

# **Deleuze and Organisations**

## **A Double Capture**

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## **Declaration**

I declare that the content of this thesis is my own work and that it has not been submitted in any form for the award of a higher degree elsewhere.

Harkaitz Ibaiondo,

Tolosa, Basque Country, 2020

## Abstract

Why is it that some organisations resist much-needed change, even when change is self-evident? Why do organisations and organisational actors keep on following the same processes, rules, and strategies, even when existing organisational procedures and routines no longer seem to work? How can we account for organisational transformation, or the lack thereof? ‘We’ here does not refer to academics or researchers. It refers to organisational researchers *and* practitioners. In other words, how can I, as both researcher *and* manager, simultaneously, account for—and facilitate—the organisational transformation of the company (Sigma) where I work? The objective of this research is not (only) a conceptual understanding of organisational transformation. It is not *about* transformation, rather, it aims at an *actual transformation*.

Aiming at understanding and performing transformation, this research experiments with the encounter between Sigma and the different domain of philosophy. I connect the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze’s work with the organisation I work for as a senior manager. I traverse both worlds, concepts (theory) and practices, and observe the effect of their encounter. Stated differently, this research experiments with a specific type of relationship between different elements and traces its transformations.

The experiment entails observations (ethnographic fieldwork into organisational practices), the creation of concepts, and active interventions in the object of study, Sigma. Differently stated, the experiment involves what I refer to as exploration, reflection and crafting. Exploration involves detecting the affects produced by the encounter with Sigma and Deleuze’s text; a multiplicity of intensities or impressions is created. Reflection means the coming together of these impressions in a new concept of Sigma as thought experiment. Crafting entails the actualisation or embodiment of the concept in concrete practices and discourses. This is arguably a *new* method. It emerges from the encounter with Deleuze’s work.

Similarly, a new reading of Deleuze’s work<sup>1</sup> (I consider him a philosopher of organisation) and a transformed organisation (Sigma) emerge from their encounter. The key arguments that this thesis puts forward is that transformation happens when a specific type of relationship becomes *embodied*. I call this relationship ‘double capture’ or ‘nomadic traverse’. Which is conceptualised and practised throughout the thesis and the research. The key to transformation are these ‘double capture’ relationships.

In this regard, the thesis expands the experiment also to the relationship with the reader--aiming at enacting a transformation rather than just reading about it. Focusing on ‘double capture’ relationships has proven transformative. Arguably, through ‘double capture’ relationships the organisation implicated in the experiment (Sigma), the field of organisation studies, Deleuzian studies, and the reader might be

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<sup>1</sup> I think that it is new, at least for Organisation Studies.

transformed. Undoubtedly, the research transformed from an experiment aiming at organisational transformation to my personal transformative journey, which paradoxically also entails a collective transformation

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## Preface

You are about to embark upon a journey into a different type of PhD thesis, which could also be conceived of as an experiment. As such, I should expect more from you than just reading it—you are also in some sense participating in the experiment. Due to its unconventional structure, this thesis may feel uncomfortable to read; chapters are not organised in the normal way into a single linear argument. Additionally, some aspects of the text might be new for you. I am assuming that this is not the kind of thesis one normally reads or expects to read. Hence, I want to clarify the purpose of this research and thesis from the outset.

The aim of taking this journey is a ‘transformation’. Not in the sense of just reaching a different cognitive understanding about, and gaining additional knowledge on, a subject matter. As such, the text does not just analyse and build up an argument about change. Rather, I aim to perform a transformation. I would like to impact positively on the object of my study and myself by actualising my potential for developing new skills and changing practices. Moreover, this thesis also aims at transforming the reader, by opening up a new way of understanding, by fostering new experiences and facilitating new actions. In other words, the thesis aims to create new possibilities of being for the writer, for the organisation, and for the reader.

In going on this journey we are taking considerable risks by experimenting with transformation instead of making a detailed and specific argument about transformation. The developmental psychologist Robert Kegan (1982) suggests that change comes as the result of proper balance between challenge and support. Unfortunately, it remains unclear what proper balance of challenge and support might be in this case. On this journey, I will challenge and support you, and in doing so will hopefully find the transformative balance. I suspect that you as a reader might find the text challenging even with my attempts to minimise its convolution. I hope that you will nevertheless remain engaged. I will try to support you throughout this journey but without being too supportive, as this would be counter-productive.

Many concepts might be hard to grasp at first; they may even confuse or disturb you. These concepts do not offer definitive explanations—Instead, they foster insights and a different type of understanding. Consequently, you may miss precise definitions, illustrative empirical examples, or specific arguments. You may feel somewhat lost and uncomfortable, but this is part of the journey. Therefore, rather than assessing the analytical value of this text, I ask that you play along with it, allowing the concepts to create the experiences. The text is crafted to impact the reader, to create experiences of transformation, not just facilitate intellectual understanding<sup>2</sup>. The thesis is not aiming to be either a piece of non-academic literature that creates feelings or merely an action-oriented recipe for implementing transformation. It is a PhD thesis, an academic text. My purpose is to experiment, bringing together cognitive understanding, transformative experiences, and action to implement change. In other words,

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<sup>2</sup> For example, instead of describing how to ride a bicycle so that the reader understands it conceptually, I am aiming at helping the reader to ride a bicycle.

I am proposing that you suspend your assumptions of how a PhD thesis should be read and *experiment with a different type of relationship* with an academic text. My hope is that the more you engage experientially with this unorthodox thesis, the more you will experience the transformative power of such an encounter.

I suggest that changing the way we relate creates something new that transforms both the author and the reader. My motivation for proposing this path is my insight that individual development does not automatically translate into new ways of being together, or collective transformation. Having dedicated two decades to my own development, I now feel an impulse to explore new ways of relating. That is, with this research and thesis, I want to experiment with a new way of relating to my colleagues and to you the reader in a more satisfying kind of relationship. In that regard, writing this thesis has been very challenging and demanding for me. Early readers suggested that the text was impossible to read. Indeed, throughout this journey, I have often felt frustrated, incapable of connecting in new ways. Nevertheless, I persisted with the experiment. I am not interested in reproducing an easier way of relating, an already formalised relationship. Rather, I seek a different kind of connection, a unique form of relationship that calls forth the potential of each participant within a fertile, co-creative field.

Challenges inspire me. I prefer innovation to the repetition of the same forms. I have consciously taken this path of seeking a new approach to doing research, writing a thesis, reading philosophy or acting in the organisation I work. At the same time, I have tried to become what I feel I potentially am, and to express and show my contribution to developing and maximising our collective potential through changing the way we relate. Nevertheless, sometimes I felt overwhelmed and unable to actualise this personal and collective potential. At times, the task seemed to be too difficult for me. I might have been too demanding on myself or on the organisation I wanted to impact—and perhaps too demanding on you as the reader. I have not always found the balance between challenge and support, I suspect.

To summarise, this thesis does not only aim to develop a conceptual understanding of transformation. It is also an experiment about feelings, experiences, and practical suggestions that aims *to perform such a transformation*. I hope that together, we will be able to create a transformative encounter that will positively affect us both. I suggest that this might happen if we relate in a new and different way. This is the reason why this thesis is expressed in an atypical and experimental manner. My hope is that you are willing to experiment with me in this new way of relating, which will be challenging (sometimes even painful) but potentially rewarding.

Experimenting with the thesis itself and with the relationship between reader and text is not the only experiment of this research, however. As noted before, I would like this research to impact positively on the object of my study: the organisation I work for as a manager. But, can a research impact an organisation? If so, how? Can concepts change organisational practices (and discourses)? What is the relationship between theory and practice, or between researcher and manager? These questions reveal that the research expressed in this thesis entails two additional experiments: the experimentation with the organisational transformation of me as both a manager *and* a researcher, and ultimately the

experimentation with the relationship between theory and practice. Both experiments will be introduced in more detail in Chapter 1. In sum: I am proposing experimenting with a transformative relationship (that I will later call ‘double capture’) between research and organisation (or researcher and manager), reader and text, and ultimately between theory and practice. Let us start our journey (or experiment).

## **Chapter 1. Making a Difference of Theory and of Practice**

This chapter will act as an introduction to the main components of my research. I will begin by introducing my motivation for doing this research in the first place. I will then provide a brief presentation of Sigma, the organisation for which I work, and through study, am trying to transform. I will then talk about myself. After this, I will discuss the major influence of Gilles Deleuze's work, which will guide us throughout the thesis. It will soon become clear that Deleuze might also be the main reason for some of the difficulties of the research approach I took. His work leads us to explore the relationship between theory and practice. Relationships are a central theme of my research. Specifically, I will explore the relationship between reader and text, theory and practice, philosophy and organisation, and between researcher and manager. I will also explore the relationship between chapters or sections within a chapter. By drawing on Deleuze, we will return to the issues that arise from experimenting with a new way of doing research, as outlined in the preface. That is, I will propose a different approach to the practice of research. By focusing on a different kind of relationship between theory and practice, I will be trying to facilitate new possibilities for understanding, experiencing, and implementing transformations. In other words, I am proposing experimenting with new ways of relating in order to perform transformations, theoretically and practically, personally and organisationally.

### **1.1. The research focus or question**

Formed in 1956 as a small workshop in the town of Mondragon, Fagor Electrodomésticos has since grown to become one of the world's biggest domestic and commercial appliance manufacturers. Based in the Basque Country, Fagor pioneered the Mondragon Cooperative Corporation (MCC), which eventually developed into the world's largest workers' cooperative, comprised of 122 industrial companies, 6 financial organisations, 14 retailers, 4 research centres, 14 insurance companies, and a university. In 2014, the MCC was employing 69,000 people, and its assets were valued at 24.72b Euros, with a revenue of 12.1b Euros (2015). Despite this, in 2013 Fagor Electrodomésticos had officially announced bankruptcy, having accrued an accumulated debt of 800 million euros after suffering 5 consecutive years of heavy losses. This affected 1600 employees in the Basque Country as well as 5642 employees worldwide<sup>3</sup>.

I studied at Mondragon University and have a high regard for the cooperative movement. Consequently, I felt it a pity to see the flagship of the movement fail. The shocking bankruptcy of Fagor Electrodomésticos, as well as personal experiences with my former and current employers, has led me to wonder: Why is it that some organisations resist much-needed change, even when change is self-evident? Why do organisations and organisational actors keep on following the same processes, rules,

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/spain-fagor/spanish-appliance-group-fagor-files-for-bankruptcy-idUSL5N0IY3K020131113> , [https://elpais.com/economia/2017/10/29/actualidad/1509278561\\_185570.html](https://elpais.com/economia/2017/10/29/actualidad/1509278561_185570.html) , <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fagor> ,

and strategies, even when existing organisational procedures and routines no longer seem to work? How can we account for organisational transformation, or the lack thereof?

The aim of this thesis goes beyond answering these questions. It expands into transforming the way organisations and organisational actors behave when the habitual routines and procedures do not work anymore<sup>4</sup>. In addition to contributing to existing theoretical knowledge, the thesis aims at directly and concretely informing the managerial practices of Sigma, the organisation for which I have been working as Commercial Director since 2015. My aim is to provide practical knowledge that would make Sigma more sustainable, i.e. a company that can adapt to new demands and challenges. With this in mind, the principal concern of the thesis is: How can a PhD research account for—and facilitate—the organisational transformation of a company such as Sigma?

## **1.2. Introduction to Sigma, Its Need for Change**

Adaptability to new demands and challenges is important for any organisation, and employees within Sigma are well aware of this. As its Managing Director, wrote:

*Adaptability is a core competence in a fast-changing world. The ability of an organisation to transform itself to give the best answer to the new challenges is crucial for its sustainability. As the historical review [ addressed in this paper] demonstrates, the evolution and change have been always present in our company, from its very first day. As it has been in the past, nowadays there are again new inputs that push our company for further adaptation.* (unpublished paper for the IMPM master's program, 2018).

However, the inputs that demand a transformation are not specified by the Director. The size of the company is a key factor for reaching competitiveness, both because of the cost reduction that the economy of scale brings, and because increased financial capacity is needed in order to compete for international projects. On the other hand, starting in the early 2000s, Sigma's parent company and main customer, Alpha, saw a dramatic shift in the railways system market as low labour cost countries started favouring local manufacturers who were gaining knowledge in mechanical technology. As a result, while withdrawing from the business of complete train building, global train builders started partnering with local manufacturers, trying to keep themselves in the business of control and power electronics technologies. For example, today, Indian Railways manufactures its own locomotives and trains but purchases its traction converters externally from companies that are specialised in control and power electronics (such as ABB, Mitsubishi, Siemens, etc.). Similarly, Chinese rail companies started producing their own trains, since 1997 for Metropolitan trains and 2003 for high-speed trains. This is typically done in partnership with global leaders (such as Alstom and Siemens) under transfer of technology agreements instead of buying complete trains. Alpha set up Sigma as a spin-off company

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<sup>4</sup> For example, I had to significantly change how I write this thesis and communicate as a manager as neither was working. I could reframe the research question to: why do I keep acting the same way when the need for change is self-evident? However, I see my personal development as a means rather than an end in itself. I prefer to focus on collective transformation.

tasked with developing its component business, enabling it to begin selling to other train builders. Since 2013, Sigma started seeking customers in the open market and generating additional revenue. The rationale of this strategy was that by transitioning from building complete trains to delivering strategic, technologically demanding components (such as traction converters, control electronics, gearboxes, bogies, couplers, and wheelsets) to external clients, Sigma would not only become more sustainable but could also contribute additional revenue and profits to the Alpha Group as a whole.

As a result of this strategy, Sigma's future challenge has become how to *grow in revenue profitably, selling outside Alpha Group in the open market* instead of just serving the parent company, as it has been until recently.

### **1.3. Introduction of the researcher *and* manager, and theory *and* practice**

I intend to facilitate Sigma's transformation towards growth and sustainability, not only as a researcher but as an employee too. I first joined the company in 2013, initially working in the engineering and later pre-sales department, when seeking out external markets had just been established as the company's new objective. Since 2015, I have been the company's Commercial Director, and as such a member of the Board of Directors, responsible for marketing, sales and presales. At that time, we were targeting 70 million euros of annual order intake. My position within Sigma as Commercial Director has allowed me to try to influence Sigma's practices and sustainability.

My background is in electrical engineering, specialising in power electronics. I have worked as a designer, R&D manager, and as a technical director at my former employer, also holding several patents and having published technical papers. It was only in 2008 that I started to develop an interest in management and organisational studies. As a manager at my previous employer, I was engaged in organisational practices; some of these practices were explicitly formalised, while others seemed to be just the way things were done there. Frequently, I faced the limits of these organisational practices that rendered them unworkable. From my perspective, there were organisational practices (such as market prospection or strategic reflection) that did not work, and I could not change them. In other words, as a practitioner, I encountered the limits of my practical knowledge. I wanted to impact the world of my former employer differently. But because I felt, as a manager, lacking in the knowledge to do so, I embarked on a journey to learn about theories of organisational practice. I moved from organisational practices to theories, first by reading books on management and eventually by joining the International Masters Program for Managers (IMPM) at Lancaster University in 2011. The IMPM is a degree program dedicated to the development of managers and organisations through reflective practice, which very well suited my interest in connecting theories to practices. During the IMPM master program, I developed a productive intellectual relationship with my future supervisors, Professors Martin Brigham and Lucas Introna, and sought opportunities to further explore the relationship between theory and practice within a PhD research.

I have been seeking to connect theory to practice since I first faced the limits of managerial and organisational practices. When I first started my PhD journey in 2015, I had hoped that learning new theories and concepts would contribute to transforming practices in organisations. I assumed that reading books on philosophy and organisational studies, and ultimately completing this thesis, would directly contribute to my practices as a manager, and in turn to Sigma's transformation. My implicit assumption was that the research could potentially facilitate Sigma's transformation and contribute to its sustainability as an organisation. During this project, both as a researcher and as a manager, I have moved back and forth between practices and theories/concepts, although I have often struggled to find their direct connection to one another. I have also struggled to find the explicit contribution of my research to Sigma.

Ultimately, I have encountered organisational practices that, in my view, did not work. I have also found limits in my managerial practices and in my ability to change organisational practices. Additionally, I have encountered challenges for the organisation (such as growing sales outside Alpha) that demand changes to both personal and organisational practices. I hope that this research, and theory in general, will facilitate these personal and organisational transformations. Thus, the relationship between theory and practice is in a sense the key issue of this research, not merely for its own sake as a theoretical curiosity, but as a central part of how the research can contribute to the transformation of Sigma.

#### **1.4. Introduction of Deleuze. Using his philosophy, seriously**

Before coming back to the relationship between theory and practice, let me first introduce another important component of this research. In addition to exploring the relationship between theory and practice with contributing to a specific organisation in mind, I started this research intent on furthering my decade-long engagement with the work of the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze and his colleague Felix Guattari. I have long found their work to be so insightful that they became a central inspiration for this research. Since my initial encounter with his work, I have been drawn into exploring the Deleuzian universe of thought, which has exerted a profound impact on my thinking. Indeed, I have been reading Deleuze's work extensively even before any consideration of embarking on a PhD research. My decision to draw on Deleuze's work was not entirely a rational or considered choice. In truth, it was more a matter of an attraction, a resonance. As such, his figure will loom large in the following analysis<sup>5</sup>. This thesis is, therefore, the coming together of my intention to study and to continue working with my supervisors, Martin Brigham and Lucas Introna; to contribute to Sigma, and to continue engaging with Deleuze's thinking.

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<sup>5</sup> I spent the first two years reading Deleuze's work and writing about it. Several times, my annual review examiners and supervisors highlighted the lack of connection between my writing and Sigma. "Why is this Deleuzian concept relevant for your thesis?" I didn't know what to answer. I just wanted to read and understand Deleuze.

Deleuze's work has been extensively explored in organisation studies. It could be argued that organisational scholars Robert Cooper and Gibson Burrell working at Lancaster University pioneered this "minoritarian" line of analysis with their seminal papers on modernism and postmodernism (Cooper & Burrell, 1988, Cooper, 1989, Burrell, 1988 and 1994). Others, mainly within the U.K. with direct or indirect connections to Lancaster University and to the work of Cooper and Burrell, such as Chia (1999), Linstead (2000), Wood (2002), Styhre (2001, 2002), Styhre and Sundgren (2003), Carter and Jackson (2004), Thanem (2004, 2005, 2006, 2011), Thanem and Linstead (2006, 2007), Munro and Thanem (2018), Brigham (2005), Sørensen (2005), Fuglsang and Sørensen (2006), Lawley (2005), (Kornberger, Rhodes, and Ten Bos (2006), Cavalcanti (2012), Vergne (2013) further increased the presence of Deleuze's ideas in organisational studies. Without these authors, Deleuze could have simply been an interesting philosopher for me, with no connection to my daily work or to this research. These important authors have allowed me to dare to experiment with Deleuze and to connect his ideas with practices in Sigma.

I decided, however, not to draw on the important secondary literature on Deleuze for my research. Rather than studying, criticising, or drawing on the secondary literature, I have preferred instead to be exposed to Deleuze's works directly. I do not claim to arrive at an authentic or unique understanding of Deleuze or what his work stands for. One could indeed claim that there are many possible interpretations, that there is no "one" Deleuze but rather a "multiplicity" (Smith, 2012, 124). Instead of addressing the already existing multiple interpretations, I have merely tried to affirm my own particular interpretation out of my encounter with Deleuze.

In that regard, 'my Deleuze' is different in two ways, which can be the contributions of this research to Deleuze and organisational studies: Firstly, my approach differs from the secondary literature because instead of introducing, explaining, or applying Deleuzian concepts, this research 'does with' Deleuze:

*We learn nothing from those who say: 'Do as I do'. Our only teachers are those who tell us to 'do with me' and are able to emit signs to be developed in heterogeneity rather than propose gestures for us to reproduce (Deleuze, 1995b, 23).*

Throughout this thesis, I do not reproduce Deleuze's concepts. Instead, I try to read the signs he emits and then I develop those signs towards an understanding and facilitation of Sigma's transformation, so that it can respond to new challenges and reach sustainability. The approach that this research follows is of practising with Deleuze.

Deleuze is interpreted in this research not just as a theoretical philosopher but also as a practitioner, as evidenced by his methods or 'pragmatics'. Moreover, I think that he is interested, as I am, in the use of the text in extra-textual practice, i.e. in using theory to impact on practices<sup>6</sup>:

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<sup>6</sup> Without neglecting the intertextuality between Deleuze's work and this text, his theories impact not only practices but also understanding.

*I do not present myself as a commentator on texts. For me, a text is merely a small cog in an extra-textual practice. It is not a question of commenting on the text by a method of deconstruction, or by a method of textual practice, or by other methods; it is a question of seeing what use it has in the extra-textual practice that prolongs the text* (Deleuze as quoted in Smith, 2012, 193).

Highlighting the practically focused side of Deleuze's work and its synergistic potential for transforming Sigma does not entail ignoring his contribution to theory through his extraordinary ontology. The Deleuze of this thesis is, secondly, different in that I put forward a new reading of his ontology. Organisational scholars like Chia (1999) or Wood (2002) categorise Deleuze as a "process philosopher", which means that they highlight an ontology of becoming identifying reality with change. In other words, being *is* becoming, rather than a permanent essence. However, both Plato's and Aristotle's classical ontologies deny reality to change and consider it accidental or contingent and non-essential. Process philosophy and classical ontologies both suggest that there is an exclusive choice between stable substance *or* becoming as the primary reality<sup>7</sup>. Being is a permanent essence *or* being is becoming. I would suggest that describing Deleuze as a 'philosopher of process' is a reduction to one dimension of this dualism of becoming *or* stability<sup>8</sup>.

Instead, I suggest that Deleuze is focused both on processes and flows, and also on essences or identities. Similarly, I suggest that both process and product have to be considered, that we should explore organisations from the perspectives of both change and stability. Following Deleuze's method, reality is divided into two heterogeneous elements; a distinction is made between process and product *or* becoming and substance. Instead of focusing just on one side of the distinction (e.g. process), both elements of the dualism are fully real and have to be explored, traversed, and thereby connected. In other words, both differentiated elements are put in relation traversing them: they are organised. Therefore, I suggest that Deleuze focuses on the relationship between both elements of that dualism substance-becoming—specifically, on their organisation. Consequently, I claim that Deleuze is a philosopher of organising, and as such is an appropriate source to study organisations. Moreover, I suggest that, by focusing on the relationship between process and product, Deleuze is indirectly addressing our concern about stability and change in organisations; he is concerned with transformation. I will articulate these claims more thoroughly in Chapter 3, which is dedicated to examining Deleuze's work.

### **1.5. Exploring the relation between theory and practice with Deleuze.**

In addition to focusing on Deleuze's pragmatics and considering him a philosopher of the organisation of heterogeneous elements, I claim that Deleuze's ontology offers the appropriate means

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<sup>7</sup> I think that debate is still alive today between object-oriented or process-oriented philosophies.

<sup>8</sup> Throughout this thesis many other distinctions will be addressed such as "molecular" and "molar", "virtual" and "actual" or change and stability, especially since making distinctions or differentiating is part of Deleuze's method.

to explore the relationship between theory and practice. Reading Deleuze's work both intensively and extensively<sup>9</sup> has enabled me to think about the relationship between theory and practice in a different way. Contrary to my initial anticipation at the beginning of this research (see section 1.3.) that theory contributes to practices by informing them or through being implemented, I have realised that the relationship between theory and practice is in fact very subtle. In the next paragraphs, I will thus try to tease out the specificities of this complex special relationship.

Although theory and practice are inseparably united in this research (just as the researcher and manager are inseparably united in my person), drawing on Deleuze, I suggest that the two be differentiated into distinct domains. Theory and practice should be treated as two independent attributes that are expressions of the same substance (Deleuze, 2005a, 27). This is the first movement of Deleuze's method. Starting from a unity (such as research, myself or reality), we differentiate two elements (e.g. theory and practice, researcher and manager or process and substance), which we posit as being different, i.e. two heterogeneous elements. The reader may notice the paradox of my suggestion here. The two elements are unrelated, independent, heterogeneous, distinct domains; at the same time, they are expressions of the same research (person or reality), just as our body and our soul can be considered as two independent elements of the same mode or way of being i.e. individuality. Yet, the heterogeneous elements (such as theory and practice, or process and substance) are connected or organised in a specific way.

This raises the question: In what way are they independent? Drawing on Deleuze's understanding of Spinoza, it can be said that there is no hierarchy between the heterogeneous worlds of soul and body, an argumentation that I transpose to theory and practice. They are distinct inasmuch as they both imply different attributes: thought and extension. As modes of different attributes, the body does not have to obey the soul; there is no supremacy of thought over extension, one is not taking over the other. In Deleuze's somewhat cryptic words, one reign does not take over the other because "movement cannot be thought" (2005a, 59). Movement, action, extension or body are distinct, different from thought and knowledge. In other words, "the entity is unthinkable" (Deleuze, 2005a, 60). What the body can do, its capacity for movement or extension in space, has nothing in common with thought. For Deleuze, thought cannot reach the body, the material world, or movement in space. The body does not obey thoughts, and thoughts do not represent the body, they are independent worlds. Each mode of being, or individuality (e.g. a person, organisation, thesis) can be divided into independent elements or worlds, yet these heterogeneous worlds do not encapsulate each other (there is no relation between the discursive and non-discursive sides of an organisation, for example). Stated differently, in my reading of Deleuze, there is no hierarchy or power relation between theory and practice. Although they are united in the same research, theory and practice are different domains, each existing in their own right.

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<sup>9</sup> Extensively: reading almost all his books, courses and even letters. Intensively, I read some several times, in different languages and trying to feel its impact on me. Attentive to the insight it provoked.

The relationship between the two worlds of soul and body, thought and extension, is further developed in Deleuze's monograph "The Fold" (Deleuze, 2006b), in which he states that "each operates according to its own laws" (2006b, 135), without "influence, action or even infrequent interaction between the two" (2006, 136). There is, however, harmony between them, an "inseparability" (2006b, 123) or connection, a "correspondence and even communication" (2006b, 4). Despite this, they retain their respective autonomy. Theory and practice are distinct, heterogeneous, and independent, but they communicate and come together in one single unity. For example, this research is expressed, on the one hand, by thought that "actualizes" it, and on the other, by practices that "realize" it (2006b, 136). Theory and practice are two distinct expressions of the same research, or the same "event" (Deleuze, 2006a, 352).

Rather than treating theory and practice as independent domains without interaction or relation between each other, some commentators, such as Badiou (2000) and Hallward (2006), claim that Deleuze's domain of practices entails implementations or actualisations of virtual ideas or concepts. Eagleton (2017), on the other hand, proposes a more materialistic approach, where practice inspires theory, and as such is indispensable for the creation of theoretical forms. Whether theory informs practice or practice informs theory, "in each case their relationship has typically been a totalisation of one over the other" (Foucault as quoted in Nail 2012, 7): practice as the implementation of theory or theory as the representation of practices, in each case one takes over the other. In my reading, I suggest a different type of relation or organisation of different elements.

Roffe provides a more nuanced approach that moves beyond the idea of one element taking over the other, suggesting instead that there is a "reciprocal determination" (2014, 149) between Deleuze's virtual and actual (i.e. between theories and practices). The physical encounters between bodies produce virtual or incorporeal events or ideas which are, in turn, actualised in the material world. This reciprocal determination acknowledges the double movement from practices to theory and back again. There is a conceptualisation of practices and an implementation of theories, or in other words, a virtualisation of the actual and an actualisation of the virtual: a circuit.

While I largely agree with Roffe's idea of a circuit between theories and practices, I object to his interpretation of a resemblance between ideas and their actualisations. In my view, ideas and practices are two different worlds: one does not determine the other. Theories are not implemented, and they do not determine practices. Practices are not represented by theories, either. In essence, there is no resemblance between theories and practices.

I propose, therefore, that we differentiate theory and practice as heterogeneous elements. They are independent, devoid of hierarchy, resemblance, or reciprocal determination. They entail different attributes, extension and thought, with no relation between them. They do, however, come together in the unity of this research; they *do* relate in a specific way. This subtle relation between theory and practice can be understood in the famous Deleuzian example of the wasp and the orchid:

*The orchid seems to form a wasp image, but in fact there is a wasp-becoming of the orchid, an orchid becoming of the wasp, a double capture since 'what' each becomes changes no less than 'that which' becomes. The wasp becomes part of the orchid's reproductive apparatus at the same time as the orchid becomes the sexual organ of the wasp. One and the same becoming, a single block of becoming, [...] an 'a-parallel' evolution of two beings who have nothing whatsoever to do with one another. [...] a common but asymmetrical deterritorialization (Deleuze & Parnet, 2007, 2-3).*

The relationship between a company and its customer might similarly exemplify this point. In this type of relationship, company and customer are two heterogeneous organisations, or entities. There is no resemblance between each entity, nor a reciprocal determination, nor one taking over the other, or vice versa. They are independent organisations that have nothing in common, that is until there is an encounter between them. At this point, there can be harmony, communication or even relation. Their encounter is a coming together of two independent heterogeneous elements: they now belong to the same assemblage. A company and its customer are organised such that each affirms its difference and independence. No one would expect, for example, Airbus to become Lufthansa (at least in principle). Body and soul, orchid and wasp, Airbus and Lufthansa, process and product, virtual and actual, Sigma and organisational studies, theory and practice, researcher and manager, and so forth, are each a pair of heterogeneous elements that come together in an encounter constituting an assemblage, an organisation but each keeping its "respective autonomy" (Deleuze, 2006b, 136). I consider this type of relationship between two heterogeneous elements Deleuze's organisational principle of differences. It is called 'double capture'. We are going to explore it throughout this thesis, but it may already be apparent that the approach to the relationship between theory and practice is a case of my reading of Deleuze's ontology, of this organisational principle governing the relationship between heterogeneous elements—the relationship between theory and practice that I propose is a double capture.

