
6. At ICQI 2011 I recognized my second name (its possibilities of making sense in Finnish) as kind of Deleuzian. (HG).
7. "fly about in it"—why do you say 'fly about'...? (HG).
8. Gale & Wyatt, 2009.
9. This is a word which is used in the forms Saami, Sami and Sámi. Sámi is the form Sámi Parliament is using. And, oh, how I would like to write more about the newest Sámi issue in Finland—whether the people with Sámi background and roots, but who have lost their Sámi language, are accepted to get the identity of Sámi or not...Maybe once... (HG).

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Liz McKenzie has followed different lines of flight within education, often working simultaneously across different sectors. After studying Psychology and Child Development she worked as a nursery assistant and taught in further and higher education, before gaining a teaching qualification and teaching in primary schools, whilst also tutoring for the Open University. She subsequently became a teacher educator for the post-compulsory sector, where she developed research interests in reflection/reflective practice and issues surrounding teaching higher education in further education contexts. She currently teaches in the Masters in Education programme at Plymouth University and continues to research reflection, HE in FE practice styles and professional identities as well as exploring writing as a means of professional development. Liz lives in her native Cornwall, close to the beach and cliffs she grew up with.

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