Besides, this type of relationship is a 'bloc of becoming'—something happens, some effect emerges out of the encounter. Each *becomes* but remains independent from the other. It is a common but asymmetrical becoming, meaning that each follows its own path, at its own speed, and in its own way. Each one's becoming is different. This process is, in Deleuze's words, an "a-parallel evolution" (Deleuze & Parnet, 2007, 2). The company and its customer are affected by their encounter. Their relationship constitutes a new assemblage, a new arrangement, but what is more, the encounter impacts both organisations. The company becomes, and its customer becomes also. For instance, more employees may be hired, new products developed, or new facilities opened. Each organisation's evolution, however, although caused by the encounter, is different, not parallel or symmetrical with the other organisation. A big contract between Lufthansa and Airbus has a different meaning for, and impact on, each organisation. I have, therefore, found that the concept of double capture is appropriate for exploring organisational transformation.

*To encounter is to find, to capture, to steal, but there is no method for finding other than a long preparation. Stealing is the opposite of plagiarizing, copying, imitating, or doing like. Capture is always a double capture (Deleuze & Parnet, 2007, 7).*

In addition to organisational transformation, the concept of ‘double capture’ helps us to explore the relationship between theory and practice as independent elements that have nothing to do with one another (like the orchid and the wasp, or a company and its customer). The encounter between theory and practice produces asymmetrical becomings. In other words, theory and practice do not become together; each becomes by itself, remaining independent but nevertheless coming together. Out of their encounter, there emerges an evolution of concepts and practices. Becoming is not imitation, assimilation, application, implementation, or exchange. Each of the heterogeneous elements follows their own path, it is a non-parallel or asymmetrical becoming. Rather than one taking over the other, or a reciprocal determination, I claim that this specific relationship between theory and practice is “a double capture,” or “nuptials between two reigns.” (Deleuze & Parnet, 2007, 2). Both theory and practice are expressions of the same event, but they go side by side with, as Nail argues, the goal of:

*not to ground one in the other or to describe or interpret the world more accurately, but rather transform the world itself using both theory and practice, side by side (2012, 7).*

In addition to the metaphors of double capture or nuptials between two independent reigns, Deleuze suggests that we should understand the relationship between theory and practice as a relay or traverse between each other:

*The relationships between theory and practice are far more partial and fragmentary. On one side, a theory is always local and related to a limited field, and it is applied in another sphere, more or less distant from it. The relationship which holds in the application of a theory is never one of resemblance. Moreover, from the moment a theory moves into its proper domain, it begins to encounter obstacles, walls, and blockages which require its relay by another type of discourse (it is through this other discourse that it eventually passes to a different domain). Practice is a set of relays from one theoretical point to another, and theory is a relay from one practice to another. No theory can develop without eventually encountering a wall, and practice is necessary for piercing this wall (Deleuze and Foucault, 1972)*

According to Deleuze, this traverse is performed by someone or something that he interchangeably calls the “realiser” (2006a, 356), “vitalism” (2006a, 386) or the “vinculum substantiale” (2006a, 357). In our case, the realiser is the researcher-manager who “will perhaps be what passes from one to the other, which makes move from one aspect to the other of the event”(Deleuze, 2006a, 356, my translation). As researcher and manager, I abide by both worlds. I go back and forth between theory and practice, academia and Sigma. I am neither purely an academic nor purely a manager. I am both an outsider and an insider to both worlds at the same time. I am performing a relay between theory and practice, traversing them. The focus is on the passing from one to the other, moving from one to the other, living them independently.

In sum, the heterogeneous elements of theory and practice are traversed, and they consequently come together in the unity of this research. Theory and practice are connected by a relay between them. The relationship between theory and practice can, therefore, be defined as a double capture wherein both elements evolve asymmetrically, each following its own path whilst remaining independent (although they belong to the same assemblage of this research). Said differently, the encounter between theories and practices might make us see or understand and act differently. Concepts and practices may evolve out of the encounter. Their encounter, however, is performed by the realiser that traverses them. In our case, I, the researcher-manager, am acting as the realiser for this thesis. The relationship between researcher and manager can be seen as a relay or traverse. I suggest that, if the encounter between a PhD research and Sigma meets the criteria of a double capture, it will transform them both<sup>10</sup>.

## **1.6. Introduction to the experiment. Where Deleuze and research meet.**

### **1.6.1. Experiment with double capture. Performing a transformation.**

The usefulness of ‘double capture’ as a concept (and Deleuze’s work in general) for my analysis is not something to be taken for granted. This research is not an implementation of the double capture concept. Instead, theory goes side by side with practice. Double capture or traverse is the central thread of the research, and it is expressed in theories *and* practices. In that regard, the research can be conceived of as an experiment on the value of Deleuze’s work for exploring organisations and their transformation. Similarly, Deleuze’s work has never been a matter of interpreting, but rather of experimenting: “It is precisely that we oppose a field of experimentation, personal as well as collective, to the activities of psychoanalytic interpretation”(Deleuze, 2004b, 384). This research explores the outcome of the encounter between Deleuzian concepts and Sigma’s organisational practices. Ultimately, the thesis is an experiment to explore whether the encounter between a PhD research (conceptually based on Deleuze’s work) and a particular organisation can contribute to both organisational concepts and practices. In other words, this research experiments with a double capture type of encounter between Deleuze’s concepts and Sigma’s practices, aiming for the research itself to contribute to Sigma’s transformation towards growth and sales outside of Alpha<sup>11</sup>. This research proposes an experimental approach in order to respond to the problem of how we can account for, and facilitate, organisational transformation.

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<sup>10</sup> The reader may expect a more specific definition of the concept of double capture. As noted before, instead of providing a detailed description of this type of relationship I hope the reader could experience it through the text.

<sup>11</sup> From the point of view of the manager, the research should serve the interest and demands of Sigma. However, from the point of view of the researcher, the experiment can shed some light on understanding organisational transformation, Deleuzian research methods and the relationship between theory and practice. There should not be a hierarchy or power relation between the theory and practice or researcher and manager, however, often, the manager takes over the researcher as I see myself more as a manager than a researcher. Or the sustainability of Sigma means more to me than the PhD award.

Exploring the relationship between theory and practice with Deleuze has led me to view their relationship differently: it is a double capture. Moreover, this exploration has also led me to think of this thesis as an experiment. However, this thesis is not only *about* an experiment; it does not just *represent* what I thought or did. This thesis, like

*Deleuze's writings exemplify what they express: his texts are themselves problems, field of vectors, multiplicities, or rhizomes whose singularities can be connected in variety of ways, so that writing on Deleuze's text is itself a becoming, a production of the new (not merely an "interpretation" as hermeneuticians might say) [...] to read or write on Deleuze is to trace out trajectories whose directions are not given in advance of one's readings or writings (Smith 2012, 124).*

Instead of representing or explaining Deleuzian concepts like “multiplicity”, “rhizome”, “pragmatics”, or “intensity”, which has been done by Parr (2010) as well as Young, Genosko, and Watson (2013), the thesis enacts the practices that it conceptualises. In other words, this text exemplifies, both in practice and in theory, what it expresses: a specific type of relation between heterogeneous elements; traverse or double capture. This research constituted the event of experimenting with a double capture type of relationship between theories and practices. In that regard, the research expands the experiment with ‘double capture’ to the relationship with the reader. The thesis not only represents an experiment or a concept, but makes the reader live it. Ultimately, the research experiments with a different type of relationship between theory and practice, research and Sigma, text and reader, and researcher and manager, aiming to both account for and facilitate an asymmetrical and unparallel transformation or becoming of the elements out of their encounter.

### **1.6.2. Experiment with thesis structure**

It is important to note that there is a “pragmatics” or method in Deleuze. Firstly, a multiplicity is created by dividing the research into theory and practice, or myself into researcher and manager. Secondly, the heterogeneous elements come together in a specific type of relation: a double capture. Similarly, as preparation for a double capture with the reader, the thesis is divided into heterogeneous, independent chapters. Just as I traversed the heterogeneous elements of theory and practice, connecting them through research, the reader should traverse, and thus connect, the heterogeneous chapters that stand by themselves and may seem to have no relation between one another, except for belonging to the same thesis. All chapters are expressions of the same thesis. With this in mind, the writing of this thesis practices a specific way of organising the chapters, aiming to substantiate a traverse or double capture between them performed by the reader.

The experiment alters the expected chapter outline and organisation of the thesis and transforms it into a different journey, a new traverse and therefore new organisation. Drawing on Deleuze, the research experiments with a new and emergent structure of the thesis, as opposed to applying or implementing a pre-given one. In other words, instead of a linear or arborescent argument, I present a

multiplicity of chapters and arguments whose rhizomatic connection and organisation is external to these elements. This should be performed by the reader (as realiser). While this is perhaps more demanding, I hope it is also more rewarding and remains more faithful to Deleuze's methodology. A double capture entails "a long preparation" (Deleuze & Parnet, 2007, 7), which means, as has been noted, that one must first live the terms of the encounter independently, and then traverse or connect them. In that regard, Chapter 2 introduces Sigma, the organisation that is the focus of this study, and the first element of the double capture. However, as the reader may have anticipated, this account does not aim to be a truthful representation of Sigma, but instead an 'intensive exploration' that differentiates a multiplicity of intensities or feelings arising from the encounter with Sigma. Similarly, Chapter 3 is an intensive exploration of the second element of the double capture: Deleuze's work. A particular version of Deleuze emerges out of my encounter with his work. Neither my account of Sigma nor my reading of Deleuze are fixed and stable entities that can be captured, contained or represented. Each emerge as multiplicities of intensities, even if they are mediated through representations such as organisational data in Sigma and in books and other publications by and about Deleuze. These instances serve as points of departure rather than definitive accounts. Also emerging from the encounter with Deleuze's work, the methodology of this intensive exploration and the overall pragmatics of my research is articulated in Chapter 4. Out of the exploration of Deleuze's work, I divided the pragmatics of this research into three movements. Chapter 2, 3 and 4 constitute the first movement of my methodology: Exploration (section 4.2.). This could be seen as the preparation for a double capture between Sigma and Deleuze. Chapter 5 outlines the initial outcome of the encounter between Sigma and Deleuze's work; Sigma is re-imagined. The chapter is a thought experiment that sketches out a potential Sigma and its possible transformations. In that regard, Chapter 5 is the second movement of the pragmatics of this research: Thinking (section 4.3.). Chapter 6 constitutes the third movement: Crafting (section 4.4.). After summarising my intervention in concrete organisational practices, Chapter 6 explores these actual transformations and the impact of the research experiment on the organisation. Chapter 7 discusses the conclusions of the experiment. As noted earlier, no chapter is privileged over another: each aims to be independent, standing on its own and affirming their difference. After traversing this multiplicity of chapters, I hope that the reader will be able to discern the meaning of the concepts and of the thesis by connecting, experiencing and practising them himself or herself<sup>12</sup>. The reader should develop a particular understanding of this research experiment and what it does, and will hopefully appreciate the concept of organisation and organisational transformation that this thesis puts forward. In sum, I suggest the reader approach their encounter with this arguably unorthodox and heterogeneous text as an experiment with an open ending.

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<sup>12</sup> The reader shall act as realiser, traversing (and thereby connecting) the chapters and concepts at 'infinite speed of thought', that way the reader shall be practising the concepts, using them and experiencing them.

### 1.6.3. Experiment with other ways of doing PhD research in Organisation Studies

I propose a double capture between theory and practice, PhD research and Sigma, the thesis and the reader, and arguably, as has been alluded to, between Deleuze and me. On the one hand, out of my encounter with Deleuze's work an original interpretation of Deleuzian thought has emerged. On the other hand, the encounter with Deleuze's work has impacted on my thoughts and practices. His thinking has made my research evolve by helping me to realise that to seek out a relationship between theory and practice might be the wrong starting point. There is no need to connect theory to practice, or vice versa; one must simply affirm each as different domains. To live one and then the other as independent fields has made sense to me. As a result, I felt relieved of the burden of connecting my research experiment to the transformation of Sigma. Paradoxically, starting to live them independently as heterogeneous elements, without seeking their relation to one another, has allowed me to contribute more to both worlds. I suggest that knowledge and theories do change practices, not through their implementation, but rather practices are re-formed as a result of the encounter between practice and the different domain of theory. This is a result of a double capture type of relationship between them. Similarly, organisational studies could evolve out of the encounter with a different domain, in the present case, of Deleuze's philosophy. When two distinct domains encounter each other—if they are allowed to follow their own path, if there is no relation of power or a pre-defined relationship, but rather a double capture type of encounter<sup>13</sup>—that is when theories and practices evolve.

Bolstered by Deleuze, I have dared to propose a specific relationship between theory and practice. Of course, one must acknowledge that the debate about this relation is an old one, but one that remains important even today (to me, at least). The present discussion is based on Deleuze and his pragmatics. Although the systematic exploration of this debate is not the goal of the research experiment, I think that my approach could eventually relieve organisational studies (as it has for me) from the burden of continually trying to define the relationship between theory and practice. I argue that there is no need to represent in rigid theories what organisations are, nor is there any need to prove or implement theory. Representations should be dynamic, flexible, and 'soft', open to becoming. Perhaps PhD research should not simply be about theory and conceptualisations, or production of knowledge (Wood, 2002). I am of the view that my PhD research experiment is not limited to an account of Deleuze's concepts. As previously stated, I am not merely illustrating my journey through Deleuze and exploring how I interpret his concepts. Neither am I commenting on or criticising his concepts or their interpretation by other organisational studies scholars. Furthermore, I am not trying to apply his ideas to organisations. Instead of being limited to theory and concepts, I am experimenting with Deleuze, putting his concepts to work. However, PhD research should not just be about the use of practical knowledge, nor the implementation of theories. PhD research should be neither just about the production of theoretical knowledge, nor just about practical knowledge, but instead about their double capture encounter.

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<sup>13</sup> The relation between theory and practice presented here should not be reduced to a theory. It has to be practised too, which entails a paradox. Practising it will be implementing it. As noted before, theory and practice do not resemble. Claiming that practice should be independent of theory is a theoretical statement.

As I have done in this research, researchers should traverse both fields, exploring and experimenting with concepts and practices. Researchers should connect both worlds, traversing them both. They should connect theories to a different domain, to the “extra-textual practice that prolong the text”(Deleuze, 1997, xvi). In this understanding, researchers may become the relays connecting organisational studies and organisational practices, traversing them both. Perhaps researchers have to abide by, or dwell, in both worlds: organisational practices and organisational concepts. They should embody practices and theories, and with this embodiment of both worlds, with this external encounter of independent elements through the body of the researcher-member of the organisation (not necessarily a manager), both fields could evolve, become.

I have always wondered why organisational researchers do not research the organisation to which they belong, e.g. universities or other research organisations. Maybe they want to produce and contribute to theoretical knowledge on the whole as opposed to producing practical knowledge for their organisation. Or perhaps producing theories *is* their contribution to their organisation. In any case, the becoming of theories, the production of theoretical knowledge would be the result, according to my reading of Deleuze, from the encounter with the outside, with another different, heterogeneous domain. “Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental *encounter*” (Deleuze, 1995b, 139, original emphasis). That is my suggestion for PhD research; to live organisational concepts and practices as independent domains that come together by the researcher traversing them. Eventually, the encounter constitutes a ‘single block of becoming’, an ‘a-parallel’ evolution of both theories and practices.

As a result, rather than contributing to the theoretical debate about the relation between theory and practice or simply proposing a new reading and use of Deleuze’s work, this thesis hopes to open spaces for acting in new ways. This can be done by doing research differently, by inhabiting both worlds of theory and practice, and more importantly for me as a manager, by acting differently in organisations. Said differently, this experiment aims at performing a specific organisational principle (double capture or traverse) and transformation whilst it conceptualises them<sup>14</sup>. Could it open spaces to other ways of researching, working or being? As Deleuze notes:

*Once communication between heterogeneous series is established, all sorts of consequences follow within the system. Something 'passes' between the borders, events explode, phenomena flash, like thunder and lightning* (Deleuze, 1995b, 118).

To conclude this introduction, I will repeat, or rather copy with differences Thanem's (2011, 113) view that, rather than creating bodies of knowledge to be compiled into academic journal articles or university libraries, I hope to create knowledge that can feed back into the managerial practices of organisations like Sigma, to open them up to different ways of living, working and organising<sup>15</sup>. That

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<sup>14</sup> The experiment may impact the researcher-manager, Sigma, the reader, Organisation studies, Deleuze studies.

<sup>15</sup> Different ways of thinking and practising life, work and organisations. In other words, life, work and organisations are expressed in thoughts and in bodily actions. I (as researcher and manager) aim to contribute to both theories and practices. Not applying one on the other but rather performing their double capture encounter.

is, to “give life, to liberate life wherever it is imprisoned, to trace lines of flight” (Deleuze, 1995a, 224, my translation).

## 1.7. Summary

The reader might have had different expectations for the first chapter of a PhD thesis on organisation studies. I have tried to be faithful to my interpretation of Deleuze and my ultimate purpose for the research, transformation. Deleuze does not give detailed definitions or make concepts clear. For any explanation of a concept, many other concepts are included. For him, a concept (or even a text) has the form of a multiplicity, which sometimes appears as a list of concepts. As a result, if we wish to understand a concept, we are charged with intuiting a meaning, which ultimately is not *the* meaning but one of many possible intuitions.

As the text is not straightforwardly clear, Deleuze (and I) tend to repeat with differences the underlying arguments. Deleuze does this masterfully, something I feel is not the case with my writing. However, I want to make sure that I neither lose the reader with too complex a presentation of the arguments nor that I explain too clearly so that the (or my) meaning is too evident. Nevertheless, I suggest the reader just pick up what interests him or her and leave the rest aside. The text presents lines of flight that the reader connects, reaching (eventually) their own interpretation. The reader should not try to understand everything or be quick to judge the text according to previous assumptions. This thesis should just be read as an experiment, its reader open to what emerges from their encounter with the text.

Allow me to succinctly reiterate the territory that we have covered until now. I wondered why it is that some organisations resist change, continuing to follow the same strategies even when they no longer seem to work. In that regard, I have suggested that Sigma needs a change, that it should grow in order to be more competitive (due to the economy of scale and financial capacity) and start selling outside of the Alpha Group. Sigma should be more oriented to business so as to become more sustainable and contribute additional revenue and profits to the Alpha Group. This research, and I, the researcher-manager, want to contribute to Sigma’s transformation. Therefore, the research question becomes “how can a PhD research account for *and* facilitate organisational transformation” instead of only accounting for it conceptually. With this in mind (the research serving Sigma’s sustainability), the relationship between theory and practice becomes a key issue of this research. However, instead of using theory to impact on practices, drawing on Deleuze, I conceptualise and practise the research as a double capture between theory and practice, with me as realiser connecting both. Eventually, out of this encounter, both theory and practices evolve (independently) and they might be seen as contributing to each other.

I suggest that the Deleuzian double capture (or traverse) is a different type of relationship between heterogeneous elements, a different organisation. Consequently, I claim that Deleuze is a philosopher of organising, and as such is an appropriate source to study organisations and their transformation.

However, instead of applying or implementing concepts, I practise with Deleuze’s work, I consider him a practitioner. In that regard, instead of representing, the thesis exemplifies what it expresses. It

shows a different structure. The thesis aims at the reader discerning the concepts through traversing, experiencing, living or practising them as both theory and practice are expressions of the same research experiment. Ultimately, I propose to experiment (conceptually *and* practically, in theories *and* practices) with a double capture (or traverse) type of relationship between Deleuze's work and Sigma, between theory and practice, and between researcher and manager, even between text and reader. In other words, the research and thesis experiment with new ways of relating. A new way of coming together is conceptualised and practised, eventually creating new possibilities of being for Sigma, organisation studies, the reader and myself.

All of the concepts covered in this chapter will be examined in more detail in the following chapters. These further explorations may prove confusing, however, as I do not stick to the same concepts. I leave it to the reader to make the connections within the multiplicity that is presented. The next chapter focuses on one of the elements of the double capture: Sigma. The chapter will be completely dedicated to intuiting what Sigma is, and may seem overly empirical, seemingly having nothing in common with Deleuze's concepts and the overall argument. Please be patient; chapters will connect to each other as they are traversed. Enjoy each chapter without expecting a pre-given structure, without trying to fit them into a linear argument. This thesis may have a unique single argument, but it will potentially emerge from the traverse of the multiplicity of arguments. Let us then start the exploration of Sigma as the preparation for its double capture type of encounter with Deleuze's work and the research itself.

## Chapter 2. Sigma

### 2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, we are going to explore Sigma, the organisation for which I have worked as Commercial Director since 2015. The Chapter is mainly based on empirical work conducted in 2016, showing the views of the researcher and manager, as well as employees and consultants at that time. I suggest that this was Sigma at the beginning of the research and before the encounter with Deleuze's work. Chapters 5 and 6 will address the outcome of the arguably double capture type of encounter between a research based on Deleuze's work and Sigma.

As stated in Chapter 1, the focus of this research is to experiment with the encounter between Deleuze's theories and Sigma's practices. Hopefully, this encounter might be regarded as being a 'double capture'. That is to say, that the interaction between Deleuze's theories and Sigma might form a common block of becoming, whereby each element evolves out of its encounter with the other. This encounter requires "a long preparation" (Deleuze & Parnet, 2007, 7). What this entails is that I, as the realiser, connecting the heterogeneous domains of Deleuze's concepts and Sigma's practices, shall live and experience them both thoroughly (and independently). To better understand this encounter, we must first explore Sigma and Deleuzian theory as separate entities, which will be done in Chapter 2 and 3, respectively.

As we have seen in Chapter 1 with the example of the orchid and the wasp, a double capture entails "a wasp-becoming of the orchid, an orchid becoming of the wasp" (Deleuze & Parnet, 2007, 2). The wasp becomes an essential part of an orchid's reproductive apparatus, and so too the orchid becomes the sexual organ of a wasp. In that regard, Deleuze's work is explored from an organisational point of view, extracting what is most interesting and relevant for organisations from all his concepts. His ontology is interpreted as concepts about the coming together of differences or singularities. In other words, I read him as a philosopher of organisation. Similarly, in this chapter we are going to explore Sigma from a Deleuzian point of view, focusing on intensities, singularities, or heterogeneous elements and their relations. The precise nature of this 'Deleuzian point of view' will be detailed in Chapter 3.

In Chapter 1 we discussed the distinction between theory and practice. A similar distinction can be made between what Sigma *is* and what it *does*. More precisely, we can differentiate between the theories, discourses, and representations of what Sigma officially is, and contrastively what it does, i.e. the affects it produces amongst employees, customers and external consultants. We will traverse both.

To commence our exploration of Sigma, I will first begin with a short description of the organisation based on the "Sigma corporate presentation" (2016, 2018) and our Strategic Plan (2016, 2018), as well as using other official documents to provide a broad representation of Sigma on the whole and how it operates. The focus of this chapter will quickly shift, however, towards exploring the affects Sigma produces. Rather than building up a picture of what Sigma is by simply presenting data and facts, I think it will prove more fruitful to focus on its 'intensities'. Intensities are the feelings or impressions that

emerge from the interactions occurring within Sigma. In sum, this chapter starts with what Sigma *is*, its representation, and traverses to what it *does*, to the intensities and impressions.

As noted in Chapter 1, I suggest traversing both elements of the dualism (theory and practice, or here representations and intensities). I suggest that recording the multiplicity of intensities, emerged from a multiplicity of ways of observing, is much more pertinent to the study of organisational transformation (and to producing change) than that of an 'accurate' description of Sigma based on official documentation. These intensities capture experiences that cannot be found in official descriptions of Sigma. For example, there will certainly be a difference between what managers, employees, or customers think about Sigma. Deleuze calls this the “micropolitics” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 249), which are the intensive dynamics within an organisation that are as critical as the macropolitics for approving new rules, norms or laws<sup>16</sup>. I assume that these impressions and experiences will point to potential transformations which are not currently articulated in official documents. Utilising these intensities, I will endeavour to sketch out Sigma’s potential transformations in Chapter 5. My underlying assumption is that Sigma is more than its official representation. If this is the case, the intensities that the organisation produces will have to be considered in order to fully account for its transformation<sup>17</sup>.

I have collected intensities at Sigma primarily through interviewing its employees. I have also drawn on Barrett’s (2013), Lencioni’s (2002) and Belbin’s (2012) analyses. As the reader might have anticipated, I do not use them to capture an accurate representation of Sigma’s culture (Barrett), nor its group dynamics (Lencioni), nor individual roles in a team (Belbin). Instead, I use them as opportunities to encounter intensities. Their questionnaires and surveys create new vocabulary, introduce new words and enable new ways of talking. They somehow make evident the intensities experienced by employees in their encounter with Sigma. I recognise that other analytical tools could be used for this purpose. I am certified to use Barrett's method, however, and have been using his analyses for a decade. The other two have been proposed to me by my colleagues (Lencioni) or consultants (Belbin), and have been instrumental in gauging the dynamics of the Board of Directors, dynamics that I intuited and yet struggled to articulate.

As noted in Chapter 1, I traverse between the role of the Deleuzian researcher and that of the Sigma Commercial Director. Following the method we are starting to become familiar with, I divide myself into two heterogeneous elements: researcher and manager. Although it is not easy, I try, where possible, to segregate my observations of Sigma as a Deleuzian researcher from the affects Sigma produces in me as its Commercial Director. What follows is a process of exploration: I live them independently, I traverse both, experimenting with their encounter, which hopefully evolves into a double capture. As previously noted, I think it is the case that out of the encounter between the different domains of

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<sup>16</sup> A similar dualism could be posited between “molecular” and “molar” as we shall see in the following chapter.

<sup>17</sup> The reader might find that the chapter, and the thesis, are too focused on impressions and feelings. The reader may miss more facts, evidences and descriptions. However, I suggest that impressions are more relevant for the purpose of this thesis.

researcher and manager something new emerges and eventually both evolve (asymmetrical and un-parallel).

Nevertheless, the account of Sigma's intensities that I provide becomes a representation. As a reader, the encounter with Sigma cannot be felt directly: it is mediated by me. This is, of course, an unavoidable limitation of this thesis. In spite of this, given that I am a member of Sigma, I am in some capacity an embodiment of its culture. Through reading this thesis, the reader is encountering an exponent of Sigma. Thus, the intensities emerging from the encounter with this thesis could serve to complete my account of Sigma. By traversing the intensities and the representation, my hope is that you, in your role as the reader, might potentially reach a new interpretation of Sigma. In short, I suggest that the reader should not only focus on the account given by the chapter but should also try to be attentive to the intensities that it produces. This chapter (and the thesis as a whole) is not only what it says but also what it *does*. As previously suggested, it is preferable to include intensities (feelings and impressions<sup>18</sup>) when preparing for a double capture type of relationship between reader and text with the associated bloc of becoming or transformation. With this in mind, I encourage the reader to observe the affects the text produces on him or her in addition to what is represented. This is needed in order to prepare a double capture with the text and author. This chapter aims at beginning the preparation for three double captures: a PhD research based on Deleuze's work and Sigma, the researcher and manager, and finally, the reader and the text.

The chapter starts with a brief description of Sigma (section 2.2). I, as researcher, will then detail the multiplicity of intensities at Sigma, firstly by focusing on the company's culture and its employees' personal values, and then by examining the Board of Directors' values, relational dynamics and roles (section 2.3). The section following this (section 2.4) will then aim to explore the intensities that emerged when I, as a researcher, conducted interviews. I will then discuss how I view Sigma from my perspective as a manager (section 2.5), moving onto my analysis as a researcher (section 2.6). Rather than delving into an extensive quantitative representation of the company, Chapter 2 as a whole presents a record of, and reflection on, the intensities that emerged from a multiplicity of interactions within Sigma. This is in preparation for the encounter with Deleuze.

## **2.2. A brief description of Sigma**

### **2.2.1. Sigma's history and mission**

As previously discussed, Sigma is a Basque company that designs and manufactures solutions for the railway and urban transport markets. This comprises designing and manufacturing electric traction systems, control and multimedia products, and energy storage solutions for a range of locomotives,

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<sup>18</sup> The intensities constitute the difference between what the text expresses and what the reader receives, how he or she is impacted. As we shall see later, this difference, if it goes back and forth between reader and text (and author) makes both evolve. There is no double capture or transformation when the reading does not produce any difference to what is represented.

Electrical Multiple Units (for commuter, regional and long-distance trains); metropolitan train systems, tramways and urban buses.

Sigma's mother company, the Alpha Group, a global leader in the design and manufacture of trains, was originally founded in 1892. Traditionally, train building companies evolved from electrical manufacturing<sup>19</sup> or mechanical building<sup>20</sup> backgrounds. The Alpha Group belonged to the latter, starting as a manufacturer of coaches, and for the most part, oriented to metal works. Throughout its early history, the Alpha Group remained dependent on more electrical-oriented companies. However, since around 2001, in a bid to become independent from other suppliers and electrical companies, Alpha decided to develop its own electrical technology in-house rather than being involved in partnership with another train builder. To substantiate this change, in the early 2000s Alpha created three subsidiaries: Alpower, Altic, and Alsw, focused on control and communication electronics, power electronics, and software development, respectively. In 2012, Sigma was established as the result of a merger between these Alpha subsidiaries. The mission of Alpower, Altic, and Alsw, and since 2012, of Sigma, has been to serve the parent company Alpha with technological products that enable the company to strategically avoid dependency on other international players. In this regard, it is indicative that most of the employees, including managers, come from an engineering background; for example, in 2016, 7 out of 9 of the Board of Directors, including the Managing Director, were engineers.

In its beginnings, Sigma focused on technological development. Later, its focus shifted towards product development and towards supplying products to Alpha. It is important to note that initially Sigma had a market in its parent company and did not need to rely on purchases from external customers. Alpha, as Sigma's sole customer, increasingly contracted projects to its spin-off, which led to exponential growth in the number of employees and revenue at Sigma. Indicative of this exponential growth is (Figure 1) which shows the turnover and number of employees since the establishment of the first subsidiary (Altic) in 2002:

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<sup>19</sup> Such as Siemens, Alstom, Bombardier, ABB, Mitsubishi, General Electric, etc.

<sup>20</sup> Such as General Motors (developed as EMD, Caterpillar, Progress Rail), Kawasaki, Transmashholding (TMH), Stadler, Talgo, Pesa, etc.



Figure 1: Turnover and employees from 2002 to 2017

This growth produced a shift in the main challenges of developing new technologies and products. By having to manage so many more projects and employees, the most pressing issues have become more organisational in nature. In the early 2010s, Sigma depended on the Alpha Group as its sole customer, its products exclusively designed to meet the requirements of the parent company. At the time, the only external project Sigma undertook was an order for developing locomotive equipment for CLW, the Indian Railways' subsidiary. This meant that Sigma's project management processes and procedures were specifically tailored to meet Alpha's needs, and this was reflected in Sigma's culture and organisational structure. The Managing Director of Sigma, as well as other managers and many key employees, had previously worked for Alpha's department of Research and Development. Other employees started working for Sigma just after finishing their university studies, and thus this was their first and only job. In 2018 the average Sigma employee age was 33, the majority of the people being in their late 20s and early 30s, and most of them from the Basque Country. The gender ratio is 2:1 male to female. I suggest that by working so closely with Alpha as its sole customer, by having many managers who had formerly worked in Alpha, and by having a relatively young workforce, Sigma has rendered itself quite malleable to adopting Alpha's culture.

Since 2013, Sigma has been in the process of transitioning towards a more business-oriented model in order to adapt to new challenges. Rather than exclusively serving the Alpha Group, Sigma was asked by the Alpha Group to increase its revenue with customers outside its parent company in the global market. Sigma's company mission has shifted, and Alpha, while it remains Sigma's owner, has become one customer amongst many others.

Arguably, this is a common organisational story: the journey of an engineering start-up that progresses towards marketing its own products independently, eventually gaining autonomy from its

parent company. This research is not about that journey. Instead, in order to facilitate a Deleuzian double capture, the following sections aim at differentiating the singularity of Sigma.

### 2.2.2. Sigma’s organisational chart and processes

Sigma is organised in departments and processes. Figure 2 shows the organisational chart:

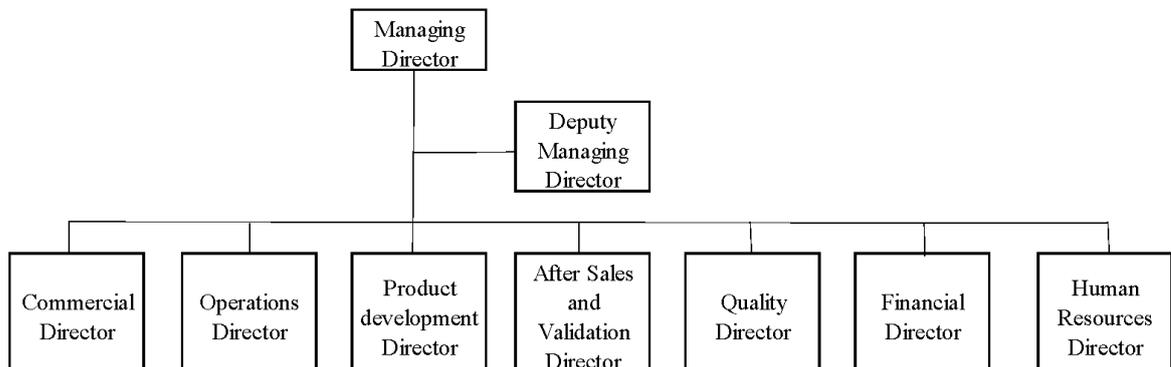


Figure 2: Director level Organisational chart May 2016

In May 2016, the Board of Directors was constituted by the Managing Director, the Deputy Director, and 7 functional Directors<sup>21</sup>. The Operations department, with 93 people, was the biggest department, followed by the Product Development department with 65 people and the After Sales Department with 42. The Quality department and Finance department were each constituted by 12 people. The IT and Planification departments, each with 5 people, report to the Deputy Director. Three people worked in Human Resources (HHRR). I led the Commercial Department, which was constituted by 17 people and distributed thusly:

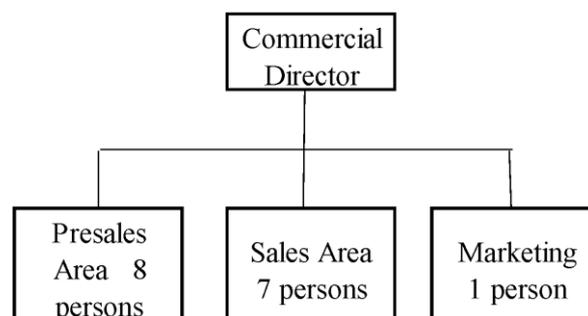


Figure 3: Commercial department Organisational chart May 2016

<sup>21</sup> The Safety Manager reports directly to the Managing Director but he is not part of the Board.

Figure 4 shows the organisation of the Operations department:

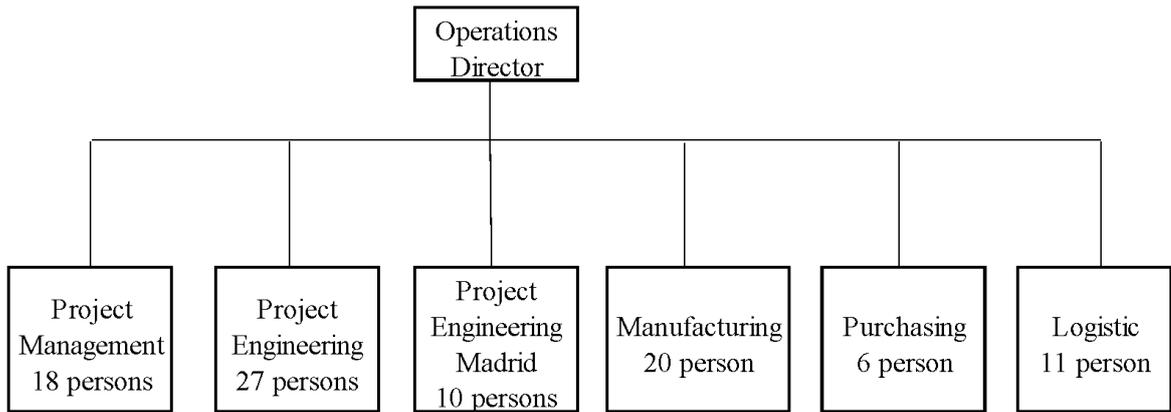


Figure 4: Operations department Organisational chart May 2016

As we can see, of 93 people within the Operations department, 55 are dedicated to project managing and engineering, 20 to manufacturing, 6 to purchasing, and 11 to logistics.

Figure 5 shows the organisation of the Product Development department:

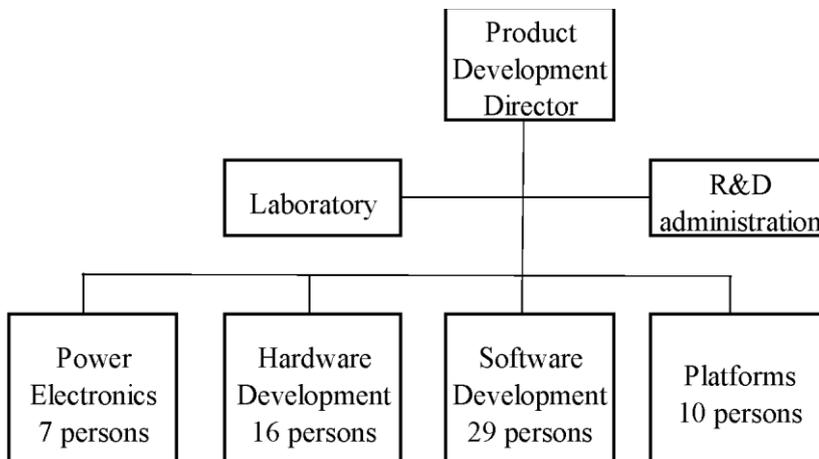


Figure 5: Product Development department Organisational chart May 2016

In this chart, we can see that there are functional areas for developing power electronics, hardware and software and also a ‘Platform’ area that includes product platform managers. Comments on these Platforms will be made at the end of the section.

Note that there is no ‘Technical department’ as such. Technical expertise is distributed between Presales (reporting to the Commercial Director), Product Development (under the Product Development Director’s supervision), and the project management and engineering departments (reporting to Operations Director). Moreover, diagnostics and validation areas are located in the After Sales Department. Rather than having a classic matrix organisation with a clear division between projects and

functional departments, Sigma has projects together with engineering resources allocated to projects, and then more engineering resources dedicated to product development (ideally detached from projects). Furthermore, the presales area does not belong to either project engineering or product engineering. There are three (excluding After-sales engineers) groups of engineers. Each group has different operational priorities: one looking to what the market requests, another taking care of the project at hand that has to be delivered on time, and another designing the product that they think Sigma should develop and have on the shelf ready to deliver. I think that this way of organising has consequences. Three different directions are involved in order to decide what technical solution Sigma should offer to customers. This is not to mention the difficulties of managing knowledge across departments.

To remedy this already complex departmental organisation, the solution that Sigma adopted was to add another dimension to how it operates: processes. Sigma is organised into departments, but it functions according to a process map:

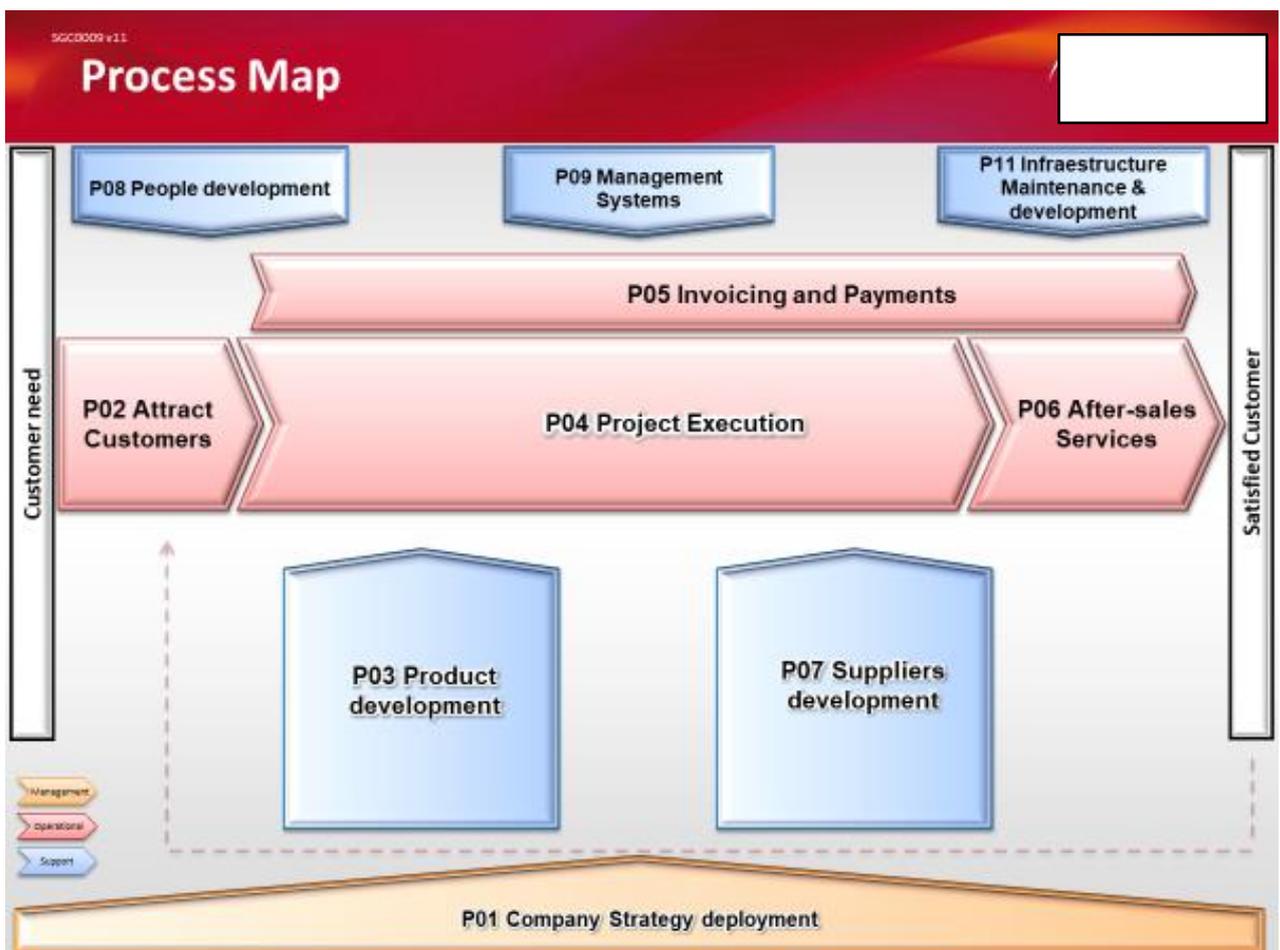


Figure 6: Process Map 2016

The processes work across departments. For example, process P02 (to attract customers) is executed by people from the areas of presales, project engineering, product development, and after sales, to name a few. Similarly, product technical experts belonging to the Product Development department participate in the P04 process (project execution). Each process has a leader and a committee in charge

of the design and continual development of the process. Usually, the department directors are the leaders of their closest process. The Operation Director, for example, leads P04 (project execution), the Product Development Director leads P03 (product development), the After Sales Director leads P06 (after-sales services) and I, as Commercial Director, led P02 (attract customers) for some time. According to some interviewees, this organisational structure sometimes causes processes to be conflated with departments. From my personal experience as a director, I would have to agree: I sometimes doubt if one activity is part of a departmental activity or a task within a process. Moreover, I find it confusing as to whether an engineer follows departmental or process directives as an individual may participate in multiple processes in addition to having a departmental boss. As a result, I think that prioritising tasks and making technical decisions is not straightforward—directors are involved. In my experience, with no single Technical Director, if the Commercial Director (in charge of Presales), Operations Director (in charge of the Engineering area) and Product Development Director disagree on a technical matter, the Managing Director himself is involved to decide upon the solution to said technical issue.

In addition to the Board of Directors meetings as well as the P01 committee, there was a committee called ‘management model’ constituted by members of the Board. This committee was in charge of improving the process map and managing strategic initiatives related to the processes. There was also the committee of product strategy, another committee with a high participation of members of the Board.

This table summarises the committees, their participants, leaders and represented or absent directions:

Committee	Participants	Leader	Represented Directions	Absent Directions
P01	* Managing Director * Deputy Managing Director * Product Development Director * Financial Director * Operations Director * Quality Director	Managing Director	*Managing(2) *Product Development(1) *Operations (1) *Finance(1) *Quality(1)	*After Sales *Commercial *HHRR
P02	* Purchasing Manager * After Sales Director * Commercial Director * Project Engineering Manager * Sales Area Manager * Presales Engineer * Quality Director * Product Platform Manager	Commercial Director	*Operations(2) *Product Development(1) *After Sales(1) *Quality(1) *Commercial (3)	*Managing *HHRR *Finance
P03	* Hardware Area Manager * Power Electronics Area Manager * Electromechanical Area Manager * Diagnosis Area Manager * SW Area Manager * Safety Manager/ RAMS * Project Engineering Manager * Product Platform Manager *Quality Engineer * R&D Technician * Product Development Director * Validation Area Manager	Product Development Director	*Product Development(7) *After Sales(2) *Operations(1) *Quality(2)	* Managing *Commercial *HHRR *Finance

Committee	Participants	Leader	Represented Directions	Absent Directions
P04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Project Engineering Engineer</li> <li>* Purchasing Manager</li> <li>* Manufacturing Manager</li> <li>* Logistics Manager</li> <li>* Validation Area Manager</li> <li>* Safety Manager/ RAMS</li> <li>* Project Engineering Area Manager</li> <li>* Product Development Engineer</li> <li>* Project Management Area Manager</li> <li>* After Sales Manager</li> <li>* Madrid office Engineering Manager</li> <li>* Operations Director</li> </ul>	Operations Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Operations(8)</li> <li>*After Sales(2)</li> <li>*Product Development(1)</li> <li>*Quality(1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Managing</li> <li>*Commercial</li> <li>*HHRR</li> <li>*Finance</li> </ul>
P06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Hardware Area Manager</li> <li>* Technical Assistance Service Manager</li> <li>* After Sales Traction Project Manager</li> <li>* Quality Director</li> <li>* After Sales Director</li> <li>* Diagnosis Area Manager</li> <li>* Purchasing Engineer</li> <li>* After Sales Control Project Manager</li> <li>* Project Management Area Manager</li> <li>* After Sales Area Manager</li> </ul>	After Sales Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Operations(2)</li> <li>*Product Development(1)</li> <li>*After Sales(6)</li> <li>*Quality(1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Managing</li> <li>*Commercial</li> <li>*HHRR</li> <li>*Finance</li> </ul>
P08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* After Sales Director</li> <li>* HHRR Technician</li> <li>* Deputy Managing Director</li> <li>* HHRR Director</li> <li>* Operations Director</li> <li>* Madrid Office Manager</li> <li>* HHRR Risk Prevention Technician</li> </ul>	HHRR Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Managing(1)</li> <li>*Operations(2)</li> <li>*After Sales(1)</li> <li>*HHRR(3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Commercial</li> <li>*Product Development</li> <li>*Finance</li> <li>*Quality</li> </ul>
Management model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Management Quality Technician</li> <li>* Deputy Managing Director</li> <li>* Quality Director</li> <li>* Operations Director</li> <li>* HHRR Director</li> <li>* After Sales Director</li> </ul>	Deputy Managing Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Managing(1)</li> <li>*Operations(1)</li> <li>*After Sales(1)</li> <li>*HHRR(1)</li> <li>*Quality(2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Commercial</li> <li>*Product Development</li> <li>*Finance</li> </ul>
Product Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Managing Director</li> <li>* Deputy Managing Director</li> <li>* Operations Director</li> <li>* Product Development Director</li> <li>*Commercial Director</li> </ul>	Product Development Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Managing(2)</li> <li>*Operations(1)</li> <li>*Product Development(1)</li> <li>*Commercial(1)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*After Sales</li> <li>*Finance</li> <li>*HHRR</li> <li>*Quality</li> </ul>

Table 1: Map of processes, adapted from “Mapa de comités Sigma 04.2017”

Several observations could be made from Table 1. I, for the purposes of this thesis, would like to highlight that the participation of the Commercial Director or any other representative of the

Commercial department was limited to the P02 committee and the Product Strategy committee. Although constituted by members of the Board of Directors, as Commercial Director I did not participate in the P01 committee (who were tasked with designing the strategic reflection process), or in the management model committee, where internal organisational issues were addressed. I think this provides a context to understand some of the comments and intensities in the interviews with sales managers and my own experiences as Commercial Director. I think it shows, from my point of view, the limited access of commercial sensibilities to the rest of the organisation. I will come back to it in my analysis in section 2.5. and 2.6.

I would also like to note that in the P03, P04 and P06 committees, the majority of the participants belonged to the process leader's department. That is, 66% of the P04 committee were stationed to Operations, 66% of the P06 committee to After Sales, and 58% of the P03 committee to the Product Development Department. The Commercial and HHRR departments were in a minority (37% and 42%) in the P02 and P08 committees, respectively. I will come back to this in Chapter 6 where I discuss the process of organising the P02 committee.

Evidently, Sigma has a functional departmental distribution but with process-based management, one of them being 'Project Execution' (P04). Instead of the classical *Project versus Functional* department matrix organisation, Sigma has a modified *Process versus Functional* department organisation:

	Commercial Department	Operations Department	Product Development Department	After Sales Department	Quality Department	Financial Department	HHRR
P01	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
P02	x	x	x	x	x		
P03		x	x	x	x		
P04		x	x	x	x		
P06		x	x	x	x		

Table 2: Functional department versus Processes

Additionally, Sigma has yet another dimension involved its day-to-day operation: Platform managers. These platforms are: Locomotives, Tramways, EMU-Metros, Buses, Energy Storage Systems, Hermes (passenger information systems), Atenea (communications) and Cosmos (Train Control Management System or TCMS). The first four platforms are applications, that is, types of railway systems; the last four are specific products. These platforms were also cross-departmental. The Locomotive platform manager, for example, coordinates resources from different areas to design the products for his platform. Moreover, Platforms had detailed business plans which included sales targets. Each project might be overseen by a project manager, a platform manager, several functional area managers, and the P04 process leader. Additionally, the project was usually already started within the

P02 process of tendering. Decisions taken in the bidding process were questioned and altered by the project manager or platform manager.

As a result, I, as a researcher, propose that Sigma's internal organisation is evidently complicated. I will, however, leave my analysis of this for the end of the chapter. Once the intensities Sigma produces amongst its employees are explored in section 2.3 and 2.4. the representation of Sigma will be completed. I will then move on to analysing what has been presented. The interested reader can continue with Sigma's representation, exploring its key performance indicators and strategic initiatives in Appendix 2.1 and 2.2 respectively.

In this section, I have represented Sigma's mission, organisational complexity, KPIs and strategic initiatives. We have started from Sigma's representation based on official documents. In the following sections we continue to explore Sigma, but from another angle: its intensities or the affects it produces. We are making the transition from representations to intensities. From what Sigma is officially, to what it does.

### **2.3. Exploring intensities**

What Sigma does, it does to someone. The intensities gathered in this and the following section are my or my interviewees' impressions. There could be frictions caused by contrasting values between the reader and the representation put forward by the research. I suggest the reader neither judge nor feel judged, but rather that the text is approached without pre-given concepts or an impulse to defend or criticise. I think that the reader's impressions out of the encounter with the text facilitate noticing assumptions that each party holds. Simply observe; the aim of the chapter is to put the reader in an observing mode. Allow for multiple points of view, each affirming their difference without one taking over the others. I suggest that observing one's assumptions and realising different points of view without trying to defend or impose one's own would constitute a new way of relating. Eventually, a double capture.

#### **2.3.1. Exploring the intensities of Sigma's culture**

Whilst central to this thesis, Sigma's organisational culture is not to be found in official documents like the ones used in the previous section. Therefore, I, as a researcher, have used Richard Barret's survey methodology to characterise Sigma's culture. The methodology, which will be explained in detail in Chapter 4, collects data on Sigma's culture using a closed questionnaire. This questionnaire asks employees to select 10 values<sup>22</sup> from a list of 100 that they believe to be representative of Sigma. I conducted the survey in 2014, 2015 and 2017; in 2016, an external consultant (Gamma) undertook this task, also using Richard Barrett's methodology. The survey used by the external consultant in 2016 featured a different list of values to those I employed in 2014 and 2015. For example, "Disorganisation"

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<sup>22</sup> Some might not be 'values' for the reader. They are just what the organisation gives value to or shows according to the employees.

and “Lack of decision making” ranked amongst the top 10 Sigma values in 2014 and 2015, but were not featured on the list of 100 values for the 2016 and 2017 surveys.

The results are presented in Table 3:

Participants	88	Participants	88	Participants	185	Participants	95
2014		2015		2016		2017	
Bureaucracy	39	Flexibility	43	Bureaucracy	98	Bureaucracy	53
Team working	38	Bureaucracy	42	Silos	90	Growth	48
Lack of decision making	38	Team working	40	Cost reduction	82	Hierarchy	42
Disorganization	37	Disorganization	37	Hierarchy	74	Cost reduction	39
Cost reduction	35	Hierarchy	35	Balance work family	73	Silos	39
Endless meetings	33	Short term	34	Financial results	65	Balance work family	35
Customer collaboration	32	Cost reduction	32	Team working	58	Customer satisfaction	29
Short term	32	Endless meetings	32	Gossips, rumors	52	Adaptability	28
Inefficiency	32	Balance work family	27	Fellowship	52	Team working	26
Innovation	30	Lack of decision making	27	Short term focus	52	Financial stability	26
Hierarchy	29	Inefficiency	27			Gossips, rumors	26

Table 3: Current Sigma value assessment from 2014 to 2017

Perhaps the reader might be able to form their own idea of Sigma’s culture by examining the table. My interpretation, both as an employee and a researcher, is aligned with the views of the external consultant. According to the 2016 external consultant's report:

*Although there are several positive values that are very valuable for an organisation such as Teamwork, Fellowship, Orientation to financial results and Reconciliation between personal and working life, these may be not fully exploited, and the expected results are not achieved due to the influence of the potentially limiting values that the employees perceive strongly today. These potentially limiting values [Bureaucracy, Departmental Silos, Cost reduction, Hierarchy, Gossips and rumours, Short term focus] indicate a certain degree of confusion regarding strategy, a need for improving the efficiency of processes and systems which are slowed down by hierarchical norms and bureaucracy, and that in some cases gossip and rumours substitute effective organisational communication. In addition, organisational silos have the potential to create both a sense of isolation and the evasion of responsibilities (Gamma, 2017, 9, my translation).*

These sets of values underline that employees have positive experiences (e.g. teamwork and companionship) but simultaneously encounter rigid structures that negatively impact both efficiency and employees’ motivation.

In the Barrett methodology, the ratio between positive values and potentially limiting ones is measured as “Cultural entropy”, which refers to the percentage of marks given to potentially limiting values divided by the total. In other words, cultural entropy indexes labour that is perceived by employees as unproductive. In Sigma’s 2016 assessment, 37% of the marks were attributed to potentially limiting values such as bureaucracy, hierarchy, gossip and rumours. Since these are perceived as unproductive, they do not contribute to a good performance or to competitiveness. Richard

Barrett (2013), the creator of this methodology, considers organisations with 10% or lower cultural entropy as having a “healthy” culture. He argues that with more than 30% of cultural entropy a company cannot compete in the open market since limiting values might cause inefficiencies that prevent the company from using its resources optimally. I think Sigma’s relatively high degree of entropy is only possible in state-owned organisations or subsidiaries with the parent company ensuring purchase orders. In other words, companies that do not utilise their energy optimally can still continue to function, but only if they are subsidised by governments or parent companies. If Sigma aims to compete in the market, such a high degree of entropy would become a problem as it might compromise its competitiveness. As a result, based on Barrett, one might suggest that Sigma’s cultural entropy figure of 37% calls for considerable organisational changes, indeed, a wholesome transformation.

### 2.3.2. Exploring Sigma’s employee values

In much the same way I have characterised Sigma’s culture, I have again used Richard Barrett’s methodology to explore employees’ personal values. In this case, the survey asked: “with which 10 values of this list of 100 do you identify yourself?”. Table 4 shows the results of these surveys over the last 4 years:

Participants		88		Participants		88		Participants		185		Participants		95	
2014		2015		2016		2017									
Commitment	50	Commitment	45	Commitment	115	Continuous learning	50								
Responsability	43	Fellowship	40	Positive attitude	77	Commitment	49								
Positive attitude	41	Positive attitude	39	Adaptability	69	Positive attitude	42								
Fellowship	41	Responsability	36	Continuous learning	69	Responsability	42								
Continuous learning	37	Continuous learning	33	Honesty	57	Fellowship	39								
Adaptability	33	Adaptability	30	Respect	54	Employee development	36								
Confianza	26	Efficiency	25	Conciliation work family	51	Adaptability	35								
Respect	23	Honesty	21	Cooperation	50	Cooperation	27								
Profesional development	22	Initiative	21	Logical thought	50	Conciliation work family	26								
Honesty	22	Cooperation	20	Listening	48	Family	25								
		Profesional development	20			Respect	25								
		Family	20												
		Respect	20												

Table 4: Personal values assessment 2014 - 2017

Summarising briefly, the group of employees participating in the survey (185 out of 250 in 2016) consists typically of relatively young or middle-aged professionals with a desire to learn and to continue to develop and grow personally and professionally. They attach great importance to relationships, have high standards in terms of the quality of their work, and value teamwork. They are flexible and adaptable, ready for new challenges and committed to what they do. However, there is at the same time a strong desire among them to preserve the balance of personal and work life.

### 2.3.3. Exploring the intensities of Sigma Board of Directors

As Commercial Director since 2015, being a member of the Board of Directors I had access to its meetings and experienced intensities that I thought were worth exploring for the purpose of this

research. Therefore, in addition to Sigma and its employees, as a researcher, I specifically examined the dynamics of the management team. To do this, I used several methods and benefitted from the external consultant’s work and reports.

### 2.3.3.1. Board of Directors’ value assessment.

As noted earlier, in 2016, Sigma’s cultural characterisation was conducted by the external consultant Gamma, based on Barrett’s methodology (section 2.3.1 and 2.3.2.). In that survey, the values that the members of the board identified to be most representative of Sigma's culture at the time of surveying were as follows:

2016 Board of Directors	9
Bureaucracy	4
Gossips, rumors	4
Fellowship	4
Balance work family	4
Control	4
Silos	4
Hierarchy	4

Table 5: Current Sigma value assessment from the Board of Directors, 2016

The culture of Sigma is perceived by the Board of Directors (including myself as Commercial Director) in much the same way as the rest of Sigma's employees. There are 8 values that coincide with both Sigma's Board of Directors and its employees: Bureaucracy, Gossip, Fellowship, work-life balance, departmental Silos, Hierarchy, Cost reduction and Team-work. There are, however, some strong values such as “Control” that have a significant presence amongst the Board of Directors but not amongst the company’s employees. This suggests that the Board feels more control or perceives more control within the company than the rest of the employees. As the external consultant summated:

*Regarding the type of values, in the case of the Board of Directors, they are mostly of an organisational type, although in the limiting values, contrary to the global picture, there are both structural and relational values. That is to say, the Board of Directors also perceives problems, in addition to the structural ones, that have to do with people’s personalities or ways of being (Gamma, 2017, 34, my translation).*

The Board of Directors is concerned with internal organisational issues, whether structural or relational. Gamma differentiates organisational or structural values from relational values. Whilst organisational values describe the way members of an organisation work together, relational values refer to modes of being as individuals, i.e. the way people relate to each other. Improving organisational values demands changes to the processes, changes that Gamma argues are easy to change; altering personalities is a much more difficult undertaking.

Gamma notes that:

*It is striking that the Board of Directors perceives Bureaucracy + Hierarchy + Confusion (the combination of these 3 values can be interpreted as paralysis) since it is this team that makes the decisions, sets the course and creates the policies (Gamma, 2017, 34, my translation).*

Since the Board of Directors, who are actually in charge of managing Sigma, perceive a bureaucratic, hierarchical, controlled-silos or department-oriented organisation, then a question arises: What is preventing the Board from making decisions and changes?

### 2.3.3.2. Board of Directors’ five dysfunctions according to Lencioni.

Researching the Board of Directors required a different approach to further understand what was happening in the Board of Directors meetings. Instead of studying its culture and values, an observational tool more focused on group relations could better capture the dynamics of its intensities. Following the suggestion of a colleague, I experimented with Lencioni’s (2002) model that identifies absence of trust, fear of conflict, lack of commitment, avoidance of accountability and inattention to results as the five dysfunctions of a team. Using his model and the questionnaire he proposes, I conducted a survey of Sigma’s Board of Directors in order to characterise the relations between its members. These are the results I found:

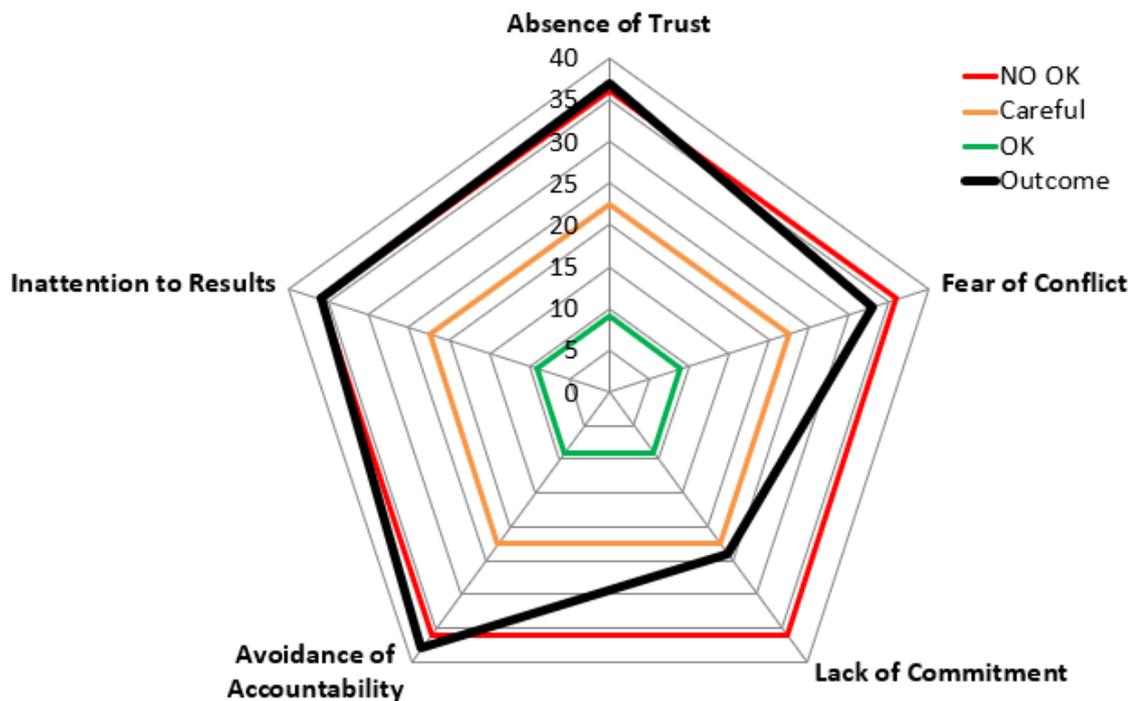


Figure 7: Results of the questionnaire based on Lencioni applied to the Board of Directors

In this model, if the outcome (black line) is inside the green line, the relation is considered to be “okay”; the orange line means “careful” or “should be worried”; the red is “trouble, not okay”.

Lencioni's five dysfunctions appear to be at worrying levels within Sigma's Board of Directors. Of the five, lack of commitment is the Board's least concerning result, yet it is at Lencioni's "careful" or "should be worried" level. According to Lencioni's model, there appears to be no trust between members of the board to openly discuss differences, as well as a fear of conflict. Consequently, there are serious issues with accountability; no one is made responsible for reaching objectives. This survey suggests that the team is not working well as a group. Relations between the members of the team prevent them from producing good results as a cohesive unit.

With this level of team dysfunction, collectively making decisions and setting the course or creating policies and change seems to be difficult. Can this team have a common strategy to spread across the entire organisation if they cannot discuss their individual points of view? As a researcher, I wonder how this team may lead the transformation to reduce cultural entropy (see section 2.3.1.) and consequently increase Sigma's competitiveness and employee's satisfaction. How can a team with such inattention to results produce the necessary transformation? Can this Board of Directors lead Sigma to adapt to the challenges ahead?

However, as a member of the Board, I wonder how I contribute to that situation. In which ways do I act or speak that stimulates fear or defensiveness and hinders trust and accountability? Instead of feeling guilt, shame, anger or depression, could we, the Board, explore the result openly? What can I do to change the relationship between Board members?

### **2.3.3.3. Board of Directors' roles according to Belbin**

To further explore the dynamics within the Board of Directors, I drew on Belbin's methodology (2012). Using his model sheds light on the nature of the Board of Directors' internal relations and their roles within the team. However, I consider neither the relations nor the roles fixed attributes. As we will see in Chapter 3, I believe relations are external to the terms and that they can be changed. Similarly, the roles are, in my reading of Deleuze, contingent behaviours. We can act differently, not limited to our roles. Therefore, I do not intend to assess how the members of the Board *are*. Instead, I seek the intensities that arise from their interactions.

The exercise was carried out by "Delta", an external consultant in 2017. As previously noted, this activity was included in the Cultural Transformation Program. Belbin (2012) differentiates nine management roles as follows:

	DESCRIPTION	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	DON'T BE SURPRISED	CAF P&A BOARD OF DIRECTORS ROLE
<b>Plant, Mind</b>	Tends to be highly creative and good at solving problems in unconventional ways.	Creative, imaginative, free-thinking, generates ideas and solves difficult problems.	Might ignore incidentals, and may be too preoccupied to communicate effectively.	They could be absent-minded or forgetful.	No team member has the strengths of this role in abundance
<b>Resource Investigator</b>	Uses their inquisitive nature to find ideas to bring back to the team.	Outgoing, enthusiastic. Explores opportunities and develops contacts.	Might be over-optimistic, and can lose interest once the initial enthusiasm has passed.	They might forget to follow up on a lead	When the team needs to take advantage of the opportunities, it turns to <b>Board Member (BM) 1</b>
<b>Co-ordinator</b>	Needed to focus on the team's objectives, draw out team members and delegate work appropriately.	Mature, confident, identifies talent. Clarifies goals.	Can be seen as manipulative and might offload their own share of the work.	They might over-delegate, leaving themselves little work to do.	When someone is needed to organize the work of the team, turn to <b>BM 2</b> , also have <b>BM 3</b> and <b>BM 4</b> participate
<b>Shaper, Impeler</b>	Provides the necessary drive to ensure that the team keeps moving and does not lose focus or momentum.	Challenging, dynamic, thrives on pressure. Has the drive and courage to overcome obstacles.	Can be prone to provocation, and may sometimes offend people's feelings.	They could risk becoming aggressive and bad-humoured in their attempts to get things done.	When you need to accelerate the pace and make decisions, you can count on <b>Commercial Director</b> , make <b>Managing Director</b> participate too
<b>Monitor, Evaluator</b>	Provides a logical eye, making impartial judgements where required and weighs up the team's options in a dispassionate way.	Sober, strategic and discerning. Sees all options and judges accurately.	Sometimes lacks the drive and ability to inspire others and can be overly critical.	They could be slow to come to decisions.	When the team needs someone to choose between different options, ask <b>BM 7</b> for advice, make <b>BM 4</b> participate too
<b>Team Worker</b>	Helps the team to gel, using their versatility to identify the work required and complete it on behalf of the team.	Co-operative, perceptive and diplomatic. Listens and averts friction.	Can be indecisive in crunch situations and tends to avoid confrontation.	They might be hesitant to make unpopular decisions.	If there are discussions and the team's environment needs to be improved, try to get <b>BM 2</b> , <b>BM 3</b> and <b>BM 4</b> to participate. Also have <b>BM 5</b> , <b>BM 6</b> and <b>BM 7</b> participate
<b>Implementer</b>	Needed to plan a workable strategy and carry it out as efficiently as possible.	Practical, reliable, efficient. Turns ideas into actions and organises work	Can be a bit inflexible and slow to respond to new possibilities.	They might be slow to relinquish their plans in favour of positive	When you have to transform decisions into feasible procedures, go to <b>BM 5</b> . Have <b>BM 2</b> , <b>BM 4</b> and <b>BM 7</b>
<b>Completer Finisher</b>	Most effectively used at the end of tasks to polish and scrutinise the work for errors, subjecting it to the highest standards of quality control.	Painstaking, conscientious, anxious. Searches out errors. Polishes and perfects.	Can be inclined to worry unduly, and reluctant to delegate.	They could be accused of taking their perfectionism to extremes.	When the plans have to be completed reaching the highest levels of quality, a key task can be performed by <b>BM 5</b> and <b>Managing Director</b> . Have also <b>BM 1</b> participate
<b>Specialist</b>	Brings in-depth knowledge of a key area to the team.	Single-minded, self starting and dedicated. They provide specialist knowledge and skills.	Tends to contribute on a narrow front and can dwell on the technicalities.	They overload you with information.	When the team needs someone to investigate thoroughly and acquire the specialized knowledge that the team requires, go to <b>Commercial Director</b> and <b>BM 1</b>

Table 6: The Roles of the Board of Directors according to Belbin's methodology

Adapted from <http://www.belbin.com/about/belbin-team-roles/> and the report by "Delta".

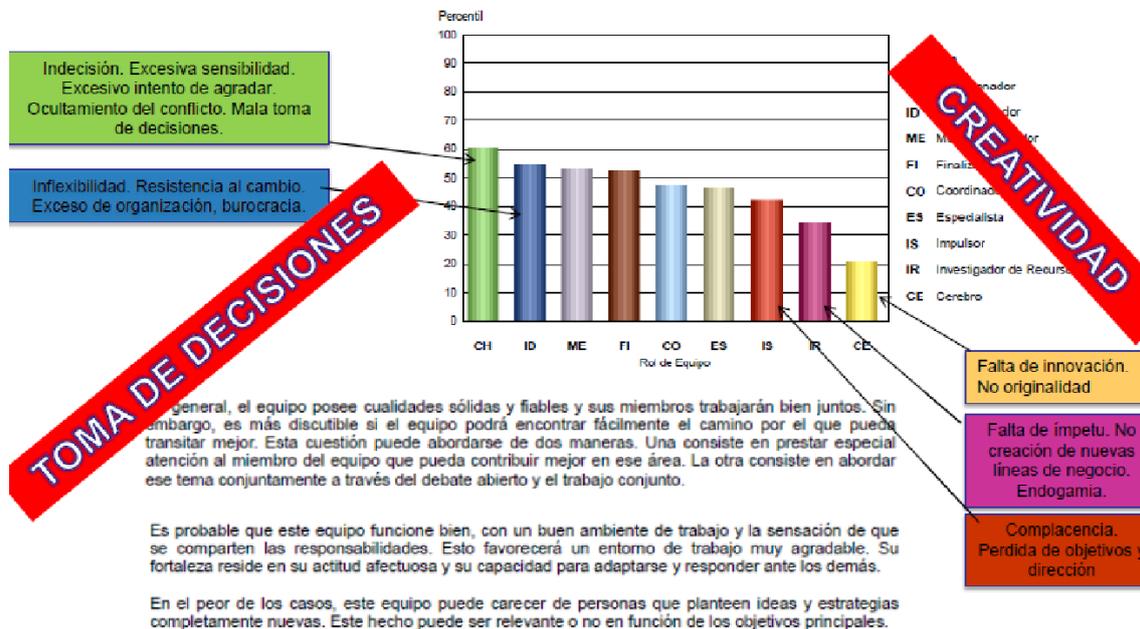


Figure 8: Excerpt from the "Delta" (2017) report in Spanish

Indecision. Excessive sensitivity Excessive attempt to please. Conflict concealment Bad decision making
Inflexibility. Resistance to change. Excess of organisation, bureaucracy
Lack of momentum No creation of new business lines. Inbreeding.
Lack of innovation No originality
Complacency. Loss of objectives and direction

Table 7: Translation of the "Delta" remarks in Figure 8

According to the assessment from "Delta", the Team Worker or cohesive role, marked green, has a very strong representation within the Board of Directors: six Board members (2,3,4,5,6,7) out of nine are all identified with this role<sup>23</sup>. This, on the one hand, makes working together easy, but on the other hand, it might also be a source of indecision, bad decision making, excessive intent to please, excessive responsiveness, and a tendency to hide conflict. The second most present role is the Implementer (blue)

<sup>23</sup> Neither I, the Commercial Director, nor the Managing Director are identified as team workers

which applies to four Board members (2,4,5 and 7). This, according to “Delta” shows inflexibility and resistance to change, and a desire to see things excessively organised, which leads to bureaucracy. The next most represented roles are the Finisher (grey) and Coordinator (light blue).

There is a low representation of the Shaper/Driver, Plant/Creative Minds and Resource Investigator roles. The low presence of these leads to a lack of innovation and originality. This means that there is little momentum or impetus to create novel ideas and projects. Without the presence of these roles, the team becomes complacent, thereby losing direction and focus on objectives.

Nevertheless, there are two members identified as Shapers or Drivers. One is the Managing Director; I, the Commercial Director, am the other. Therefore, the momentum at Sigma comes directly from the Managing Director, who, as a driver, mitigates inertia amongst the rest of the Board of Directors, and more extensively, amongst all Sigma employees. Furthermore, the Managing Director is also a Completer/Finisher, who according to Belbin (see table 6) is “most effectively used at the end of tasks to polish and scrutinise the work for errors, subjecting it to the highest standards of quality control”. Finishers are “painstaking, conscientious and anxious. [The finisher] searches out errors, polishes and perfects”, but “can be inclined to worry unduly and is reluctant to delegate” (Table 6). Based on Belbin’s method, it could be said that, being a Shaper and Completer/Finisher, the Managing Director conditions the dynamic within the Board of Directors and Sigma. He could be seen as a leader, making decisions, creating a vision and motivating employees. However, what could also be seen is a leader who is reluctant to delegate tasks and is therefore involved in all decisions, undertaking every important action himself.

#### **2.4. Encountering intensities, searching the impact of Sigma in its employees**

Sigma was further explored through 23 interviews with employees that I conducted on Sigma premises between May and September 2016. With these interviews, I wanted firstly to meet my colleagues in a setup other than with me as a manager, instead simply as someone interested in understanding their views on Sigma and how they perceived the organisation. Therefore, this section is written from the researcher point of view, trying to give voice to Sigma's employees. Secondly, I wanted to confirm that the outcome of Barrett’s survey (section 2.3) was not mistaken. The methodology of these interviews will be explained in Chapter 4. I must reassert that rather than gaining a full description of Sigma, interviewing aimed at exploring employee’s emotions and personal impressions when interacting with their colleagues. Instead of collecting facts and qualities, navigating through these impressions or feelings (re-)constituted the ways Sigma affected its employees. In other words, the interviews sought to map the multiplicity of intensities sensed by employees in their encounter with Sigma. From these interviews, I identified five common themes: Sigma as a project, relation to the Alpha group, looking inside, no direction and constant change. The following sections explore these themes in detail.

#### 2.4.1. “Sigma is a project”.

*For me Sigma is not a workplace, it is not work, it is a project. When I joined Alpower it wasn't about getting a job, I was already working and not looking for new jobs. But, this project was starting, and well, it was a gamble, I liked the project and decided to join. And after so many years it remains a project. (22.06.2016 Interview with A.M.)*

Sigma is a life project or personal project for many of its employees. It is where they spend a significant amount of their time and energy. Sigma is not simply a place to work; I think that the employees also have expectations about its future. It is a project in which they are investing in, a life project. I would say that they are so committed to this project that it becomes difficult to separate work and personal life.

*It is true that it is a very young company and the entry of projects has been faster than the capacity we have had to hire people. We have experienced a very high growth stage in which people entered at a faster rate than the capacity to constitute us, that has been a major challenge. This has had an impact on projects and products with a very improvable quality. (26.05.2016 Interview with O.A.)*

Sigma is a project that is in the making, it is not yet mature. It is a young company with young employees. It started as a small group within Alpha R&D and has grown to 300 employees (beginning of 2019). Some of the employees are convinced that the company has grown too quickly, juggling too many projects at the same time and hiring too many people. Some interviewees suggest that organising a rapidly growing company, and planning a long-term strategy in the face of this growth, became *the* challenge that is viewed as not yet solved.

*I have seen quite a few companies, as in my previous job, I travelled a lot. And the truth is that Sigma looks very well in comparison regarding people management. It is not a company focused on making profits but rather oriented to its people development. It is a company for the people who work in it. And that gives me satisfaction, I feel very attached to the company, I give everything, I take it as something of mine, and I see the return, the people are valued, the effort is shared by all and for all. From this point of view, the truth is that I am very proud and happy to belong to Sigma. (10.06.2016 Interview with M.J.)*

Many employees expressed a strong commitment, not only to the company that pays them but to Sigma as a project for the future, which aims to create quality jobs in the Basque Country; the company is supporting 300 families locally, with a wider societal impact. According to the Managing Director, the goal is to bring business to the Basque Country rather than Japan or Germany. I would say that people are motivated, and proud to be a member of Sigma, with a strong feeling of belonging, of being a part of a community. Employees generally feel that they are part of a group of good people with good relationships with colleagues. Many expressed that the working environment is very good.

However, as Sigma grows, commitment has also been changing, and some employees feel that their own and also other's personal involvement was greater in the past, that in some cases their high involvement and motivation are turning into de-motivation, dissatisfaction and frustration. As many employees noted, as the company grows and becomes more formal, employees lose passion or excitement. Thus, for many employees, there is a kind of nostalgia for the old times of pre-merger Altic and Alpower days, when the challenges were focused solely on product and technology development and the company's size made dealing with these more manageable. However, other interviewees argue that we need to leave romanticism behind.

Many feel that in order to maintain its employees' motivation and commitment, Sigma needs to develop and empower employees. To retain talent, the company could continue offering opportunities for personal and professional growth as it had been doing in the past. However, as the organisational structure has stabilised over time, these days there are fewer professional development opportunities available. Since Sigma's employees value expanding their knowledge and developing professionally and personally, the lack of opportunities is becoming an acute concern for some of them.

Employee satisfaction (see Appendix 2.1.) is one of the strategic key performance indicators (KPI). I would say that Sigma's Board of Director has a genuine interest in people and their development. This de-motivation or reduction of satisfaction and commitment concerns the Board members. However, whether they tackle it effectively enough to improve the situation remains to be seen.

#### **2.4.2. "Sigma is conditioned by its relationship to Alpha".**

According to its Managing Director, Sigma is 100% Alpha; not only is it owned by Alpha, but the parent company also impacts Sigma in ways other than just being the owner. Some interviewees expressed that at Sigma, things are done in a similar way to Alpha since key employees came from Alpha R&D and carried over specific values, culture, and strategies. Instead of just being the owner, they think there is a continuity between Alpha and Sigma.

However, there is to some degree of ambivalence inherent to belonging to the Alpha Group. On the one hand, it is seen as a privilege to be part of Alpha. As Alpha has been successful, their principal supplier, Sigma, has been successful too. Sigma provides them with products when they win a project, and so being owned by Alpha provides very secure employment. As one interviewee said, "we are lucky to belong to the Alpha Group as we have the support of a big company which will need our equipment and will not let us down". He continues: "it provides lifelong employment, safe for retirement".

On the other hand, as stated by interviewees, Sigma lacks the autonomy to follow its own path and make its own decisions.

*For me, the main challenge now is to break the dependency with Alpha. We need to make our own path, provide to the 250 families that constitute Sigma by our own merits, like adults. Now it seems that we still need our parents to survive; we have to become autonomous. (2016.06.22. Interview with A.M.)*

For example, according to my experience, investments and strategic plans have to be approved by the parent company, commercial opportunities risks have to be reported, and the annual salary increase is determined by Alpha.

I would say that the relationship between Alpha and Sigma is complex—it is neither simply a customer-supplier relationship nor an owner-subsidiary one. Sigma is a subsidiary and supplier to Alpha, but on occasion, it is also a customer as Sigma contracts Alpha R&D for certain developments. Sometimes Alpha and Sigma are partners with 50% of the undertaking each. This is a multifaceted relationship, even more insofar as both Alpha and Sigma are not just single entities but multiplicities, with multiple windows, interactions or encounters. Though within their relationship it is not always clear whether they act as customer, supplier, subsidiary or partner, I think Sigma's relation to Alpha conditions what Sigma is and what it can become, since the future of Sigma depends on Alpha.

#### **2.4.3. “Sigma as a Navel-gazer. Looking inside rather than outside”.**

Sigma is the integration of different working styles previously present in Altic and Alpower, but this integration, in some employees' view, is not always balanced. The previous Managing Director of Alpower is now the Managing Director of Sigma, and some view Sigma's formation as Alpower's takeover of Altic rather than a merger. Alpower is considered by some interviewees to be more authoritarian, more centralised and closed off than the latter. Some interviewees highlighted that the way work is performed remains close to the Managing Director's personal style and a continuation of Alpha's practices. The Managing Director worked in Alpha R&D before becoming the leader of a small team which then developed into Alpower, and he now heads Sigma. He is considered a strong leader by former Alpower employees who follow and trust him. The company's organisational and leadership style is evidently a highly important issue both for Sigma employees and for management; most interviewees' comments related directly to the company's management model. As a result, I would agree with some interviewees who see Sigma as an inward-looking organisation, oriented to its internal relations and organisational issues, without attending to the outside world of customers, suppliers, competitors, strategic alliances, partners, or society in general.

Many employees think that as leadership style and core values and culture remain the same, the way work is performed hardly changes. In their view, changes that were considered substantial ended up only being superficial changes. For example, in 2014-15 the implementation of the processes map (see section 2.2.2.) took place. Some processes like “project management process (P04)” or “product development process (P03)” were designed and implemented to avoid departmental silos. Despite this, many felt that the company ended up with process silos, each director focusing solely on their own process or department since the process owner and the head of the department is the same person. Rather than closed off or hermetic departments with strong interdepartmental barriers, now there are closed off processes too, something that many interviewees perceived as: “we work the same way”. According to some interviewees, the division of an activity into two differentiated processes (P03 and P04) does not improve competitiveness and complicates matters as their interaction has to be managed. They think

that while each process might be correctly developed, the interaction or relation between processes, for example, P03 and P04, is not resolved. Moreover, one interviewee stated that the Board of Directors is not “even” treating that problem: according to some interviewees, in reality, the daily tasks of a project management, P04, takes preference over the product development roadmap, P03. They think that the product development decisions are taken for the sake of the project under execution and without consideration of the product that the designers envision for the future. I think, as a researcher, that the organisation of different entities (departments, processes, product Platforms, members of the Board of Directors) is not resolved, and according to some interviewees, it is not even safe to talk about it. Despite this, I think most of the energy and concerns are focused on the ways work is done and the internal organisation. Sigma can be characterised in this case as a navel-gazing organisation:

*I see Sigma as very bureaucratic and separated in compartments. We are very isolated from each other. Formally and aesthetically we are very involved and very interconnected, we have defined procedures and mechanisms, but it is purely aesthetic, it is not functional. We comply with all procedures only to be certified. We are very scrupulous on that, too much, they are very complex procedures. We look too much to our own navel and think that our own work is saving the company, all of us each by himself, independently saving the company. But the individualised advance of all does not advance the company, we lack that connection, that should be provided by procedures but does not exist. We have procedures only to comply, then they are inapplicable. We lack a functional organisation. It cannot be a rigid company, we are not flexible at all. We are not operational; the procedures have not been created by the workers who execute them. Only 2 of 8, but they will not say anything that the other 6 do not want to hear. (2016.05.26 Interview with J.C.)*

For many, it is not a problem of one department or one process but of the Board and the Managing Director who are in charge of connecting all departments and making them work together. I think that each department, process, or person cannot be a free independent agent following its path; coordination or organisation is needed. As stated earlier, it seems that Sigma grew quickly but uncoordinated, and organising so many employees and projects is still an open issue.

Some interviewees perceived the current internal organisation and culture as limiting. Sigma is perceived as very bureaucratic, centralised, authoritarian on decision making, rigid, and hierarchical, and some interviewees had a general feeling that they were being controlled. The few individuals that are trying to contribute to improving things do not feel supported by superiors and miss stronger leadership to actually move the organisation.

However, employees who commented on this lack of leadership perceived that it reflects on middle managers and directors, and not on the Managing Director who is considered by many employees as a leader they follow despite his stubbornness (24.08.2016 Interviewee with J.F.). They think that he makes most of the decisions without delegating and without giving autonomy to other directors. In their view, it is difficult to express dissent or disagreement with him because most employees feel that it is

risky to be critical. There is a lack of confidence in talking critically to him. One of the interviewees recounted an anecdote about the difference between Asian and Western CEOs that he picked up while working with Japanese colleagues: generally speaking, the Asian CEO sits in the back of the car and tells the driver where he wants to go; the western CEO wants to drive the car. Sigma's Managing Director, like the Western CEO, "wants to drive the car" (personal communication from the Managing Director). In situations where the Managing Director is not involved, there is no clarity on how decisions are made, or who makes them.

*Everyone gives opinions about everything, but no one dares to decide without the Managing Director's consent, and they are thus paralysed until the issue reaches him and he makes his decision. (2016.07.05. Interview with X.M.)*

With all important decisions waiting on the Managing Director to drive them forward, Sigma is often seen by interviewees as a slower and less effective organisation than what they feel would be ideal to minimise delays. This leads to frustration amongst more active employees, and to a general lack of accountability amongst employees on the whole.

#### **2.4.4. Sigma has no direction.**

*I am frustrated. I don't see the company doing well. It has no orientation, we are moving like a chicken without a head, acting, doing many things, going to many places but without clear direction. The entire management team is involved in all-day meetings trying to improve internal organisational issues without looking where we are going in terms of customers and markets at all. (09.05.2016 Interview with G.M.)*

Sigma is seen as a company without a strategy or clear direction, a "headless chicken" not knowing where to go, just moving around and changing directions too quickly. Its strategy is seen to change very frequently, from just supplying to Alpha, to serving locomotive companies outside Alpha, to refurbishing old trains. The company's mission has changed. Previously, Sigma's main focus was to serve Alpha technological products. Sigma was explicitly created to reduce Alpha's technological dependency with electrical background companies such as ABB, Siemens or Mitsubishi. This goal now coexists with selling outside Alpha in order to increase revenue, adding the component business to the portfolio of the Alpha Group. Some interviewees saw this dual mission as a contradictory one, believing there can only be one goal or the other, but not both, and they felt that the clear path was lost. They wondered whether Sigma should serve Alpha or sell outside Alpha. The challenge, I think, is to grow the external market while still serving Alpha. But how can that be done? How can the two different businesses be coordinated at once? "Alpha consumes all our resources and the business does not generate sufficient enough profit to increase capacity" stated the Managing Director (2016.05.06 Interview). In other words, the business of serving Alpha takes over the business of selling outside Alpha: "maybe we need two different organisational structures to address business with Alpha and outside Alpha" (stated one interviewee). Thus, the challenge again becomes an internal organisational

issue of how to serve Alpha without it consuming all the resources, time, investment and energy of Sigma, so that capacities and markets outside Alpha can be developed. To do this, Sigma has the difficult task of striking the balance between Alpha and non-Alpha operations. Additionally, it seems that no one yet has a vision and strategy to figure out how that balance can be achieved. Instead, Sigma is focused on KPA (Key Performance Actions) and KPI (Key Performance Indicators) and has invested much less time and energy into vision and strategy. In other words, they act and measure results but have not yet created a strategic plan.

Conversely, other employees feel that Sigma does have objectives, even if they are not derived from an explicit vision and mission or strategies. Some interviewees think that there are incoherencies between what is said and what is done. Sometimes there are statements about what is going to be done but without preparation to do it. The strategy and actions do not derive from an well-articulated vision because, as noted by one interviewee: “culture has strategy for breakfast every morning”. He thinks that the fixed values, culture and leadership determine the actual actions of the company (and also, therefore, its results) instead of a formally stated vision and strategy. Inconsistencies and incoherencies are demotivating and frustrating for some employees. In their view, the vision is simply not implemented. Many changes are made to reach the vision, but nothing changes; there is a good definition but bad implementation. Adaptive changes or continuous improvement initiatives are proposed every year as the outcome of the strategic reflection process. I would suggest that their impact is very low. They do not succeed in achieving the stated objectives like time to market, non-quality cost or developing cost (see Appendix 2.1). According to some interviewees, Sigma needs a cultural transformation in order to see changes in outcomes. But how can that be done? How can a cultural transformation and a change of values be implemented? It is not a matter of intentions (actually, there is an ongoing cultural transformation program to tackle this) but, as stated by one interviewee, there is a risk that cultural change will just be a “window dressing” as it is managed by the members of the board who are the exponent of the current culture. “A new culture demands new leaders” stated one interviewee.

There have, however, been profound changes in the past. The former Deputy Managing Director had an impact in the less than 2 years he worked at Sigma from 2014-2016. He made Sigma more professional by focusing less on engineering and more on management. He promoted the process map and the strategic reflection process, and he established a management model with a control panel of key indicators. But he also granted more autonomy and motivation to the rest of the Board members. For some interviewees, he represented a real transformation, an inflexion point, one of Sigma’s milestones. He produced effective change and facilitated further changes, like the re-organisation into processes and the development of the management model. “Before him, Sigma was rife with departmental silos, hierarchy, and authority, but he looked more for consensus,” said one interviewee.

However, some interviewees wonder whether those changes will remain, whether the process that the former Deputy started towards a professional management instead of focusing on engineering will stop in his absence. Moreover, for some, Sigma is already losing what he achieved. Some employees think that he did not ultimately succeed in getting the Board of Directors to work better as a team.

“Perhaps because he was not allowed to make the changes he may have suggested, or perhaps because he just needed more time” stated one interviewee. Nevertheless, as expressed by one interviewee, “The Managing Director did well to hire the former Deputy, an acknowledgement of his own lack of organisational skills”. That is a strong statement that I do not fully endorse, either as a researcher or as a manager. From my point of view, the Deputy was focused on organising through the implementation of a management model, something the Managing Director had no time for as he was occupied on product development and commercial aspects. However, I would also suggest that the Managing Director took longer to deliberate and make organisational decisions than the Deputy. Besides, I think that, for Sigma’s Managing Director, organisational decisions are more difficult than business or product strategic decisions.

#### **2.4.5. Sigma in constant movement, always changing**

*We are at an important turning point and I think that, although the dynamics of this project (Sigma) are continuously changing, now we are at a point where we have to do something more. We have to make important changes, define really where we want to go, in the next few years where we want to be. It is evident that we cannot continue to do exclusively what we are doing or limit ourselves to a single client or to the products we have. I also believe that it is important to do these things calmly, it is difficult to maintain the balance between being safe and doing nothing and being unconscious. It is a time to define many things, but I also tell you that it is quite constant, we are always at a crossroads. The movement is essential, we cannot stay static, there is a total pressure of prices, competitors and others, we have to be doing new things, looking for new niches ... before they were locomotives, now rehabilitations ... I do not know where we are going to end up, but what I am clear of is that we have to be continuously moving. It is not an option to accommodate, both externally and internally, the organisation must be very dynamic, it must adapt to the needs. People have to be flexible to change roles, responsibilities, tasks etc. The times in which one spends their life doing the same thing in the same way has already passed. We are constantly changing, and we must also see it as natural, without resistance to change. That would be counterproductive. There is no other alternative, like it or not. (2016.09.06 Interview with O.C.)*

Sigma is perceived by employees as continuously changing. Initially, it was focused on technology, started delivering products to Alpha and grew exponentially due to the number of projects and people it managed. In 2014, Sigma moved to refurbishment services with a project in Italy. This was an attempt to add value to the products in the form of customer service. Therefore, the challenge moved beyond developing technology or core products to becoming a solvent sustainable business, and for that goal Sigma needed to make a profit being competitive, seeking markets outside of Alpha. It can be said that Sigma’s focus has been changing from developing products to managing a high number of projects to being a business-oriented company. And in this business orientation, the focus has also evolved from locomotive builders to refurbishments to other train builders.

In addition, there is a transformation that entails moving away from developing and delivering ad-hoc products within the execution of a contract with a customer, towards developing standard modular product platforms outside concrete commitments with a customer but without reinventing the wheel each time (see Appendix 2.2. on Modular program). Sigma's management and key employees envision that by moving from projects to product platforms, and from R&D to sustainable business, Sigma will benefit from the increased efficiency and profitability of the engineering workforce. However, according to some interviewees, the effectiveness of this change of approach remains to be seen. Some argue that Sigma is not ready for unknown projects as a refurbishment service for outside clients, as employees still need to move out of their comfort zone and learn how to deal with external customers. Although the interviewees perceive that Sigma needs to explore the external market, they perceive the unknown as uncomfortable, too frightening. They think there is a resistance to managing the risks of the unknown. In contrast, some argue that the issue is that Sigma has already explored external markets and failed:

*We tried a refurbishment project, but the results were bad. We tried a standardisation program<sup>24</sup>, which was cancelled after a year. We are a divided soul, young, willing to do things, optimistic, pioneering, fond of challenges and risk and yet on the other hand beaten, with failures that derive from controlling the budget, controlling people and centralised decision making. We tried with several products and opportunities but in the end were mainly limited to one, the traction converter, and we have no profits from external customers. (2016.08.24 Interview with F.J.).*

*Sigma is a project that is in still maturing, a long process of settlement, of searching for the site. Changes in management, change of tools ... there are many things that need to change. The most important thing is to make a cultural change because the values determine the results. For me, a cultural change is a change in the style of leadership. The whole issue that goes around the management model is a potential change, which is not how far it is going to materialise, because deep down for me a cultural change is a change in the leadership style, it's a change in that part. The challenge is that there is first an honest and committed intention to question what you have to question and change, and then the ability to do it—because it is not simple, we talk about things that are often on an unconscious level. [...] What does not change are the values that are in fact working, and are values that we surely adapt from Alpha and that are present here. People say in the formations that we are changing many things but basically nothing changes, what does not change are the de facto values, which are present from the beginning, and that is maintained by the real leadership of the company, sometimes unconsciously. (2016.09.02 Interview with E.L.)*

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<sup>24</sup> The modularisation program started in 2013. However, it was cancelled in 2014 and started again in 2017 with the external consultant. At the time of this interview, 2016, there was no modularisation program.

In general, we could say that Sigma is very open to change: not only has its focus and orientation been changing over the years, its management model, members of the Board of Directors or employees' roles have also been continuously changing. Although Sigma conducts many change initiatives, it has arguably conducted too many without allowing them to settle or stabilise. It is seen by many interviewees as continuously changing, yet it does not change in the values and style of its leaders, and as a result, the culture and core dynamic of the company remain the same. As an interviewee (2016.05.26 O.A.) suggested, "we need to create a context to learn and innovate as we lack the resources and skills to jump into the unknown".

## **2.5. Manager's view on Sigma.**

I must admit that separating my role as a manager and as a researcher has been difficult, and arguably I could not always differentiate these roles. In my daily activity in Sigma, I am seen as the Commercial Director. Although my colleagues knew I was doing a PhD research, with the exception of conducting surveys and interviews, for the most part, I interacted with employees as the Commercial Director and as a colleague. The insights I gathered as a researcher using these methodologies became knowledge I used as a manager. There is no tangible difference between what I think as a manager or a researcher. Somehow, it is as difficult as separating what is the contribution of Deleuze and the contribution of Guattari to the books they wrote together.

The traverse or double capture between manager and researcher is not between two defined blocks, and it is not performed just once. The traverse is continuous, a manager-researcher back and forth movement. The constant communication between both roles makes it impossible to clearly distinguish their perspectives. As a researcher, I picked up statements and insights mediated by the manager. Another person with another position in Sigma would probably reach different conclusions from analysing the same interviews. My interest as a researcher resonates more with some statements and topics than with others. As a researcher, I observe Sigma through the perspective of a manager. That is why, as a researcher, I presented data about Sigma using interviewees' and consultants' statements and Barrett's, Lencioni's or Belbin's interpretative frameworks. I have tried to be as impartial as possible. In other words, I tried to be an outsider-observer emptying the interaction as a researcher of all the manager's purpose and utility. I aimed at an observing attitude instead of acting or managing.

As a manager, I fully agree with Barrett's, Lencioni's or Belbin's analyses. In the manager role, I feel inclined—perhaps more so than the researcher is allowed—to emphasise the influence of the Managing Director on the intensities that emerge and constitute Sigma. It is true that, as the Commercial Director and a member of the board, I interact more with the Managing Director than with any other colleague: we have weekly meetings, almost daily phone calls and frequently travel to India or China on business trips together.

As a manager, I agree with what the researcher has stated before: the Managing Director is a leader, he makes me follow him and motivates me to reach the vision we share for Sigma. I feel committed to

help him and I consider him a friend who can be relied on. I do think he is the central figure of Sigma. It is difficult to prove as a researcher, but as a manager, I believe he conditions the way we work and also the way we relate within the Board of Directors. From my point of view, he is reluctant to delegate tasks that he considers important. He is in charge of undertaking every important action by himself and sometimes he may not leave the room to allow the Board of Directors to act or express themselves. He seems to have an inner drive, possibly a feeling of caution, hesitance, insecurity or distrust about leaving the important decisions to others. As he once stated in a personal communication “trust must be gained, one has to prove their trustworthiness first”. However, I realise that the responsibility and pressure he may be experiencing from Alpha may be contributing to his caution.

Agreeing with the outcome of Lencioni’s questionnaire, I, as a manager, think that the dynamics of the Board of Directors do not satisfy the needs of trust, efficiency, or connection between its members. The fear of conflict is clearly present; at least one other Board member and myself, when we raised criticisms at Board meetings, have been told by the Managing Director to behave properly. It becomes difficult and emotionally taxing for me to discuss differences of opinion with others, as voicing them generally engenders conflict or at least discomfort or opposition. We maintain what I think is a superficial harmony. The general feeling I get (and I think other members also do) is that criticism is not welcome or is avoided. I feel there is a clear effort to avoid conflict and keep up the appearance of good relations. The resulting harmony is, however, artificial, from my point of view. In fact, I would attest that there is no trust between the members of the Board, and consequently, there are serious issues with accountability. I think this is evident in the way results cannot be insisted on. In my view, one has to be extremely careful when highlighting their absence.

However, the researcher’s account of Sigma’s intensities does not feel fully right. It seems too hard on the Board and Managing Director. The researcher is just observing and differentiating intensities. As a manager, I am more concerned with the consequences of these observations when they are read by Board members. I am not confident that the criticism raised in this chapter will be received as a contribution aiming to improve Sigma. There is always the risk that Board members take these words personally and enter a ‘defensive’ mode. If the reader (the Board members in this case) detaches from the text because he or she deems it to be unfair or untrue, then the double capture encounter will undoubtedly not happen. I hope this will not be the case. I am saddened when I see how my actions sometimes contribute to the disengagement or even pain of others. I plead that the reader forgives my lack of affinity—as both a researcher and a manager—for communicating in a different way. I advise the reader not to think of this chapter as a true picture of Sigma, but rather as the researcher’s and manager’s expressions, which are potentially subjected to unexamined assumptions and drives. I would suggest that (as highlighted by the researcher also), being an employee of Sigma, I place a high value on fellowship, teamwork. I am very committed to Sigma as a project, I would even say I feel loyal to the group I belong to. In that regard, maintaining a friendly relationship with the reader (specifically, any member of the Board) is much more important to me than imposing a specific representation of Sigma.

With this in mind, I should note that most of this chapter (with the exception of section 2.5. and 2.6) was written in 2016 and it was only at the end of the thesis (2019) that I started to realise the impact of my statements on the reader. It was only near the end of this thesis that I have been considerate of my relationship with my audience. I think this is indicative of a change as the outcome of the research experiment. We will see this throughout the thesis and in detail in Chapter 7.

The reader might have noticed that I, as a manager, live a contradiction. On the one hand, I suggest we focus on relationships, but on the other hand, as the Commercial Director I have responsibilities and feel accountable for reaching the targets. I confess that my self-esteem and recognition depends on performance. When I perceive practices or discourses that could jeopardise our collective performance, I am not able to remain in ‘observing mode’ as explained before, nor be focused on relationships. I just throw myself at passionately trying to meet the collectively defined targets. In other words, I try to defend my identity of a well-performing manager.

The researcher is not very different from the manager. As a result, although the chapter aims at a new way of relating or double capture, it ends up highlighting limiting intensities. I ultimately end up, somehow, criticising, which was the practice I wanted to avoid in the first place. In sum, I consider the chapter too oriented to criticise. Nevertheless, it highlights the issues that I think need to be considered, aiming at Sigma’s improvement (from the researcher and manager’s point of view). Even if it seems to do so, it does not aim at imposing a view. Rather, it is an attempt to relate in a different way, a way that affirms my point of view without softening it, but without imposing it. I hope the reader can appreciate my underlying intent and the experiment itself.

## **2.6. Conclusions of the Exploration of Sigma. The traverse of research and management.**

Chapter 2 has explored Sigma as an organisation, starting from the mainstream representation based on official data, then moving to more intensive feelings, impressions, and affects articulated in encounters with Sigma. This exploration is not a task of description or representation of what is Sigma but rather of what Sigma does, of its manifestation. I have focused on intensities. I am interested in the ways that Sigma is perceived by its employees and external consultants using Barrett, Lencioni, and Belbin’s methodologies, and by myself as researcher and manager. I have created a multiplicity of impressions.

This multiplicity shows a mix of experiences. On the one hand, it includes elements perceived as limiting or unproductive: bad and centralised decision making, lack of autonomy from Alpha, bureaucracy, hierarchy, departmental silos, the need for improving the efficiency of rigid processes and their interaction, gossips and rumours, confusion regarding strategy and direction, evasion of responsibilities or avoidance of accountability, concealment or fear of conflict, absence of trust, excessive sensitivity, complacency, inattention to results, excessive organisation, lack of impulse, lack of innovative and creative minds, paralysis, inflexibility, and resistance to change. On the other hand,

Sigma is also perceived as a good and safe place to work, with teamwork, fellowship, cooperation, a balance of personal and family life, and in continuous change. Most of the employees are well-trained professionals with positive attitudes, highly committed to Sigma's project, interested in continuous learning and development (both personally and professionally), and ready to adapt to new situations.

Sigma is this multiplicity of intensities or affects. However, the reader might have made connections between these intensities throughout the text and reach some conclusions of what Sigma is. In that regard, I share my own interpretation of this multiplicity of impressions.

1) The interviews, combined with the Barrett, Lencioni and Belbin surveys and above all my experience as a manager, point to the Managing Director as a central figure in the current Sigma setup and presumably for the foreseeable future. His *modus operandi* and his relations to the Board of Directors and employees conditions the culture and management model of the company. It can be said that the Managing Director's double role of Impeller-Driver-Shaper and Completer-Finisher conditions the two groups of affects perceived by the employees. Their divided experience may be related to his two different roles.

It could also be said that changes will remain superficial unless the Managing Director and the relationships he maintains with the members of the Board of Directors change (and arguably its members). As Gamma stated, processes, procedures, and organisational structural values can generally be easily changed, but personalities and relational values are much more difficult to change. Although Sigma as a multiplicity cannot be reduced to one of its elements, it could be argued (see Chapter 3) that the relations between the elements define the organisation. As a result, the Managing Director is a central element both embodying Sigma's culture and organising Sigma's relations (for example between members of the board). I would say as a researcher and a manager that his own transformation and openness to new behaviours and ways to relate to others will facilitate or inhibit Sigma's transformation.

However, this is not a research on a particular person and his leadership skills—it wouldn't be Deleuzian to focus on one individual. Sigma is a multiplicity and its Managing Director is a singularity among many others that constitute the organisation. As we will see in the following chapter, it is not legitimate to characterise a multiplicity by only one of the singularities it includes. Yet, an organisation is defined by the external relations between its members, and one member can be more influential to establishing those relations. In general, I would say that I perceive some centralisation in the organisation.

2) Sigma faces the challenge of selling its products outside Alpha and moving from engineering to marketing and business to gain autonomy from the parent company. However, although the challenging target of selling outside Alpha was established, I think that much less time and energy was invested in business and commercial aspects than in product and internal organisation. As we have seen, the commercial sensibility was not integrated into the other processes and committees and Sales managers felt like outsiders and needing more support from the 'navel-gazing' organisation.

3) Finally, I suggest that a new challenge emerged out of the encounter between the researcher and Sigma. The intensities emerging out of the interaction with Sigma showed a different image of the organisation<sup>25</sup>: contrary to what the officially stated vision and targets express, the need for change is not limited to growth and selling outside the Alpha Group. I think there is also a need to change the culture, leadership style, processes and relations. In other words, I think that there is a need to change how Sigma (and especially the Board of Directors) work together. As a result, I think that, internally, a new challenge arises of transforming the culture and group dynamics.

4) In addition, I think that Sigma's relationship with the Alpha Group is going to condition Sigma's future.

As we will see in the next chapter, the key insight from a Deleuzian perspective is to do with relations, with the coming together of heterogeneous elements. In that regard, I think his work can contribute to further exploring relationships in an organisation, and eventually transform them.

We have explored Sigma, one of the elements of the experiment's encounter, from a Deleuzian point of view. The next chapter will explore the other heterogeneous element of the double capture: Deleuze's work. I will discuss his oeuvre from an organisational perspective, extracting from Deleuze's concepts what might be interesting for Sigma. However, Deleuze's concepts are not applied to Sigma, nor is the empirical study of Sigma used to probe Deleuzian concepts. Sigma and Deleuze's work have nothing in common until they come together in an encounter of heterogeneous elements. The outcome of this encounter will be addressed in Chapter 5 and 6. I suggest that the reader does not try to find Sigma in the exploration of Deleuze's work. What I propose is to live them independently. In other words, we have just explored Sigma and now we move to another world: Deleuze's work.

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<sup>25</sup> Sigma is seen differently.

## **Chapter 3. To explore Deleuze's Organisation**

### **3.1. Introduction**

Having explored Sigma, this chapter turns to the philosophy of Deleuze. This is a conceptual (or even philosophical) chapter with no direct connection to Sigma. The reader may miss the relevance of Deleuze's concepts to Sigma, however, we are connecting them by exploring one after the other. The traverse between both will eventually organise them in a new way. Instead of explicitly making the connection between concepts and Sigma, I present both as heterogeneous elements of the research. Each stands on its own in separate chapters. The outcome of their encounter will be addressed in chapters 5 and 6. This chapter is the preparation for the double capture between Deleuze's concepts and Sigma.

In addition, this chapter could also be seen as the outcome of the double capture between Deleuze's work and the researcher. The work of Deleuze will be explored from an organisational point of view. Deleuze takes the form of an organisational philosopher. I have extracted from his work what I thought interesting for organisations, as well as whatever I felt personally drawn towards. As suggested earlier, I seek out not just an intellectual understanding of Deleuze, but also the transformative experiences that Deleuze's work can stimulate. As a result, I have focused on relationships, on how heterogeneous elements (such as theory and practice, Sigma and Deleuze, company and customer, text and the reader etc.) come together to create a new assemblage. Simply put, I am interested in how differences are organised, how those differences and their relations constitute an organisation, and ultimately the organisation's transformation.

The chapter is divided into six sections. Section 3.2. introduces Deleuze's conceptualisation of difference and makes a distinction between two different types of difference. In section 3.3., Deleuze's ontology is read from an organisational perspective, exploring what happens when differences come together, addressing Deleuze's ontology of organisations. Section 3.4. presents different types of relations extracted from Deleuze's work. Finally, section 3.5 addresses the organisational transformation conceptually based on Deleuze's ontology.

### **3.2. Difference in itself or kind and difference in degree**

The first premise of Deleuze's philosophy is that difference in itself or pure difference cannot be subsumed to identity or similarity. Deleuze's work can be seen as an attempt to 'think difference' without subordinating it to resemblance, opposition or analogy i.e. "think difference in itself" (Deleuze, 1995b, xv). What is difference for Deleuze? As he defines it, "everything separable is distinguishable and everything distinguishable is different. This is the principle of difference" (Deleuze, 2001, 87). Pure difference, or difference in itself, is anything that is separable/distinguishable, any independent perception or distinction. This principle of difference recognises those differences in kind as "singularities" i.e. differences that have no relation to others. Singularities are independent, autonomous, and heterogeneous—they stand by themselves. Differences in kind or singularities are

singular, turning, critical, or inflection points: “bottlenecks, knots, foyers, and centers; points of fusion, condensation, and boiling; points of tears and joy, sickness and health, hope and anxiety, “sensitive” points” (Deleuze, 2015, 55). They are pre-individual, non-personal, a-conceptual. They are events “or rather the event expressed by this verb” (Deleuze, 2015, 21): to grow, to boil, to condensate. The difference in kind is an infinitive verb, an event. It is what happens, an effect.

Difference in itself is not the difference between two things, or a difference of degree. Singularities are distinct from anything else, the difference is in kind, not in degree. Deleuze makes a clear distinction between difference in kind and difference in degree. A difference in kind is a qualitative difference, a singularity without a reference to compare with, whilst a difference in degree is a quantitative difference, a difference in an axis of space or extension, for example. States of matter (such as solid, liquid, or gas) can be said to be differences in kind, whilst increasing the temperature of water is a difference in degree.

When increasing the temperature of water, eventually its state will change, becoming a gas, and there will be a difference in kind, an event. When cooled, water will eventually become ice, and with this change of state a difference in kind will emerge. Differences in degree can become differences in kind. But this is not a direct cause-and-effect relationship— differences in degree do not automatically become differences in kind. There is a wall, an obstacle to pass from one to another. In “Thousand Plateaus” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 509), this wall is called a “threshold”. Differences in degree cannot be increased or decreased beyond a certain threshold without changing in nature, without the difference in degree becoming a difference in kind. Water has a threshold at 0° C where it changes in nature from water to ice, and another threshold at 100°C in which it evaporates. Traversing a threshold produces a difference in kind.

From an organisational point of view, I equate superficial changes to differences in degree. For instance changes on the number of employees, projects, contracts or customers, the degree of investments, the office layout, the geographical distance between offices, etc. can be considered differences in degree. The organisation can remain essentially the same irrespective of its number of employees, contracts or customers. However, differences in degree become difference in kind (change in nature: transformation) if the threshold is reached<sup>26</sup>. Superficial changes and initiatives could eventually transform the organisation as a whole. Thus, organisational transformation comes about through transgression of its thresholds, “the threshold, the ultimate marking an inevitable change” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 509).

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<sup>26</sup> It could be argued, drawing on Deleuze and Guattari’s account of “marginalism” and “anticipation-prevention” (Deleuze, 2017), that there is a number of drinks, a threshold, that must be reached when the alcoholic becomes suicidal or a clinical case. In other words, a threshold where an “alcoholic” becomes another thing like a “suicidal” or “patient”. There is a number of exchanged seeds between tribes, which as a threshold makes the tribes (assemblages) change their nature. I could also draw on Deleuze’s work on Cinema (2013a) and Bergson (1990) but “Thousand Plateaus” (2013) directly addresses those thresholds in assemblages.

In sum, the first concept I extract from Deleuze's work is that of *difference*. Difference in itself, or in kind, is an infinitive verb, an event (to boil, to condense...), a singularity<sup>27</sup>.

### 3.3. The effect of the coming together of singularities: Organisation, Assemblage

#### 3.3.1. Introduction: Assemblage

The first idea extracted from Deleuze's work is the concept of difference, for which several words are used: difference in itself, difference in kind, singularity, event, effect, affect, infinitive verb, heterogeneous element, perception or intensity. The second idea that will be explored is the relationship between those differences.

The relationship between differences in kind is not defined by the differences in kind themselves. For example, the relationship between a man and a woman is not defined by they themselves, it is external to both elements in relation (Deleuze, 2008, 214). A man and a woman can have many different types of relations to one another. On the one hand, we have woman or man as differences in kind, and on the other we have their relationship which attributes to the singularities "the links and principles of union" (Deleuze, 2001, 24). The relations are not characteristic of the terms; they are external to the terms and not predefined.

The world is the "emission" of singularities or differences in kind (Deleuze, 2006b, 75) *and* their relations. Deleuze could be seen as a philosopher of difference, but it could also be argued that for Deleuze, this second principle of the relations between heterogeneous terms, singularities or differences is as important as the concept of difference. Deleuze may also be considered to be a philosopher of the coming together of heterogeneous elements, as much a philosopher of "organisation" as a philosopher of difference.

There are then two different principles, the differences and their associations, relations or coming together which will be called "Coming Together" or *assemblage*:

*The concept of assemblage, as developed by Deleuze and Guattari, derives from the English translation of their concept in French of agencement (arrangement), or the processes of arranging, organizing, and fitting together (Livesey, 2010, 18).*

*What is an assemblage? It is a multiplicity which is made up of many heterogeneous terms and which establishes liaisons, relations between them, across ages, sexes and reigns different natures. Thus the assemblage's only unity is that of co-functioning: it is a symbiosis, a 'sympathy' (Deleuze & Parnet, 2007, 69)*

As an experiment for the purposes of this study, organisations will be considered where Deleuze and Guattari refer to assemblages. An assemblage (or for myself, an organisation) is defined by Deleuze as "what keeps very heterogeneous elements together" (Deleuze, 2007, 179). In other words, an

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<sup>27</sup> I could think of it as 'observation' too. A distinction without judgment or interpretation.

organisation is a multiplicity of heterogeneous elements or singularities that come together. If the world is the emission of differences in kind, an organisation is the coming together of some of them. Each organisation is constituted by singular points, by differences in kind or by events emerged out of encounters between bodies. The mixture of bodies (i.e., corporeal encounters) cause events which are or are not included as constitutive parts of the assemblage.

On the one hand, Deleuze claims that the organisation is closed (Deleuze, 2006b, 24): it is constituted only by events which are internal, the effects of its bodily encounters. On the other hand, the organisation can be considered to be open as it can include new events.

Each assemblage, or in this case Sigma,

*expresses the world (inclusion), but only expresses clearly one partial zone or subdivision by virtue of its point of view (localized borough). And definitely this enlightened region depends on each one's body (Deleuze, 2006b, 71, translation modified).*

*I have a clear or privileged zone of expression because I have a body. What I clearly express is what happens to my body. The monad expresses the world 'according to' its body, according to the organs of its body, according to the action of other bodies upon itself: what happens in the soul represents what happens in bodily organs (Deleuze, 2006b, 113, translation modified).*

As has been stated, the world is the emission of singularities with every assemblage expressing clearly only the singularities affecting their body: a small region of the world, a subdivision, a limited number of singularities included in the assemblage, a finite sequence of events of the infinite series of events (Deleuze, 2006b, 27). In the case of Sigma (as seen in Chapter 2), a multiplicity of differences or singularities that stand by themselves in Sigma has been distinguished out of the mixture of bodies, out of the corporeal interactions: bureaucracy, hierarchy, fellowship, centralised decision making or the objective of selling outside Alpha. These events have a corporeal side in the sense that they happen to Sigma, and a virtual, incorporeal side in that they are attributes of Sigma. Similarly, I, as an assemblage, am the coming together of the events or distinctions that constitute me. They constitute me because they happen to my body. In sum, an assemblage is a process of arranging, organising a finite multiplicity of singularities (that come together) emerged from its bodily encounters.

It is important to note the difference between the world as a multiplicity of events, as the continuous emission of heterogeneous, independent, different in kind singularities, and the assemblage as the relationship (or coming together) between some of these singularities, the ones happening to the body of the assemblage. The former is the primary order, the latter the secondary surface organisation.

### *Coming together*

How is this coming together of a multiplicity of singularities? It is not a gathering of things together into unities, but rather what is referred to in French as “agencement”: an arrangement or layout of heterogeneous elements (Nail, 2017, 22). Heterogeneous elements or singularities cannot be summed up, cannot be naturally totalised because they are mutually exclusive—they are different in kind

(Deleuze, 2001, 40). An organisation is neither defined by intrinsic relations like laws, contracts or formalized transactions, nor by the functional relations of different organs in an organism as parts in a pre-given whole. Moreover, the whole is not naturally given. It is an artificial totality where singularities are integrated, and is defined by external relations (Deleuze, 2001, 41). In assemblages, neither the whole nor the relations are pre-given; they do not precede the external relations between heterogeneous elements. Although the tendency to relate, to connect, to encounter is spontaneous, the specific relations have to be created, and invented. An assemblage or organisation is a continuous rearrangement or configuration of a multiplicity of heterogeneous elements in which new singularities can be added, subtracted or recombined ad infinitum. “Each new mixture produces a new kind of assemblage, always free to recombine again and change its nature” (Nail, 2017, 23). In sum, an organisation (e.g. Sigma) is not a pre-existing whole, unity, essence, organism or fixed set of intrinsic relations between its parts. An organisation or assemblage is a multiplicity of heterogeneous elements constituted by their external relations of composition, mixture, and aggregation that has to be invented. As a result of these new arrangements, the nature of the organisation continually changes. “An assemblage is precisely this increase in the dimensions of a multiplicity that necessarily changes in nature as it expands its connections” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 7). An organisation is transformed, on the one hand, when singularities, or events are added, or subtracted, and on the other hand, when they are recombined or its connections (which are created, not pre-given) change.

The challenge of constituting an organisation or assemblage is in integrating mutually exclusive singularities, in organising differences in kind into an inclusive whole. It is not a matter of limiting the self-interest of each singularity by laws and contracts. Rather than contractual relations, Deleuze proposes that an organisation should be constituted by extending sympathies and affects from the terms to the whole:

*The moral and social problem is how to go from real sympathies which exclude one another to a real whole which would include these sympathies. The problem is how to extend sympathy* (Deleuze, 2001, 40).

The challenge is not to figure out the proper contracts, nor to fit differences into a specific type of relation or pre-existing unity. The challenge is to create or *invent constitutive inclusive relations* to expand partial sympathies. In other words, an organisation is the outcome of the created inclusive relations between a finite multiplicity of differences in kind emerged from its bodily interaction. In the following section, we will explore how those relations can be.

### **3.3.2. Assemblage: consistency, the holding together**

But how does the assemblage keep these heterogenous or singular elements together? This issue is one of “consistency” or “coherence” (Deleuze, 2007, 179) i.e. how the heterogeneous elements of an organisation can be held together. “If we ask the question, “what holds things together?”, the clearest, easiest answer seems to be provided by a formalizing, linear, hierarchized, centralised arborescent

model” (Deleuze & Guattari 2013, 381). Deleuze and Guattari posit that the straightforward way to hold heterogeneous elements is to organise them according to a pattern, a pre-given concept of organisation (formal, linear, hierarchical, articulated in an organigram, chain of command, processes, procedures, departments). This way of organising is referred to as “molar” (2013, 249), the centralised arborescent model by Deleuze and Guattari, which is one of repetition of the same organisational structure. The elements of the assemblage are organised by repetition or according to a given structure, akin to organs of an organism, with defined functions and relations.

Yet, Deleuze and Guattari seek another model, not one of transcendent identity of an already complete unity that organises the elements with defined intrinsic relations. In contrast with the repetitive tree or molar model of organising, the “rhizomatic” or “molecular” model, maximises differences, distinguishes disparate, heterogeneous or singular elements and improvises a new arrangement. Deleuze and Guattari seek a type of assemblage that is a veritable *invention*, a constellation of singularities, selected, organised and stratified in such a way as to converge and hold together in a new way. It is a question of finding consistency without repeating a given structure. “At first they constitute no more than a fuzzy set, a discrete set that later takes on consistency” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 377). The assemblage, or arrangement of heterogeneous elements is “the joining of separate elements through chance encounters into an enduring, apparently stable, more or less reproducible conglomerate capable of being taken in by its own objective illusion of identity” (Massumi, 1992, 47). The assemblage is a “synthesis of disparate elements [which] is defined only by a degree of consistency that makes it possible to distinguish the disparate elements constituting that aggregate (discernibility)” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 400). The assemblage is the creation of a consistent holding together of sufficiently disparate elements. It could be agreed with Holland that

*maintaining or creating consistency without imposing unity, identity, or organization- without resorting to bare repetition of the same- might be said to constitute the holy grail of all of Deleuze & Guattari’s work. [...] Their ideal is to maximize difference and to experiment with variation, to leave the comfort zone of home [...] in order to improvise with the world. (Holland, 2013, 9)*

In summation, there are two types of consistencies. I suggest that the noun ‘organisation’ corresponds to the arborescent or molar model and the verb ‘organising’ corresponds to the rhizomatic or molecular model. The former imposes or repeats an already established structure, given unity, identity or organisation and the latter entails maximising differences in kind (differentiation) and the organising or coming together of a multiplicity of distinct elements out of their chance encounters (or new relations). The molecular consistency constitutes a new arrangement or assemblage, transforming the organisation. In contrast, the molar consistency comprises a stable organisation.

However:

*Every society, and every individual, are thus plied by both segmentarities simultaneously: one molar, the other molecular. If they are distinct, it is because they do not have the same terms*

*or the same relations or the same nature or even the same type of multiplicity. If they are inseparable, it is because they coexist and cross over into each other* (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 249).

The two types of consistencies should not be seen as two types of assemblages. Organisations cannot be classed exclusively as either arborescent or rhizomatic; organisations include both. The molar and the molecular are two aspects of the same assemblage, and each assemblage has a stable molar side (of intrinsic relations and repetition of the same organisation) and a changing molecular side (of chance encounters and rearrangements). In Deleuze and Guattari's words: "The assemblage has both *territorial sides*, or reterritorialized sides, which stabilize it, and *cutting edges of deterritorialization*, which carry it away" (2013, 103)<sup>28</sup>.

### **3.3.3. Plane of consistency, abstract machine and concrete assemblage**

As stated earlier, the world is an emission of differences in kind emerged from bodily encounters: an infinite multiplicity of singularities (primary order). An assemblage or organisation is the coming together of a finite number of singularities (secondary surface organisation), those that happen to its body. The coming together or relationships between these singularities can be molar or molecular, better said, are molar *and* molecular. This means that they reproduce the pre-given stable organisation, or they introduce new relationships. Now, I call the 'concrete' or 'actual' organisation to the outcome of that coming together, to the result of the synthesis of the multiplicity of singularities. In contrast to the primary order and the secondary surface organisation, the actual organisation constitutes the "tertiary arrangement" (Deleuze, 2015, 124).

The concrete assemblage is constituted by actual practices and discourses, the part of the organisation that is visible. They are what is seen and said, the bodies and their movements, and the statements. In Deleuze and Guattari's technical names: 'the machinic assemblage of bodies' and 'the collective assemblage of enunciation' or *content* and *expression*.

In that regard, according to Deleuze and Guattari, the assemblage has two axes, the vertical axis of the distinction molar-molecular and the horizontal axis of the distinction practice-discourse:

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<sup>28</sup> More process-oriented commentators may disagree on giving the same status to the molar and molecular. In my interpretation, it is not all about flows or about the verb organising. It is process and product, name and verb, molar and molecular. They coexist, both are sides of the assemblage.

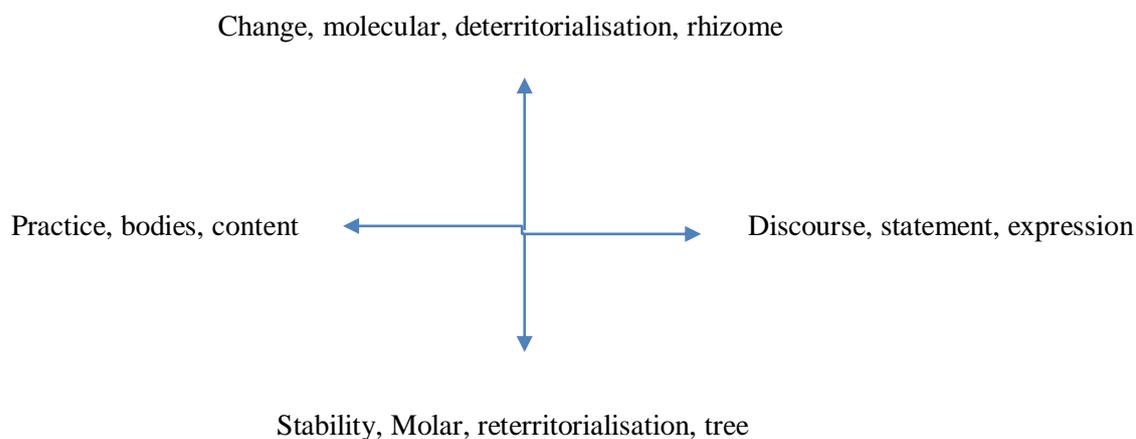


Figure 9: Assemblage's axes

We will return to this concept of the concrete or actual organisation (tertiary arrangement) after introducing one of the major concepts of the research: the abstract machine. Which is related to the secondary surface organisation, in other words, to the relationships between differences in kind.

### 3.3.3.1. Abstract machine or power

How does the assemblage reach consistency? What are the conditions for assemblages to exist?

*A synthesizer places all of the parameters in continuous variation, gradually making "fundamentally heterogeneous elements end up turning into each other in some way." The moment this conjunction occurs there is a common matter. It is only at this point that one reaches the abstract machine, or the diagram of the assemblage (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 127).*

The synthesizer, a concept synonymous with the abstract machine (Massumi, 1992, 47), intervenes in producing the synthesis. For Nail (2017, 24), the abstract machine is the *set of conditioning relations*, the network of specific external relations that holds the elements together. For Deleuze and Guattari (2013, 163, 164, 593), the abstract machine is composed of unformed matter and informal function. It is a diagram which has neither substance nor form, neither content nor expression, neither practice nor discourse. It has only functions and matter, but it simultaneously "organises" a form of expression (statements or discourses) and a form of content (bodies or practices). The abstract machine or diagram does not represent something "but rather constructs a real that is yet to come, a new type of reality" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 164).

*We must therefore arrive at something in the assemblage itself that is still more profound than these sides and can account for both of the forms in presupposition, forms of expression or regimes of signs (semiotic systems) and forms of content or regimes of bodies (physical systems), the abstract machine is expressed in discourses and happens to bodies. This is what*

*we call the abstract machine, which constitutes and conjugates both sides of the assemblage* (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 163).

The abstract machine is expressed in statements, regimes of signs or discourses, and it happens to bodies or a regime of bodies as practices. In other words, the abstract machine, the set of virtual relations of the assemblage, is “effectuated in concrete assemblages” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 169, 264-265). An assemblage is always the result of abstract machines—the abstract set of relations are effectuated in concrete practices and discourses. The concrete assemblage is arranged, organised according to its diagram or abstract machine, which is productive: it constructs the assemblage, organises its elements, draws lines that the assemblage follows. The content (bodies) and expression (regime of signs) of the assemblage derive from and are organised by the diagram or abstract machine.

In contrast to the actual organisation, the abstract machine is virtual, not a thing or object that exists in the world, but rather something that lays out an arrangement of elements. It may be said that the abstract machine is the virtual side of the assemblage, where the not yet actual relations abide, relations that condition how singular elements are going to hold together.

It may also be concluded, together with Massumi and Nail, that the abstract machine is the synthesizer, conditioning relations between heterogeneous elements. The abstract machine or diagram is the virtual set of relations conditioning the actual or concrete assemblage.

Each abstract machine is designated a proper name (as well as dates), which refers to a unique set of relations—matter and functions and not persons or subjects (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 165). But different abstract machines operate simultaneously: different ways of holding together or relating can be said to coexist. Although there is a distinction between each abstract machine, they are nevertheless inseparable, overlapping, entangled and “cross over into each other” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 249). At any given time, there are different abstract machines coexisting, each with a proper name and dates.

There is a clash between coexistent abstract machines to be effectuated in concrete assemblages. The question of which abstract machine is effectuated in the concrete assemblage or social formation is a matter of politics as “politics precedes being. Practice does not come after the emplacement of the terms and their relations” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 239). In other words, politics and practices participate in constituting the assemblage. I will come back to this later.

Drawing on Deleuze’s “Foucault” book, the abstract machine, the virtual side of an assemblage, can be also called “power”. Power “is the exposure of a power relationship or set of relationships of forces” (Deleuze, 2014, 78, my translation). See more detail about abstract machine or ‘power’ in the Appendix 1.2.

### **3.3.3.2. Plane of Consistency**

Abstract machines or power relations are virtual. Being virtual, they are external to actual practices and discourses. However, this virtual is still relative as it is represented by the diagram or abstract

machine and mediated by forces (Deleuze, 2010, 12). But is there a possibility to go beyond the diagram, beyond power? A possibility of not being conditioned by power relations or abstract machines? Certainly<sup>29</sup>. Beyond the boundaries of power, one can find ‘the absolute outside’, the impossible. The absolute outside is not a relation between forces, it is not mediated by forces or presented by the diagram or abstract machine. The relation with the absolute outside is the radical experience. It is not empirical, not the experience of a being, a form or even a relation between forces. The absolute outside is the outside of power and knowledge. One might say that it is the ‘pure’ virtual. I will also call it the plane of consistency because the abstract machine “develops in its own right on the plane of consistency” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 64).

The organisation is defined by a set of virtual relations (or power). However, the abstract machines are not pre-given, they also have a genesis, there is an outside to power. An organisation is not limited to the existing abstract machines; new sets of virtual relations can emerge out of the pure virtual absolute outside, the “body without organs” or in other words, the “plane of consistency” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 46).

The plane of consistency or body without organs (BwO) is a plane wherein a set of relations can be selected or constructed, including all kinds of possible relations, an “aggregate of all virtual potential” (Holland, 2013, 106). It can be imagined as a plane of chaotic imperceptible movement which flows in all directions where an abstract machine develops. We could consider it as the primary order (See Appendix 1.1 for more detail). It is a total lack of organisation, pure disorganisation. It is the plane of all potential chance encounters, all potential relations from where the abstract machine selects a set of relations which condition the consistent assemblage. In Deleuze and Guattari's words, the plane of consistency is “permeated by unformed, unstable matters, by flows in all directions [...] pure intensities” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 46).

The plane of consistency is the molecular side of that axis (see section 3.3.3), the plane of all potential chance encounters. It is opposed to the plane of organisation, which is molar and defined by intrinsic relations (Holland, 2013, 63). The BwO or plane of consistency is then one extreme, the limit that can never be reached (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 174). The other extreme is the rigid hierarchical unity where organs are parts of a whole, to which the BwO is opposed. The BwO or plane of consistency is not empty of organs or elements or relations, but rather, it is the plane where the organs are distributed, held together not as a unity or organism but as a multiplicity or crowd (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 34).

The abstract machines or set of relations that condition the concrete assemblage or actual relations are not pre-given or pre-existing; they come from the chaotic material movement which is still unformed, non-symbolic and imperceptible. To clarify, there is no pre-existing virtual abstract machine.

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<sup>29</sup> The reader might have noticed that if the abstract machine is related to the secondary surface organisation of the relationships between differences in kind, and the actual organisation is related to the tertiary arrangement, what we are exploring here, the non-conditioned by relationships is the primary order; the infinite multiplicity of singularities.

There is no transcendental reality. The set of conditioning relations is extracted from a plane of material chance encounters.<sup>30</sup>

As stated earlier, despite being very different concepts taken from different books by Deleuze, I suggest that the ‘primary order’ could be equated with the ‘plane of consistency’ or ‘BwO’. Of course, the likening of these concepts is a reduction of the richness of their difference. Similarly, I consider that the concept of ‘desire’ from *Anti Oedipus* (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009) comes close also to being assimilated into this multiplicity of concepts. See more detail about Deleuze’s ‘Desire’ in Appendix 1.3.

What I wish to highlight with the concepts of “desire”, “primary order” or “plane of consistency” is that there is an impersonal, machinic impulse or vital force inherent to movement, to encountering others (not as entities but as multiple assemblages). There is a natural impulse to connect, which we could call chaotic movement or chance encounters. This impulse constitutes the beginning of a potential self-organisation. What we have also called the “first movement of subjectivity”.

### **3.3.3.3. Concrete assemblage**

As we have seen, the actual or concrete organisation is constituted by specific practices and discourses. It is also conceptualised as knowledge or what is said and seen. The concrete organisation represents the actual or molar side of the organisation in contrast to the molecular or virtual side (the abstract machine or power, and the plane of consistency or absolute outside).

The actual is the visible, extensive expression of the organisation. In another conceptual reduction of Deleuze’s richness I understand it as the tertiary arrangement. The tertiary arrangement is the reign of differentiated (spelled with a 'c' rather than a 't', something that will be explained later) forms of content and expressions: individuals, persons, determinate bodies, things and propositions, discourses, narratives or representations. The tertiary arrangement is the domain of the subject, of a concrete organisation. The subject experiences itself. The practices and discourses are this specific organisation’s practices and discourses. What is said and seen is said by the concrete assemblage. There is a feeling from the inside, a kind of experience of oneself. There is a coincidence between subject and object. In sum, the actual or concrete organisation is a differentiated entity with qualities and extension.

### **3.3.3.4. The preliminary relationship between elements of the assemblage**

What is the relationship between absolute outside, power and knowledge? Or between desire, desiring machines and social formations? Or between the plane of consistency, abstract machines and concrete practices and discourses? Or between the pure virtual, virtual and actual organisation? Or

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<sup>30</sup> The abstract machine (and moreover the BwO or plane of consistency or chaotic material movement) is imperceptible, which means that it can only be grasped once effectuated in the concrete assemblage. The virtual can only be grasped as actual. There is no transcendent reality, only immanent reality. That is why the existence of an abstract machine cannot be claimed without probing its actualisation in the concrete assemblage. The abstract machine becomes a thought experiment (Chapter 5) whose effectuation is shown in the actual organisation (Chapter 6).

between chance encounters, a set of conditioning relations and intrinsic relations? Or between disorganisation, potential organisation and concrete organisation? Or between primary order, secondary surface organisation and tertiary arrangement? Or between undetermined, determinable and the determinate? Or between indifference, differentiated pure difference, and the differentiated? I am not suggesting that these are groupings of synonymous concepts. However, I do group them into three domains that I will call supreme, subtle and corporeal. Each domain is a synthesis of a multiplicity of concepts that remain different to each other.

So, what is the relationship between the supreme, subtle and corporeal domains of an assemblage? As implied in several earlier paragraphs, the corporeal is an actualisation of the subtle:

*So long as the surface holds, not only will sense be unfolded upon it as an effect, but it will also partake of the quasi-cause attached to it. It, in turn, brings about individuation and all that ensues in a process of determination of bodies and their measured mixtures; it also produces signification and all that ensues in a process of determination of propositions and their assigned relations. It produces, in other words, the entire tertiary arrangement or the object of the static genesis (Deleuze, 2015, 130).*

The secondary surface organisation produces the tertiary arrangement of individuation and determination of bodies and propositions (or content and expression), this process of actualisation is called differentiation or dramatization (Deleuze, 1995b, 221):

*Whereas differentiation determines the virtual content of the Idea as problem, differentiation expresses the actualization of this virtual and the constitution of solutions (by local integrations). Differentiation is like the second part of difference, and in order to designate the integrity or the integrality of the object we require the complex notion of different/ciation (Deleuze, 1995b, 209).*

Differentiation (spelled with a ‘t’) is in the virtual, the process from primary order to secondary surface organisation. Differentiation is the end of the process of actualisation. “Singularities preside over the genesis of individuals and persons” (Deleuze, 2015, 115). The virtual abstract machine is actualised in differentiated individuals, persons, species or even forms, subjects or representation. But, before the subject or the organisation with qualities, identity, parts, extension etc., there is a larval subject (Deleuze, 1995b, 215) or organisation which is the beginning of the condensation of singularities. The larval organisation is the dramatisation of the virtual organisation or the idea of the organisation before reaching the complete actualisation of that idea with its qualities etc. Furthermore, “it is intensity which dramatizes” (Deleuze, 1995b, 245). It is intensity which moves from virtual to actual, from Idea to qualities and extensions. It is the most intensive, the region of maximal activity which is the first to come into play, and exercises a dominant influence on the development of the corresponding parts (Deleuze, 1995b, 250).

In sum, the tertiary arrangement (actual organisation) is contingent upon the surface organisation (abstract machine) of events or the subtle domain.

*This surface topology, these impersonal and pre-individual nomadic singularities constitute the real transcendental field. The way in which the individual is derived out of this field represents the first stage of the [static] genesis (Deleuze, 2015, 130).*

From the virtual transcendental field of singularities, individuals, persons, propositions, subjects or forms derive. This genesis from virtual to individuals and propositions is called static genesis: static ontological genesis and static logical genesis.

On the other hand, as we have seen, the surface secondary organisation (events) emerges from the primary order (bodily encounters). In other words, the abstract machine develops in the plane of consistency. Or out of the indifference pure difference emerges. In sum, it seems that there is a linear genesis process from disorganisation (chance encounters) to potential organisation (set of virtual relations) to its actualisation in concrete practices and discourses.

### **Interlude**

I think this could be a good moment to take a rest. The reader might feel like a surfer being battered by waves (concepts) as he or she tries to swim out and catch a wave (meaning). I have presented an apparently infinite multiplicity of concepts, which the reader encounters. These encounters produce a multiplicity of signs, as “the impression of an external body over my body is a sign” (Deleuze, 2005a, 285, my translation). That is the primary order, the plane of consistency, a multiplicity of impressions emerged out of the bodily encounter with the text. However, the reader might not ‘know’ the text yet. He or she just differentiates the effects of the encounter; a multiplicity of impressions is created. That says more about the reader than the text as the impressions are differentiated according to the reader’s needs or sensibility.

Now, these impressions relate to each other, the reader makes connections between all these impressions. How are these relationships? That is the secondary surface organisation, abstract machine or power. How is the reader relating the impressions? What I have done, the abstract machine working in me would be a reduction of an infinite multiplicity of concepts (or impressions out of the encounter with Deleuze’s work) to three groups; supreme, subtle and corporal. In addition, I also applied a linear relationship between these groups, primary, secondary and tertiary, one coming after the other in a specific order. And that is one of the possible ‘meanings’ of the chapter up to now. I think that what is relevant for the thesis is that differentiation of the three domains. The ‘meaning’ is the tertiary arrangement, the outcome of the synthesis, of the relations between the multiplicity of impressions. However, there is another abstract machine working in me, I have not presented just the tertiary arrangement, in other words, my interpretation after the reduction. I tried to show the multiplicity of concepts, how I relate them to each other, and what my conclusion is. As a result, what I would like the reader to get from these sections is not only the three domains but also the process of reaching a meaning. Moreover, not only the theory of three domains, or even the theory of the process, but the practice of it.

Making all this explicit (visible, actual, tertiary) might feel repetitive for some readers. It serves to support that reader that might be lost. As noted in the Preface, the balance between challenge and support is not always evident. In addition, I could argue that this is another abstract machine working in me, the care for the relationship with the reader because there are different ways of relating, different abstract machines that co-exist. That is what we are going to explore in the next section, the different types of relationships.

### **3.4. Relating differences: a typology of relations**

*There is no recipe or general formula for working together*  
(Deleuze, 2007, 237)

In section 3.2. we identified the first premise of our reading of Deleuze: difference. We explored difference in kind and its relation to difference in degree. In section 3.3. we explored the organisation as an assemblage, as the coming together of differences in kind with its supreme, subtle and corporal domains. Section 3.4. will explore the different ways to relate differences in kind between them (in other words, different ways of coming together).

Some are considered ‘legitimate’ by Deleuze and others illegitimate. In other words, we are going to explore how differences in kind can be subsumed to the same or pre-existing unity (as I have done, subsuming the primary order, plane of consistency, absolute outside, pure virtual, etc. to the supreme<sup>31</sup>). Or, in contrast, how differences in kind can be organised without losing their distinctiveness.

#### **3.4.1. The three Syntheses or legitimate relations**

There are three types of relations that Deleuze considers legitimate. These relations will be addressed across multiple chapters of this thesis, but nevertheless I will note them here as privileged types of relations. The first type of relation is the synthesis of *connection*, also called the productive synthesis. In a multiplicity of singularities or differences in kind, connections are made; at least two singularities are connected, and something else is produced. The connections are fluid, dynamic, two singularities connect and disconnect. The synthesis of connection is the production of production, it puts differences in kind together, connecting singularities to produce something else. The connection produces more than the sum of the elements. The connective synthesis makes multiple, heterogeneous and continual connections, “and...”, “and then...” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 5).

The second type of relation is the synthesis of *disjunction*, also called the synthesis of recording (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 75). The first synthesis connects singularities, the second records some of those connections. The first synthesis is a production, the second a distribution. Some connections are registered and distributed—Deleuze and Guattari call it the body without organs or anti-production. There are still no functions, no parts, no organs. It is just a distribution of connections, a suspension of

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<sup>31</sup> Something that Deleuze does not.

new connections between singularities, but in order to select diverse possibilities already recorded. In a network or grid of diverse possibilities, differentiated connections are selected, an open-ended series of “either...or...or...or...” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 76).

*A disjunction that remains disjunctive, and that still affirms the disjoined terms, that affirms them throughout their entire distance, without restricting one by the other or excluding the other from one (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 76, original emphasis).*

*affirmed through their difference, that is to say, that they are the objects of simultaneous affirmation only insofar as their difference is itself affirmed and is itself affirmative. We are no longer faced with an identity of contraries, which would still be inseparable as such from a movement of the negative and of exclusion. We are rather faced with a positive distance of different elements: no longer to identify two contraries with the same, but to affirm their distance as that which relates one to the other insofar as they are “different” (Deleuze, 2015, 178).*

It is a distribution of singularities where each affirms its difference and its distance. The legitimate use of disjunctive synthesis is affirmative, non-restrictive and “inclusive” (Deleuze, 2015, 270). “The differential positions persist in their entirety” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 77). They are not excluded or restricted, all are “affirmed by their new distance” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 77).

However, there is an illegitimate use of the disjunctive synthesis. Its basic mode is that of binary distinctions (Buchanan, 2008, 59). A choice between two terms, “either/or”. Moreover, the terms, rather than “designating intensive states through which the subject passes [...] designate global persons” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 77). The illegitimate disjunction is exclusive, restrictive and negative rather than inclusive, non-restrictive and affirmative. The legitimate use of disjunctive synthesis, the inclusive, includes all singularities, and in the case of a dualism it includes all the degrees between the two terms of the binary distinction. Furthermore, it is not limited to only one distinction but to multiple dualisms. The exclusive disjunctive synthesis is a choice between two terms, either *this* or *that*, but nothing in between. It is a binary: either man or woman, not man and woman (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 75). In other words, the organisation “carries out the synthesis itself in drifting from one term to another and following the distance between terms” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 77), each singularity affirming their distance and persisting in their entirety. Circulating, sliding, gliding or feeling all the degrees of intensity between both terms of the dualism.

*Conjunction* is the third synthesis, also called nomadic traverse. In this synthesis of consumption or consummation “something of the order of a subject can be discerned” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 16). This subject or organisation traverses the body without organs—it traverses and consumes the different zones of the body without organs, the different recorded singularities of the distribution of the disjunctive synthesis.

*It is a strange subject with no fixed identity, wandering about over the body without organs,[...] being defined by the share of the product it takes for itself [...], being born of the states that it consumes and being reborn with each new state (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 16).*

It is not a fixed identity, the subject is constituted by wandering about over singularities, contingent to what it traverses or consumes. This traversal produces a synthesis, an assemblage, an organisation or Event as an effect of the coming together of a multiplicity of events (Deleuze, 2015, 58). The organisation from this perspective is “a transpositional subject moving full circle, passing through all the states” or singularities or zones of intensities (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 88). It is a “nomadic subject” passing through zones of intensive vibrations (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 84),

*an open series of intensive elements,[...] that are never the expression of the final equilibrium of a system, but consist, rather, of an unlimited number of stationary, metastable states through which a subject passes (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 19).*

Something, that we are going to call “dark precursor” (Deleuze, 1995b, 119) or *the nomadic empty element* drawing on various concepts<sup>32</sup> from Deleuze's “Logic of Sense” (2015), passes from one world to the other, from one singularity to the other, relaying between heterogeneous elements. The nomadic empty element is in the middle, endlessly traversing, running, circulating along singularities. Its function is to fill the gap, connect, relate, articulate, even translate to each other, make the singularities communicate, resonate etc. But how?

*The precursor plays the part of the differentiator<sup>33</sup> of these differences. In this manner, by virtue of its own power, it puts them into immediate relation to one another: it is the in-itself of difference or the 'differently different' - in other words, difference in the second degree, the self-different which relates different to different by itself (Deleuze, 1995b, 119).*

By differentiating differences the dark precursor puts them in relation. It is the “dark precursor which ensures the communication of peripheral series” (Deleuze, 1995b, 119). In my reading of Deleuze, differentiating singularities is a way of relating them, of putting them in communication, making them come together.

For Deleuze, organisation, is a differentiation of singularities, and the empty element's nomadic traverse or consumption of the multiplicity of singularities or intensities. The organisation is the synthesis produced by the circulation of the nomadic empty element, which makes everything function (Deleuze, 2015, 54). However, “everything happens through the resonance of disparities, point of view on a point of view, displacement of perspective, differentiation of difference, and not through the identity of contraries” (Deleuze, 2015, 181). The singularities or heterogeneous elements do not connect, “do not resonate by their resemblance, but rather by their difference” (Deleuze, 2015, 237). Each affirms its difference, its own singularity, its voice, point of view, sensitivity. The synthesis is a

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<sup>32</sup> Those are: empty square, occupant without compartment, esoteric word, paradoxical agent, element or instance, aleatory point, perpetuum mobile, mobile element, quasi-cause, nonsense etc.

<sup>33</sup> Differentiator with “c” in the original.

“nomadic and polyvocal” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 110) subject, the coming together or conjunctive synthesis of “a nomadic distribution, a non-sedentary distribution, wherein each system of singularities communicates and resonates with the others” (Deleuze, 2015, 62). The traverse constitutes a “ so, it’s...” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 17). In other words, the organisation is “*defined* by the states through which it passes” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 20, original emphasis). “Individuations are produced only within fields of forces expressly defined by intensive vibrations” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 85), intensities through which a “nomadic subject” passes (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 84).

According to Deleuze, the nomadic empty element operates “as quasi-cause assuring the full autonomy of the effect” ( 2015, 97). This is a key point. What I read in Deleuze is that the effect (secondary surface organisation) becomes autonomous from the cause, that is, the primary order of bodily encounters. The nomadic empty element, which is itself an effect becomes a quasi-cause. The organisation is not only dependant on the differences in kind emerged in the primary order due to corporeal encounters (causes), but above all on the nomadic empty element (quasi-cause) traversing them. The circulation of the nomadic empty element is another way of saying ‘abstract machine’: the virtual relationship between singularities. It can therefore be said with Deleuze that the essence of Sigma is the abstract machine, not a fixed, eternal essence but rather a nomadic empty element whose movement constitutes the Event or the assemblage Sigma.

Paradoxically, the abstract machine is an effect of bodily encounters, but it gains autonomy from bodily encounters and becomes the essence of the assemblage. This means that to transform an organisation entails a change of abstract machine: different *relations* between singularities, instead of more effects of bodily encounters (singularities) but traversed or related in the same way<sup>34</sup>. In sum, Sigma is not something to discover or, restore, it is not a principle or an origin, but that which is produced by the three syntheses: connection, disjunction and conjunction. In other words, Sigma is the outcome of the differentiation of differences and their relations, of the circulation of the nomadic empty element in the multiplicity of singularities (Deleuze, 2015, 73-74). The organisation is defined by its virtual set of relations or abstract machine.

### **3.4.2. Axiomatics or Capitalism**

We have differentiated two types of consistencies in section 3.3.2., molar and molecular. Deleuze and Guattari consider them the two extremes of the vertical axis of the assemblage (see section 3.3.3.). The former are the stable intrinsic relations and the latter the chance encounters. However, I differentiate another type of relationship; the axiomatics. Arguably, it could be considered a molar type of consistency, but I think it might be of interest for the thesis to differentiate it from molar and molecular.

Capitalism is the main example of an *axiomatic*. It is the selection of a few selected relations (axioms) within all possible infinite encounters. Instead of the molecular chaotic interactions of the

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<sup>34</sup> Which means that no matter how many new impressions the text produce on the reader, he or she do not connect or traverse them. The ‘meaning’ or interpretation of the text becomes autonomous to the impressions it produces.

primary order or the plane of consistency, Capitalism selects the finite determinate encounter of free capital with free labour amongst all the infinite connections. In sum, axiomatics will find the finite grid that will catch the infinite number of possible combinations (Deleuze, 2005b, 113). It is these axioms that give consistency to the assemblage or organisation, instead of the molar or molecular consistency.

This selection is a political project, it is not a spontaneous order, a chance selection. The axiom is not selected democratically, it is not proven as the best axiom—it is imposed politically. In that regard, capitalism needs the state to organise this encounter between free or deterritorialised capital and deterritorialised labour. Strictly speaking, then, capitalism is state capitalism (Deleuze, 2005b, 45).

*The starting point of neoliberalism is the admission, contrary to classical liberal doctrine, that their vision of good society will triumph only if it becomes reconciled to the fact that the conditions for its existence must be constructed and will not come about “naturally” in the absence of concerted political effort and organization. As Foucault presciently observed in 1978 “Neoliberalism should not be confused with the slogan ‘laissez-faire’ but on the contrary, should be regarded as a call to vigilance, to activism, to perpetual interventions” (Mirowski, 2013, 53).*

Capitalism is a political project to construct the conditions for capital accumulation. It is not spontaneous order, it does not come naturally—interventions are needed. The encounter is politically organised. This is more easily done with a strong state (Mirowski, 2013, 334). Citizens become customers, relations become transactions, competition with winners and losers is constructed and promoted as the privileged type of relation (rather than cooperation), markets are created by privatisation and so forth. Capitalism or axiomatic is a political project aiming to reform the society, subordinating it to the market (Mirowski, 2013, 55).

Capitalism helps to liberate, deterritorialise or escape from rigid traditional codes. In that regard it contrasts the molar plane of organisation, the established relations. But it is a relative liberation, existing only to serve capital. “You can have a high degree of social freedom, and a high degree of economic freedom without any political freedom” (Mirowski, 2013, 40). Workers are liberated from social ties, free to engage in economic transactions but not to seek connections, other types of relations, or coming together as a collective political project. In that regard it contrasts the molecular plane of consistency.

In the end, free workers encounter free capital thanks to the conditions built politically by a strong state. In that way, the axiomatic captures the liberated agents in a new, fixed relation in order to accumulate capital. Self-interested agents work or produce to increase investors’ capital and workers’ wages. The relations are functional and organised, they are means to another end, capital accumulation.

In axiomatic, working together is not the end in itself that actualises our potential or satisfies our needs. We instead assume that we will satisfy all our needs with money. The organisation becomes a means to increase the capital of investors and employees. Rather than being the result of a nomadic traverse it is intentionally or politically organised.

It is important to note for the purpose of the thesis that we have differentiated three domains. The molar intrinsic relations based on traditional codes, the molecular chance encounters as self-organised spontaneous order, and the axiomatic political organisation of functional relationships, which are means to another end. Appendix 1.4 develops in more detail each of them and explores alternatives to capitalist axiomatic.

### 3.4.3. Nomadic Traverse

Why should we select between our three options? Why make the choice of either exclusively codes or axioms or self-organisation? Why not all the ways between the three, encompassing them all? The organisation would have zones of self-organisation, zones of organised encounters and zones of well-established codes. Free infinite external chance encounters, selected external functional relations, and established internal or intrinsic relations—all three entangled. Traverse the three options; codes and traditional internal relations, chance encounters and spontaneous order and organised encounters, active organisation of encounters or political programs. The organisation would traverse the three zones and all the distances between them. It is an exploration, an experiment... Glide over intrinsic relations, free encounters or self-organisation and politically organised encounters as an experiment, increasing *puissance*<sup>35</sup> and joy.

The important conclusion, for me, is that for this spontaneous order formed from chance encounters to reach consistency a political agenda is necessary. In other words, in order for a new set of potential virtual relations to be actualised in the actual concrete assemblage, political struggle (or active intervention) is necessary. Similarly, for transformation to happen, chance encounters or experimentation with new relations is key. Some relations, but not all, have to be liberated from intrinsic and functional relations for transformation to happen. In addition, a molar stable part of the organisation remains, it is still traversed, it is *the* organisation that is transformed.

In sum, there are three different types of consistency: molar, molecular and axiomatic. In organisational terms, traditional given structures and codes, self-organised spontaneous order, and organising encounters as a means to another end. Instead of privileging one of them, I suggest that the organisation is the coming together of the three heterogeneous consistencies, the traverse between the multiplicity of singularities. Paradoxically, the traverse reaches a self-organisation, a spontaneous order as the coming together of traditional codes, organisation of encounters and self-organisation. The organisation is a self-organised (or molecular) consistency of molar, molecular and axiomatic consistencies. In other words, stability, change and political agenda or intervention.

*Nomadic traverse instead of reduction and linear order*

I suggested earlier (section 3.3.3.4.) that there is a linear genesis process from disorganisation to potential organisation to its actualisation in concrete practices and discourses. From the plane of

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<sup>35</sup> 'Puissance' will be commented below

consistency, to the abstract machine, to the actual organisation. In other words, a specific relation between primary order, secondary surface organisation and tertiary arrangement. However, in “Francis Bacon”, Deleuze (2005c, 71) argues that the painter does not start from a blank canvas, there are always pre-given clichés, there is always a representation or subject. Said differently, the third domain or tertiary arrangement is always entangled with the other two. There is no beginning and no end; we always start in the middle. Instead of a linear process of genesis, the organisation is the traverse or coming together of the singular domains of (1) the absolute outside of the primary order, (2) the abstract machine or the virtual relations of the secondary surface organisation, and (3) the actual organisation or tertiary arrangement. It is not a linear process from (1) to (3) passing through (2) with specific internal relations between domains. It is instead the external relations between (1), (2) and (3) which co-exist, their relations constituting the assemblage.

It is not all about one process, but instead about (1) processes of differentiation, deterritorialisation or virtualization, (2) processes of differentiation, reterritorialisation or actualisation, and (3) the territory, representation or product. Therefore, I do not regard Deleuze to be against meaning, representation or tertiary arrangement. He is not against representation, but rather against representation taking over exploration and the nomadic traverse of singularities. He is also not against the organisation of encounters or political agenda, but opposes the organisation of encounters taking over chance encounters. Moreover, the differentiation of the three domains is a thought experiment. In reality, all three are entangled, mixed.

In sum, there is no need to claim and defend a genesis linear process (even if it is actually happening), but rather to differentiate domains and traverse them all nomadically, without any one taking over, each affirming difference without a pre-given itinerary, unity or order. The organisation is the product of the coming together or nomadic traverse of processes and the organisation itself. The traverse entails a transformation, which is discussed in section 3.5.

Before that, I suggest the reader to explore some illegitimate relationships in Appendix 1.5: The duty or obligation to realise or actualise the essence, the investment of time, attention, devotion or commitment, the representations or abstractions (like the market), the interest in specific outcomes instead of experimenting, the pre-given totalities claimed missing etc. In contrast to the nomadic traverse (also called double capture in previous chapters). They are examples of blockages of the traverse. I present them as a multiplicity, without making explicit connections and conclusions, letting the reader practice the traverse. They will connect with practices at Sigma in Chapter 6.

### **3.5. Transforming organisations**

In this section, instead of a concluding with a theory of organisational transformation based on Deleuze, I differentiate a multiplicity of concepts extracted from Deleuze’s work that I felt attracted to

(according to my needs and sensibility). Therefore, I suggest the reader not to expect or jump to conclusions yet. For now, we continue exploring a multiplicity of concepts.

### **3.5.1. Relations between practices and discourses or content and expression**

What is the relationship between practices and discourses or content and expression? As the reader might have anticipated, it is a nomadic traverse between them. As noted for the relationship between theory and practice in Chapter 1, there is no corresponding relation between machinic assemblages of bodies and collective assemblages of enunciation. One element does not implement the other or act as the referent:

*We cannot even say that the body or state of things is the 'referent' of the sign. In expressing the non corporeal attribute, and by that token attributing it to the body, one is not representing or referring but intervening in a way, it is a speech act (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 100, original emphasis).*

Discourses or speech acts are interventions no less than practices or body actions are. What is between them is a “reciprocal presupposition” or an instantaneous relation between statements and incorporeal transformations which happens to bodies. For example, the accused becomes the convict in the regime of signs, which is different from going to jail, from actions and passions affecting the regime of bodies. The former is an incorporeal transformation—accused to convict—and the latter a new configuration of bodies—body in jail. There is an instantaneous relation between them, a traverse or “continual passage from one to the other” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 101). The abstract machine or event (conviction) is expressed in both practices (body going to jail) and discourses (judge’s statements).

Lenin's text “On slogans” is another example of the relation between statements and body configurations according to Deleuze and Guattari (2013, 96). The text “constituted an incorporeal transformation that extracted from the masses a proletarian class as an assemblage of enunciation before the conditions were present for the proletariat to exist as a body” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 96). Lenin's words shared the same event with the new configurations of bodies as the proletariat: the incorporeal transformation of the masses on proletariats. In this instance, both the statements and the configuration of bodies were expressions of the same abstract machine.

The language that designates “this instantaneous relation between statements and of incorporeal transformations or noncorporeal attributes they express” is called the illocutionary (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 94). In other words, when the same abstract machine is effectuated in practices and discourses, these are called speech acts or the illocutionary.

In sum, illocutionary statements, speech acts or interventions are incorporeal transformations attributed to bodies. Both discourses and body configurations are expressions of the same abstract machine. In other words, an abstract machine is actualised in practices *and* discourses and their relationship is a nomadic traverse (or double capture). As stated in section 3.4.1. a transformation of an

assemblage entails a change of abstract machine (or nomadic empty element). As a result, I suggest that organisational transformation is not only about discourses, or only about practices. A transformation involves statements *and* bodily configurations, discourses *and* practices as expressions of the same abstract machine. It is also important to note for the purposes of this thesis that the thesis itself, as illocutionary discourse, could constitute an incorporeal transformation that extracts from the actual Sigma a new Sigma before the conditions are present to the new Sigma to exist as a body.

### **3.5.2. Encountering the absolute outside; thought and free action**

Three different types of action can be differentiated. The first type is the chaotic activity of the primary order. The second type is the delayed reaction. Action as part of habits, rules, culture or a way of doing. Action as a constitutive part of the subject, as its character. Finally, when we no longer know how to react, when the situation is not extended directly to action, our habits or natural ways of acting are held in suspense. Consequently, time is introduced between the situation and action, but not only time, the assemblage also (or manager, for instance), as the character in modern cinema “does not act without seeing himself acting, complicit viewer of the role he himself is playing”(Deleuze, 2013b, 6). The reflective manager does not just act but reflects on the impact of his actions, on the role he is playing, on the impact or outcome of his actions<sup>36</sup>. “Prey to a vision, pursued by it or pursuing, rather than engaged in an action” (Deleuze, 2013b, 3). It is not just action and outcome—vision and strategy precede action. “Seeing replaces action” (Deleuze, 2013b, 9). We need time to respond, we need to think, to reflect rather than act, to “see and hear what is no longer subject to the rules of a response or an action” (Deleuze, 2013b, 3). It does not mean a passive Sigma or a passive manager, action is not removed with contemplation in its stead. But action comes, emerges from observation, from vision, from reflection rather than from automatic habitual action. Introducing time and thought brings a real new action, different from reactions, and different from habits or natural ways of doing.

This weakening or loosing of the sensory-motor schema—in other words, the introduction of time and thought—releases huge forces of disintegration (Deleuze, 2013b, 19), which means of transformation. Reflection puts on hold our reactions and natural actions, our habits, character or natural ways of acting. Not acting as usual opens a space to act in a new way, to make new connections. The disintegration of the subject opens room for a new subject.

We could also draw on Deleuze’s ‘Foucault’ (2006c) to highlight the importance of thought and free action for transformation.

#### *Thought*

As we have seen, the actual organisation derives from the abstract machine. In other words, what is seen and said (knowledge) derives from what makes us see and speak (power). I also stated that the absolute outside is the pure virtual, what is not caught by power relations (or abstract machines) and

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<sup>36</sup> It can be said that a reflective feedback loop is introduced. We could link this to Peter Senge, Argyris, Torbert and so forth.

knowledge. However, Deleuze links it to “dying” (Deleuze, 2010, 15), it is unlivable. Is it possible, though, to have an experience outside power that is not death? (Deleuze, 2010, 21). Certainly. The outside is taken by a movement and produces the same, the inside, the intimate (Deleuze, 2010, 23). This movement is called *the fold*.

The absolute outside folds and constitutes an inside, but what is this fold? Deleuze has two answers. On the one hand, “the outside folds and folding makes think” (Deleuze, 2010, 46, my translation). The folding of the outside introduces the un-thought in thought (Deleuze, 2010, 53). This way, Deleuze establishes a relationship with the absolute outside: thinking (Deleuze, 2010, 46). According to this answer, thought escapes power and knowledge, the visible and the articulable, what is seen and said and what makes us see and speak. Thinking, the relation with the absolute outside, is *to see and speak anew*, free from knowledge and power.

But more importantly, “what constitutes thinking is not what is thought” (Deleuze, 2010, 192, my translation). What constitutes thinking is not what is seen and said, but strictly *the speed by which an association is made* (Deleuze, 2010, 193). Thinking is the speed of a relation, a connection, an association. It is not the term but the relation, not the form of the visible or articulable, not the reaction to a force; thinking is connecting. What escapes knowledge and power is the speed of a new association.

In sum, “Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental *encounter*” (Deleuze, 1995b, 139, original emphasis). The encounter with the absolute outside forces us to think, to make new associations at infinite speed outside power relations. These new associations transform what is seen and said.

### *Subjectivation*

The second of Deleuze's answers to the question of ‘what is the fold?’ is that “The being of the subject, the subjectivity, is the fold of the outside” (Deleuze, 2010, 53, my translation).

*The line of the outside folds and folding constitutes an inside deeper than any inner world, when folded, constitutes the unthinkable in thought, when folded produces the subjectivity* (Deleuze, 2010, 55, my translation).

The relation with the unknown, the relation with the absolute outside is what allows the autonomous subject to escape knowledge and power (Deleuze, 2010, 163) and thereby transform without being conditioned by virtual power relations and actual knowledge. But what is this relation with the absolute outside? It is a *new field of perceptions or affects*, or in other words, ‘resisting singularities’ that are immune to power’s actions upon actions. They exceed the abstract machine (Deleuze, 2014, 207). The world is the emission of singularities, and in that regard, singularities precede power relations. “There is something different from power relations, which is the resistance to power” (Deleuze, 2014, 208, my translation). The power relation is something that fights a prior resistance, it is what struggles to overcome a previous resistance. Resistance is not second, it is first (Deleuze, 2014, 208). In summation,

this ‘new field of perceptions’ that constitutes the new subject outside power and knowledge is just the multiplicity of singularities or resisting points that are not caught in power relations.

### *Mutating the abstract machine*

The abstract machine, diagram or power relations are mutant (Deleuze, 2014, 86). When these points of resistance are globalised, they will collapse the diagram in favour of a new diagram (Deleuze, 2014, 208). In other words, if sufficient singularities resist the existing abstract machine, it mutates and a new assemblage or organisation is born (Deleuze, 2014, 214). When the organisation encounters the outside and integrates singularities that are immune to existing power relations, when the relations change, the diagram mutates<sup>37</sup> and the actual form is transformed (Deleuze, 2014, 270). Then, things suddenly are no longer perceived, described, stated, classified and known just as they were. What is seen and said (the actual organisation) is transformed.

### *Free action*

What are the resisting singularities? These are things that we do without being affected by power. Actions or practices that are *free* from the ‘action upon action’ of power or existing abstract machines, e.g. practices performed for their own sake. As opposed to being forced practices. Experimenting, exploring without purpose, without a defined goal may lead to new perceptions, to singularities outside power. Those new perceptions nourish an autonomous subject. This self or subjectivation, which is the fold of the absolute outside of power and knowledge, is one’s relation with oneself; through practices, one carves oneself (Deleuze, 2010, 114). New practices lead to new perceptions, a new field of perceptions that nourishes a new subject<sup>38</sup>.

### *Coming together*

However, “between power, knowledge and self or subjectivation there are always relations of fight, opposition or also commitment” (Deleuze, 2010, 134, my translation). New power relations, new forms of knowledge are continuously being created capturing the autonomous subjectivity, but new modes of subjectivation are also born continuously. The organisation or assemblage is the coming together or traverse of three reigns: (1) the autonomous subject constituted by thinking and associating and by new practices outside knowledge and power relations, (2) the abstract machine, or power relations, that make us see and speak, (3) what is seen and what is said. In other words, (1) free, open or chance encounters with the unknown absolute outside, (2) organising encounters acting upon actions, arranging in space and organising in time; implementing practices, and (3) the known territory of actual organisation.

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<sup>37</sup> However, could be argued that the points of resistance are outside or not caught by one diagram, but they constitute another diagram, a resisting diagram, the abstract machine of the new subject.

<sup>38</sup> I cannot help associating the encounter with the absolute outside with Kashmir Yoga practice. When the practice is not forced or does not aim for health or any other consequence, when it is a purposeless practice of observation and is lived as an encounter with the unknown, with the absolute outside, a new field of perceptions arise. The body as the object of observation and the observer emerge out of this field of perception, out of this pure observation of the absolute outside. The yogi eventually sees the body differently and experiences himself or herself differently—there can be a subjectivation, a transformation.

This traverse of three terms can be also seen in Deleuze's account of time. For Deleuze, time is constituted by three syntheses: present, past and future. I relate the known territory of actual organisation, what is seen and said to the present, the virtual conditioning relations to the past, and the absolute outside is of course the future. See the Appendix 1.7 for a detailed account of these syntheses of time.

### *Transformation*

Knowledge (3), what is said and seen, or new actual organisation emerges from organising encounters (2) or as the outcome of the encounter with the absolute outside (1). In Deleuze's words, intelligence comes before or after the encounter:

*The Socratic demon, irony, consists in anticipating encounters. In Socrates, the intelligence still comes before the encounters; it provokes them, it instigates and organizes them. Proust's humor is of another nature; Jewish humor as opposed to Greek irony. One must be endowed for the signs, ready to encounter them, one must open oneself to their violence. The intelligence always comes after; it is good when it comes after; it is good only when it comes after (Deleuze, 2004a, 101).*

Transformation of the organisation comes from its virtual side. On the one hand, the organisation is transformed if power is able to act upon actions, thus organising encounters or changing practices. Said differently, the organisation is transformed if a virtual new abstract machine is actualised in concrete practices and discourses. On the other hand, 'the good' transformation comes from encountering the absolute outside, the pure virtual, or in other words, from thinking or associating, and acting differently, performing new practices, carving an autonomous subject unaffected by power and knowledge.

### **3.5.3. Transformative circle between virtual and actual**

A possible linear process of genesis of form in three movements has been presented: from formless to unformed and to form. In other words, from disorganisation, to potential organisation to actual organisation. Flows become compact or thicken at the level of strata (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 46) and get stratified (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 185). The actual organisation is "a phenomenon of accumulation, coagulation, and sedimentation. [It] imposes upon the BwO forms, functions, bonds, dominant and hierarchized organizations, organized transcendences" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 184). In other words, the chance encounters on the plane of consistency or primary order become formal or intrinsic relations of tertiary arrangement. Just as the flow of sand in a river becomes sedimented and accumulated, chaotic movement becomes ordered and organised. The organisation is the sedimentation of chance encounters and the result of organising. The molar is the actualisation of the molecular. There is not an original organisation or assemblage as an entity; the entity is a sedimentation of change, of

organising<sup>39</sup>. Figure 10 represents that primacy of process. In this case organisations, products, forms, subjects or representations are outcomes, sedimentations, condensations of a process or flow:

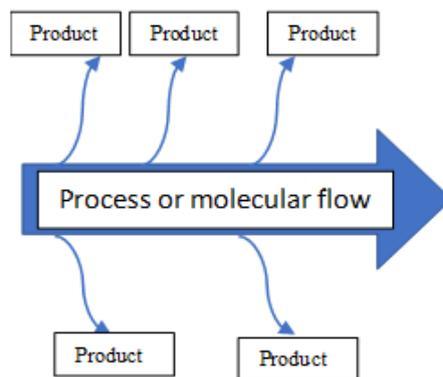


Figure 10: Products as sedimentation of a flow or process

However, as suggested in section 3.4.3. the three domains coexist: the unformed material movement or primary order, the virtual incorporeal set of relations or secondary surface organisation, and the actualisation of the virtual abstract machine in the formed concrete assemblage. Rather than being a linear process from body encounters of the primary order (or pure virtual) to virtual abstract machine (the secondary surface organisation) to its actualisation as a tertiary arrangement, the three domains coexist without a pre-given order. The organisation is a nomadic traverse between the three domains.

#### *Lines of flight*

However, it is the pure virtual plane of consistency which sets the organisation free (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 187). It is in the pure virtual or absolute outside that the assemblage opens to experimentation (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 185). To the intrinsic relations, the significance and subjectification of the tertiary arrangement, or in other words:

*To the strata as a whole [molar, tertiary or actual], the BwO [or pure virtual] opposes disarticulation (or n articulations) as the property of the plane of consistency, experimentation as the operation on that plane (no signifier, never interpret!), and nomadism as the movement (keep moving, even in place, never stop moving, motionless voyage, desubjectification) (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 185).*

In other words, differentiation of differences, experimentation and nomadic traverse. The traverse from the actual organisation to the plane of consistency entails differentiating differences or lines of flight escaping the molar organisation. In other words, the tertiary arrangement precedes the primary order. The actual organisation as the third movement leads to intensities or perceptions of the primary order.

<sup>39</sup> The product does not resemble the process. The molar is an actualisation of the molecular but without resemblance.

*It is as if a line of flight, perhaps only a tiny trickle to begin with, leaked between the [molar] segments, escaping their centralization, eluding their totalization. The profound movements stirring in a society present themselves in this fashion, even if they are necessarily "represented" as a confrontation between molar segments. It is wrongly said (in Marxism in particular) that a society is defined by its contradictions. That is true only on the larger scale of things. From the viewpoint of micropolitics, a society is defined by its lines of flight, which are molecular. There is always something that flows or flees, that escapes the binary organizations, the resonance apparatus, and the overcoding machine: things that are attributed to a "change in values," (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 252).*

There is always something that flows or flees, a line of flight escaping the molar or actual organisation. A society is defined by its lines of flights as a process of sedimentation or actualisation. However, these molecular lines of flight escape from molar structures, there is a leak of flow from the rigid segments.

Despite this, those lines of flights are reterritorialised: the “molecular escapes and movements would be nothing if they did not return to the molar organizations to reshuffle their segments, their binary distributions of sexes, classes, and parties” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 253). The lines of flight would be lost if they did not in return impact the molar organisation they escape from.

The exception defines the organisation when it reaches consistency. In the example provided by Deleuze and Guattari, the bourgeoisie was the line of flight escaping the traditional territory but becoming the new territory. Moreover, “it is always *on* the most deterritorialized element that reterritorialization takes place” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 258).

In sum, organisations “are defined much more by what escapes *them*” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 254, my emphasis). The molecular flows escaping the molar will dry up or actualise on the molar, the new or chance encounters and informal interactions coagulate in intrinsic relations. New ways of working together become the formal standard relation—they will become procedures or formal processes.

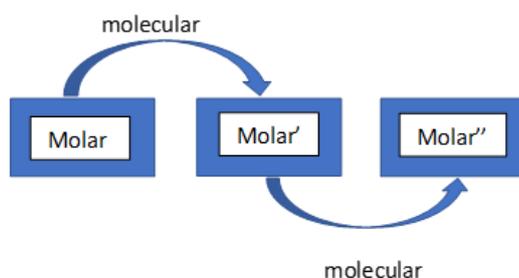


Figure 11: Molecular lines of flight condensing in new Molar

In that regard, every organisation is simultaneously molar and molecular. The actual and virtual coexist.

*Between the two poles [molar-molecular] there is also a whole realm of properly molecular negotiation, translation, and transduction in which at times molar lines are already undermined by fissures and cracks, and at other times lines of flight are already drawn toward black holes, flow connections are already replaced by limitative conjunctions, and quanta emissions are already converted into centerpoints (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 261).*

The assemblage has two sides, two extremes of an axis that it swings between. It is a “double articulation” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 47) between the plane of consistency or BwO (molecular, change, intensities...) and the plane of organisation (molar, organism, stability...). The organisation is a traverse, a continual passage, an overflight, a relay between both sides<sup>40</sup>.

### Circle

Both elements (molar and molecular) are equally important even if the lines of flight are privileged, even if they define the assemblage. The line of flights or molecular side may come together and gaining consistency would constitute a new abstract machine which could be actualised. There is a virtualisation of the actual organisation. The molecular lines of flight are condensed, thickened in the molar actual organisation. There is an actualisation of the virtual organisation. Instead of a linear process, this double articulation or the continual traverse between two heterogeneous elements can be seen also as a *circle*.

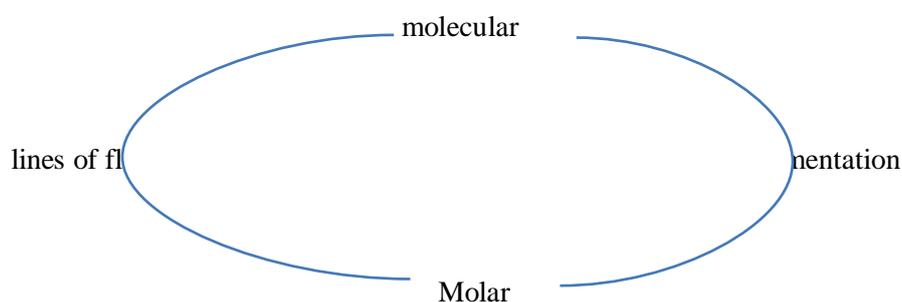


Figure 12: Molar-Lines of flight-molecular-Sedimentation Circle

The virtualisation process entails traversing the primary order, introducing disorganisation or the pure virtual into the assemblage. The secondary surface organisation is the constitution of the virtual

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<sup>40</sup> Which does not involve space or time. The traverse is an event.

abstract machine, the virtual set of conditioning relations. The tertiary arrangement is the actualisation of the abstract machine in concrete practices and discourses: the actual organisation.

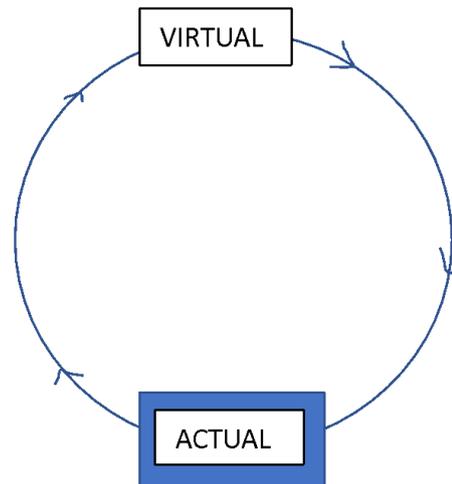


Figure 13: Transformative Actual-Virtual Circle

Deleuze in “Cinema” describes this circuit (or traverse, relay, passage...) as *crystal*. “The actual image and the virtual image coexist and crystallize; they enter into a circuit which brings us constantly back from one to the other” (Deleuze, 2013b, 87).

The virtual is not a recollection from the past experience, imagination, mental image or dreaming (Deleuze, 2013a, 82). It is linked to the actual situation, it is the virtual of the actual, two sides of the same assemblage, both real.

*The actual image itself has a virtual image which corresponds to it like a double or a reflection [...]. There is ‘coalescence’ between the two. [...] A formation with two sides, actual and virtual (Deleuze, 2013b, 71).*

The virtual is not an abstract idea decoupled from the contemplations, observations or encounters of the actual situation. The virtual is the other side of the actual situation. Observing without acting on links the situation not to an abstract idea but to its own virtuality. A virtual organisation emerges from the actual organisation.

It is a double movement—the virtual is liberated from the actual and is again captured in the actual: “double movement of liberation and capture” (Deleuze, 2013b, 72). An actual organisation or concrete assemblage, “links up with a virtual” organisation or abstract machine “and forms a circuit with it” (Deleuze, 2013b, 48). Actual and virtual enter into a relation, forming a circuit where they run after each other. It is a continual passage, relay, traverse of two heterogenous elements: actual and virtual. It is a ‘double capture’ between the actual and virtual or potential organisation.

*Thought and being*

It could be argued that this approach contributes to an extensive debate between materialism and idealism. According to our reading of Deleuze, idealism is the virtual side, the incorporeal thought. Materialism is the actual side of bodies or beings and practices. It can be said that Deleuze integrates both heterogeneous reigns without any one taking over—no idealism, no materialism, but a nomadic traverse or circle between both. Deleuze claims that “thinking and being are said to be one and the same” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, 38) even though they are different in kind. The organisation, drawing on Deleuze, has two sides, thinking and being, or Thought and Nature, or image of thought and substance of being (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, 38).

*Unlimited movements pass continually on two sides, one determinable as Physis inasmuch as it endows Being with a substance, and the other as Nous inasmuch as it gives an image of thought* (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, 44).

In our translation, incorporeal events (or the virtual side) are related to thought; the abstract machine is a thought experiment, and the embodied being is related to the actual.

### *Transformation*

In other words, and reducing the nuanced account of Deleuze to a very simple logic: the present organisation liberates or produces a potential organisation which is actualised in a different organisation with new potentials. When the actual situation changes, the new situation opens new potentials and the actualised potential is a new situation. Organisational transformation is what we see in this circuit of actual-virtual (Deleuze, 2013b, 84-85).

“The crystal reveals a direct time-image” (Deleuze, 2013b, 103). Transformation is not the crystal itself but rather what we see in the crystal. It is important to note that simply making changes in the actual organisation would not constitute real transformation or a direct time-image. These would be superficial changes limited to adding or subtracting difference in degree, or an ‘indirect time image’<sup>41</sup>. They do not reach the virtual<sup>42</sup>. We may intervene with a combination of superficial changes, in other words movements in the actual, and fail to produce transformation. Transformation is not the implementation of a virtual idea, thought or vision, either. We may have, even implement, good ideas but fail to produce transformation if the ideas are not rooted in the actual organisation. It is not a matter of having good ideas, transformation is what we see in the circuit actual-virtual. Real transformation is the complete circuit of actual with *its own* virtual (Deleuze, 2013b, 280).

#### **3.5.4. The Agent, the third element of assemblages**

In his paper “What is an assemblage”, Nail (2017) further develops Deleuze and Guattari's theory of assemblages. He claims that all assemblages “share three features that define their arrangement: their

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<sup>41</sup> I translate indirect time as constructing movement or transformation, adding degrees and direct time-image to the real transformation, movement or qualitative difference in kind

<sup>42</sup> However, as we have seen in Section 3.2., they could eventually reach difference in kind, ‘direct time image’ or transformation if they reach the threshold.

conditions, their elements, and their agents, or what Deleuze and Guattari call their “abstract machine”, their “concrete assemblage”, and their “personae” (Nail, 2017, 25). According to Nail:

*The third feature shared by all assemblages is that they all have agents, what Deleuze and Guattari call “personae.” Personae are not autonomous rational subjects, nor are they simply decentered or fragmented subjects incapable of action. Rather, the personae of an assemblage are the mobile operators that connect the concrete elements together according to their abstract relations* (Nail, 2017, 27).

In my reading, the third element of the assemblage, the personae or agent, connects the other two elements, the concrete assemblage and their abstract machines. In other words, I suggest that the double capture between actual and virtual is performed by the agent. Consequently, the agent becomes key to understanding and producing organisational transformation.

In order to bridge those elements, the agent's first task is to differentiate them, following the direction from least to most differentiated (Deleuze, 2015, 79). Said differently, he, she, or it systematically differentiates the abstract machine from the concrete assemblage. In other words, the agent differentiates or extracts the virtual event or abstract machine from the actual, and in doing so connects them. The agent “draws the relational diagram of the abstract machine and on the other hand it establishes a correspondence between the concrete elements” (Nail, 2017, 27). In other words, the agent *builds* the abstract machine. This, as we have seen, is a thought experiment, the virtual side of the assemblage.

However, the agent not only differentiates the virtual event or abstract machine, but rather, her ethics “consists of willing the event as such, that is, willing that which occurs insofar as it does occur” (Deleuze, 2015, 148). On the one hand, she differentiates and wills the event, but on the other hand, she:

*also wills the embodiment and the actualization of the pure incorporeal event in a state of affairs and in his or her own body and flesh. Identifying with the quasi-cause the sage [or agent] wishes to “give a body” to the incorporeal effect, since the effect inherits the cause* (Deleuze, 2015, 151).

Differentiating and affirming the virtual serves to extract the event or build the abstract machine. Embodying it, giving it a body, actualises the event in the concrete assemblage. The agent differentiates, virtualises or explores the actual organisation, then builds a virtual abstract machine that actualises, giving it a body, embodying it.

I suggest that the third element of an assemblage—the “personae”—is the agent of a practice; differentiation, building an abstract machine and embodying it. Nail (Nail 2017) claims that Deleuze and Guattari develop a theory of assemblages—but I would say that their work (“Thousand Plateaus”, for instance) is also a practice of assemblage. I suggest that the agent of the pragmatics completes the general logic of assemblages, which is both a theory and a practice.

The roles of the agent are explored in more detail in Appendix 1.7. linking them to the three syntheses of time. In sum, the agent, who is part of the assemblage, (1) explores the actual organisation, differentiating differences, (2) connects them, building an abstract machine as a thought experiment, and (3) actualises it, embodying it. In addition, the agent traverses three types of agents: passive, active and purposeless non-actor (see Appendix 1.7). Ultimately, the agent traverses the actual-virtual transformative circle. He, she or it is the ‘realiser’ of the double capture between virtual and actual. These transformative practices of the agent are practices of “pragmatics” or “schizoanalysis” that will be addressed in detail in the following chapter.

## Chapter 4. Pragmatics

### 4.1. Introduction

This is the methodological chapter of the thesis. However, as may have been anticipated, it will not be a conventional account of the methods used throughout the thesis. Instead, it is a conceptual exploration of multiple methods, mixed with practical suggestions and examples of how they have been implemented.

My methods have evolved throughout the research process as I have advanced through Deleuze's work. In each of Deleuze's books,<sup>43</sup> I have found interesting ideas and attractive methods to experiment with. Some ideas proved particularly relevant to me from the beginning of the project, however. Specifically, I wanted to "use" Deleuze, and interview and conduct a survey of Sigma employees with the ultimate goal of making the company more sustainable. As stated earlier, my research is focused on connecting the two heterogeneous worlds of Deleuze's concepts and Sigma, with the hope of facilitating a double capture. In other words, the encounter between Deleuze's concepts and Sigma will hopefully be a mutually beneficial one which positively impacts Sigma and also potentially contributes to Deleuze's studies. As Deleuze and Guattari put it: "with its concepts, philosophy brings forth events" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, 199). Similarly, I aim to create a thesis that brings forth events, hence it should

*be evaluated only as a function of its pragmatic implications, in other words, in relation to the implicit presuppositions, immanent acts, or incorporeal transformations it expresses, and which introduce new configurations of bodies* (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 94).

This research can be considered Deleuzian, both due to its pragmatic orientation, and because it brings together a multiplicity of Deleuzian methods. I have since received further confidence in the applicability of Deleuze's work for meeting the goals of this thesis, in part due to Coleman and Ringrose, who argue that there is a

*need for methodologies capable of attending the social and cultural world as mobile, messy, creative, changing and open-ended, sensory and affective, and that account for the performativity of method; social science methodologies not only describe the worlds they observe but (at least in part) are involved in the invention or creation of the world. [...] Deleuze's work, with its focus on becoming, affect, relationality, creativity and multiplicity, is incredibly suggestive for social science research* (2013, 1-2).

Although Deleuze uses a multiplicity of names or concepts for his methodology: "RHIZOMATICS = SCHIZOANALYSIS = STRATOANALYSIS = PRAGMATICS = MICROPOLITICS" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 23, capitalised in the original), I have opted to mainly use the term pragmatics. But what is pragmatics? Or what does it do? My understanding of pragmatics has been heavily influenced by my

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<sup>43</sup> And "Thousand Plateaus" where we find the most nuanced Deleuze "pragmatics" was the second last one.

reading of Deleuze & Guattari. In Appendix 1.8. the reader can find two complete pages of “Thousand Plateaus” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 168-170), in which the answer to the question *what is pragmatics?* has been comprehensively addressed.

However, I am aware that this quote, large and obscure as it is, might not be a very helpful one for explaining what Deleuzian pragmatics might mean. For a reader, it perhaps even raises more questions than it answers. Do not fret, however: much of this Chapter is dedicated to deciphering Deleuze & Guattari's understanding of pragmatics. Rather than limiting the meaning of pragmatics to as it presented in “Thousand Plateaus” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 168-170), I have explored and experimented with different practices and methods that I see as having some kind of Deleuzian orientation. I wanted to explore what Deleuze does to organisations, both conceptually and practically. I would say that Deleuze is as much interested in methods or practices as he is in concepts; he does what he conceptualises and conceptualises what he does. As stated in section 3.3.3., an abstract machine is expressed in discourses *and* practices. Similarly, in this research Deleuze is expressed in discourses and practices. This research experiments with how Deleuze’s concepts and practices impact organisational theories and Sigma’s practices.

Deleuze and Guattari differentiate between four components of pragmatics: generative, transformative, diagrammatic, and machinic (2013, 168-170). Inspired by their approach in *What is philosophy?*, however, I have opted to group the practices differently. The methods of this research have been summarised in three movements: exploration, reflection/organisation, and crafting, which arguably correspond to Art, Philosophy, and Science in the same book. Deleuze and Guattari’s four components are included and discussed in those three movements:

"Thousand Plateaus" Pragmatic Components	"What is Philosophy?" Movements	My Pragmatic Movements
Generative	Art	Exploration
Transformative		
Diagrammatic	Philosophy	Reflection/ Organisation
Machinic	Science	Crafts

Table 8: Pragmatics components and movements correlation

The table shows the relationships between the components of Deleuze and Guattari’s pragmatics, their “What is Philosophy?” movements, as well as the movements of my research methodology. These

are represented as Exploration, Reflection/Organisation, and Crafts. Let us consider them in more detail in the following sections.

## **4.2. Exploration**

### **4.2.1. Exploring Deleuze's concepts. Reading**

The first movement of the methodology then has been to explore Deleuze and Guattari's work. To explore Deleuze means reading his work both extensively and intensively, detecting the intensities produced by the text. Rather than trying to understand or interpret Deleuze's books, I sensitised myself as a reader to the affects produced by my encounter with the text, underlining the passages that resonated with my thinking. I then collated those passages into a single document, so as to identify connections between the ideas that seemed to evoke a sense of congruence with me and my thoughts. For most of the books I read, I wrote a draft which acted as a synthesis of all the passages that I felt drawn towards. Based on Deleuze's work, I have written up notes on: Francis Bacon, David Hume, Henri Bergson, and "Anti-Oedipus" (all four in the same draft, 36,338 words); Spinoza (5681 words), Foucault (9557 words), Capitalism (after reading the courses on *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, 12,186 words), Kafka and minor literature (4208 words), "Difference and Repetition" (14,024 words), "What is Philosophy?" (17,246 words), "Cinema" (10,890 words), "Logic of Sense" (14,241 words), "The Fold" (6454 words), and "Thousand Plateaus" (18,250 words). In total, I have written over 110,000 words on these subjects. I have also read Deleuze's Nietzsche, Proust, Kant and "Critic and Clinic", but these works have somehow not provoked enough intensity for me to write about them. In addition to having read most of Deleuze's books (excluding "Pericles and Verdi", and "Introduction to Sacher-Masoch"), I have also read courses, texts, interviews and letters.

Through my reading of his work, Deleuze became a multiplicity of intensities and affects, as explored in the previous chapter. These affects, however, cannot be attributed solely to Deleuze, but also to the encounter between his work and the researcher<sup>44</sup>.

### **4.2.2. Exploring Sigma. Differentiating differences**

*Making visible the invisible*

[Exploration] *is not a matter of reproducing or inventing forms, but of capturing forces. For this reason, no [exploration] is [descriptive]. Paul Klee's famous formula- 'Not to render the visible, but to render visible' – means nothing else. The task of [exploration] is defined as the attempt to render visible forces that are not themselves visible* (Deleuze, 2005c, 48).

In the first methodological move, I also explored Sigma—not by describing or interpreting the company, but rather by detecting the invisible forces behind its explicit representations. But how can

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<sup>44</sup> My reading of Deleuze (or Sigma) is not a true picture of reality, it is created based on my interests and (largely unconscious) assumptions.

one go about making these forces visible? “Force is closely related to sensation: for a sensation to exist, a force must be exerted on a body, on a point of the wave” (Deleuze, 2005c, 48). We cannot see what forces “are”, but we can experience what they do. They produce sensations in their interactions with our body; they affect us. When a body encounters a different body, it is simultaneously affecting and affected. These affects capture invisible forces made visible, i.e. they are felt. The goal of exploration is to make visible the invisible forces implicated in sensations and affects.

### *The study of affects*

Therefore, “this first task is inevitably tied to the analysis of social formations, or what Deleuze terms “assemblage” (agencement)” (Smith, 2012, 155). I started the study of Sigma as a social formation, an assemblage or organisation. It is not a study of the organisation itself, but rather the study of the organisation’s affects, which make visible the invisible forces. This is an important distinction drawn by Deleuze in his reading of Hume, whose “project entails the substitution of a psychology of the mind by a psychology of the mind’s affections” (Deleuze, 2001, 21). In this movement of exploration, I am not interested in Sigma’s abstract representation, in what Sigma *is*. Instead, I seek to elucidate how Sigma affects and is affected. Substituting “mind” with “organisation” and “psychology” with “study”:

[Our] *project entails the substitution of a study of the organization by a study of the organization’s affections. The constitution of a study of the organization is not at all possible, since this study cannot find in its object the required constancy or universality; only a study of affections will be capable of constituting the true science of organizations* (Deleuze, 2001, 21).

For example, a tick is limited to three affects: light, to find the extremity of a branch; smell, to fall upon an animal; and touch, to find the area least covered by fur. “A horse [...] is defined by a list of affects depending on the assemblage into which it enters” (Deleuze, 2007, 97). The first method of exploration that Deleuze proposes, based on Hume, is then the study of affects which make visible invisible forces. According to Smith, assemblages, organisations or “modes of existence [...] must be evaluated according to the purely intensive criteria of their power and their capacity to affect and be affected” (2012, 148).

### *Dividing, or the method of division*

“One must go beyond the molar to the molecular” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 290). From molar social formations, large aggregates, meanings or representations one must go to intensities, affects or functional molecules. One goes from exploring what something is and what it means, to what it does, to attending to the ways in which it functions, how it affects and is affected. One goes from social formations to lists of affects, drawing from Anti-Oedipus’ method of Schizoanalysis, from molar to molecular “distribution into maps of intensity” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 289). That is the first positive task of Schizoanalysis, to divide Sigma into functional zones of intensity or “working parts” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 327) independent of any interpretation (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 322), to create a molecular multiplicity out of a molar unity.

*In the first instance one studies large molar aggregates, large social machines [...] in this way, one remains in the framework of representation. In the second instance one goes beyond these large aggregates, [...] toward the molecular elements that form the parts and wheels of desiring machines. [...] One then reaches the regions of a productive, molecular, micrological, or microphysical unconscious that no longer means or represents anything [but which] never exist independently of the historical molar aggregates of the macroscopic social formations that they constitute statistically (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 183).*

This method of exploring the social formation of Sigma and creating a multiplicity of affects, intensities, working functional molecules, or singularities could also be called the method of division:

*The dialectic of difference has its own method - division - but this operates without mediation, without middle term or reason; it acts in the immediate and is inspired by the Ideas rather than by the requirements of a concept in general. It is true that division is a capricious, incoherent procedure which jumps from one singularity to another, by contrast with the supposed identity of a concept (Deleuze, 1995b, 59).*

My task is to create a multiplicity, dividing the actual entity or representation. This division is not made according to pre-given conceptions or transcendental essences. Rather than divide Sigma into functional departments according to an organisational chart, I divide Sigma into zones of intensity, affects, singularities or even events according to my immediate and intimate interaction with it. This, I hope, can provide a clearer picture of Sigma's social functions than could be achieved using pre-given concepts.

*Feelings [out of the exploration] are indeed “blind” because they are made without understanding and even without knowledge as to the actual existence of the object being apprehended. But this does not reduce them to a nullity. Aesthetic [explorative] feeling is immanent and uncategorizable first of all, but cognition could not happen without it (Shaviri, 2014, 156).*

Affects, intensities or singularities do not pre-exist, they are not recognised or known. They are the outcomes of an encounter. In my case, the intensities I have described in the chapters thus far have emerged from my exploration of Sigma.

However, Deleuze makes a more challenging claim by stating that affects, intensities or singularities (also called notions) are not perceived here and now; they escape the universality of the concept but also the particularity of the here and now. They are the conditions of the here and now, and of real experiences (Deleuze, 1995b, 285). For example, in the case of Sigma, “bureaucracy”, “fellowship”, or “commitment” (as we have seen in Chapter 2) are not just experiences, they are the conditions to experiment with bureaucratic situations here and now, to feel committed here and now. Sigma is divided not by empirical experiences but rather by the conditions of experience, by the conditions that make experiences possible.

Therefore, “the representation has to be divided into elements that condition it, into pure presences or tendencies that differ in kind” (Deleuze, 1990, 24). Sigma has to be divided into “tendencies”, “pure presences” or differences in kind which condition experience. Affects, intensities, singularities, tendencies, pure presences... in the end Sigma is divided into elements that differ in kind which are not concepts, experiences, or pre-given categories. “If the composite represents the fact, it must be divided into tendencies or into pure presences that only exist in principle (*en droit*)” (Deleuze, 1990, 23). They are heterogeneous elements existing in principle only and conditioning the real experience. For example, the research project has been divided into theory and practice, which are different in kind, not in degree.

*Method of intuition: Differentiating differences in kind and broadening out experience*

It is the method of “intuition [that] leads us to go beyond the state of the experience towards the conditions of experience”, towards differentiating “differences in kind” (Deleuze, 1990, 27). Deleuze’s method of intuition, based on Bergson, is a method to divide the unity (in my case, Sigma) into differences in kind which are the conditions of experience. But these conditions are neither general nor abstract. They are no broader than the conditioned experience. They are the conditions of real experience. According to Deleuze, Bergson suggests:

*to seek experience at its source, or rather above that decisive turn, where, taking a bias in the direction of our utility, it becomes properly human experience. Above the turn is precisely the point at which we finally discover differences in kind. But there are so many difficulties in trying to reach this focal point that the acts of intuition, which are apparently contradictory, have to be multiplied* (Deleuze, 1990, 27).

The conditions of experience, the differences in kind, are immanent to the experience. The conditions are not broader than the conditioned experience. They are “pure experience”, experiences before they become human experiences, before any turn in the direction of *our utility*. Pure experience, before its metamorphosis into human experience and before it has a utility or purpose, has also been called “broadening out” experience (Deleuze, 1990, 27).

*This broadening out, or even this going-beyond does not consist in going beyond experience toward concepts. For concepts only define, in the Kantian manner, the conditions of all possible experience in general. Here, on the other hand, it is a case of real experience in all its peculiarities. And if we must broaden it, or even go beyond it, this is only in order to find the articulations [conditions, pure experience, tendencies, intensities, singularities, differences in kind...] on which these peculiarities [actual experience] depend. So that the conditions of experience are less determined in concepts than in pure percepts [affects, intensities...] (Deleuze, 1990, 28).*

The method of intuition or broadening out of experiences divides the object of study (in our case Sigma) into differences in kind, which are the conditions of the experience. They are pure experiences, devoid of “we” or “I”, without purpose and without escaping from experience to abstract concepts.

The distinction between pure experience and human experience could be related to the second positive task of schizoanalysis, which is “to reach the investments of unconscious desire of the social field, insofar as they are differentiated from the preconscious investments of interest” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 350). The task is to differentiate desire from interest, desire being a connective machine, a production of encounters, a multiplicity of affects, intensities or pure experiences rather than interested human experience.

Therefore, through multiplying acts of intuition, through broadening out experience, not towards concepts but rather towards pure experience, towards a non-human, purposeless experience, we then discover the conditioning affects or percepts, intensities, singularities, notions, tendencies, or differences in kind by which the representation, social formation or large aggregate is divided. The simplest division is a dualism, which as we know is something that populates all of Deleuze’s work. The tick, as noted earlier, has three differences in kind: light, smell and touch. As we have seen in Chapter 2, Sigma is much more complex, having a multitude of tendencies or differences in kind.

#### **4.2.3. Criticising representations**

The notion of exploration also implies a critique of representation. By dividing the unity into a multiplicity, moving from molar to molecular, from representation to affects or intensities, we are questioning the existing ‘mainstream’ representations. According to Hughes, the critique of representation is part of Deleuze’s program:

*Deleuze says that a critique must be both ‘total’ and ‘positive’. It must be total in the sense ‘nothing can escape it’. It is positive in the sense that while it restricts or undermines one thing, it also reveals or releases another (2009, 2).*

The critique of representation must be total. Representations must be questioned, even destroyed. “Destroy, destroy. The task of schizoanalysis goes by way of destruction” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 311). This is the negative task of Schizoanalysis, the “destruction of molar aggregates, the structures and representations that prevent the machine from functioning” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 338). Totalities claimed missing, abstractions or representations have political consequences—they condition power relations (see Appendix 1.5.). Furthermore, representations are not to be granted; they must be interrogated, criticised, dismantled. Exploration necessarily entails “destroying beliefs and representations” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 314). These points of resistance to representation make power relations visible. The study of an organisation's resistance points enables us to comprehend its power relations (see Deleuze, 2014, 406). Moreover,

*in order for a critique to become a ‘radical critique’, it has to show [...] the genesis of what has been criticized. [...] It shows how that object came to be so convincing that it managed to supplant the new element that critique unveils. (Hughes, 2009, 3).*

*Critique* is not just a negative or deconstructive total critique, opposition or destruction. It is also ‘positive’ in the sense that it makes room for a new representation to come to the fore. Therefore, part

of Deleuze's method is to show the genesis of actual representations, and to critique actual representations—even destroy them—in order to make room for new connections and representations.

#### **4.2.4. Observer participant**

##### *Being an insider participant*

Rather than being a researcher who endeavours to participate in and observe an organisation, I am a manager, a participant who observes. I am first and foremost a reflective manager; my primary identity is as a manager, not as a researcher. I think that it is necessary to be an insider, an observer-participant, interacting, working within Sigma, multiplying encounters, acts of intuition, or pure experiences. Employees of the organisation that object to this study should recognise the researcher as one of them. Any interaction with me should constitute an interaction with a colleague. I am interested in observing how Sigma employees act when they are not being observed. Somehow, Sigma employees should (and I think they do) forget they are interacting with a researcher. They interact with a colleague. In addition to the daily work encounters, I conducted interviews and surveys to gain more 'data'<sup>45</sup> from a different perspective and to try to relate to colleagues in different ways. In those moments, I acted more as a researcher, and the relationship with employees was different than when I acted as the Commercial Director.

##### *Being an outsider observer*

Nevertheless, the main specificity of my explorative method is that it is not about applying pre-given concepts but rather to empty the interaction with Sigma from all utility, purpose or concepts, and to instead just multiply affective encounters. The challenge is to be a manager (who can interact with colleagues as an insider) but to act without purpose, agenda or pre-given concepts. The researcher is an insider, a manager, an observer-participant, but he is also an outsider, a participant-observer without purpose, utility or agenda. This is a very relevant problem (which I do not solve here). On the one hand, "what I express clearly is what relates to my body" (Deleuze, 2006b, 97). The researcher must be an insider, he must multiply encounters, affects or acts of intuition with Sigma. The relations of employees to our body should not be conditioned by being an external researcher or observer; employees should act naturally, as they do with others. I think the researcher should be an insider from the employees' point of view. Conversely, to find pure experiences the researcher must be void of purpose, utility or agenda, and should therefore be an outsider<sup>46</sup>.

##### *Traversing being insider and outsider*

The insider-outsider paradox is an unsolvable quandary, but I would argue that the researcher must traverse both perspectives all the same. The researcher has to be in the centre, connecting both worlds

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<sup>45</sup> Understood not as representations but as intensities.

<sup>46</sup> It could be argued that the researcher finds according to the manager's interest and agenda. The researcher should prove that this thesis is reasonably free of the manager's interest and agenda. However, I suggest that there is not fully outsider researcher. Even if he or she does not work in the organisation he or she studies, she belongs to another assemblage (university or otherwise) and surely has an interest and agenda for the research.

and abiding by the rules of both, without one taking primacy over the other. It is crucial that the researcher be an insider-outsider to both at once, and not an insider to one world and an outsider to the other<sup>47</sup>.

I call this form of participant observation (one without a priori concepts and purpose exploration) *intuition*. I would argue also that Bergson calls it this. In what follows, we are going to explore in more detail this insider-outsider participation-observation. Bergson's intuition considers that objects have:

*an interior and, so to speak, states of mind; I also imply that I am in sympathy with those states, and that I insert myself in them by an effort of imagination. Then, according as the object is moving or stationary, according as it adopts one movement or another, what I experience will vary. And what I experience will depend neither on the point of view I may take up in regard to the object, since I am inside the object itself, nor on the symbols by which I may translate the motion, since I have rejected all translations in order to possess the original. In short, I shall no longer grasp the movement from without, remaining where I am, but from where it is, from within, as it is in itself (Bergson 1946, emphasis added).*

The researcher inserts himself in the movements or affects of Sigma; he is inside the organisation, in sympathy with Sigma's states. The researcher will be able to differentiate states, movements, affects—from the inside. From this position, 'his' pure experiences will vary together with the movements of Sigma. But this insertion of the researcher requires an "effort of imagination" to enter into sympathy with Sigma: "intuition demands a very considerable effort of the mind" (Bennett, 1916, 45). This effort contrasts with the easiness of using concepts, which are the common way of seeing things. The effort of the mind is to remain explorative, to remain open to experiences and new affects rather than jumping to conclusions or to using concepts. The effort aims at remaining without purpose or utility, just observing and multiplying observations. Better said, the intent of the effort of the mind is to multiply pure experiences. This is because intuition is not a single act "but an indefinite series of acts" (Bergson, 1946), not one pure experience but an innumerable multitude of pure experiences. The researcher returns again and again to Sigma, allowing his encounters with it to direct his thoughts. The observer-participant encounters Sigma again and again from within, creating a multiplicity of pure experiences, intensities, affects or singularities.

These pure experiences, as noted earlier, are differences in kind. Bergson recommends being "as dissimilar as possible" (1946) because that way we prevent any one of them from taking over. Ideally, all require the same "attention" (1946) or the same "degree of tension" (1946)<sup>48</sup>. The participant-observer holds the multiplicity of pure experiences, the differences in kind, which is the goal of exploration.

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<sup>47</sup> Of course, this is also a political statement, it is the most convenient to my particular position between Sigma and Lancaster University, I feel insider-outsider to both. Other researchers would claim that another arrangement is better. However, I think I follow Deleuze in this approach.

<sup>48</sup> The reader might have noticed the similarities with the theory and practice approach we took in Chapter 1.

Bergson (1946) differentiates intuition from another mode of knowing: *analysis*. “Analysis involves a concept or system of concepts being ‘imposed upon’ material; the concept(s) fit the material into its system and, therefore, changes material rather than the concepts” (Coleman, 2008, 17). The main difference between intuition and analysis is the relationship they have with concepts and the utility of the experience. Analysis subsumes differences in kind to pre-given concepts and introduces a utility to it:

*To try to fit a concept on an object is simply to ask what we can do with the object, and what it can do for us. To label an object with a certain concept is to mask in precise terms the kind of action or attitude the object should suggest to us (Bergson, 1946).*

I do not recognise analysis to be an explorative method, but that is not to say that I reject it. Analysis, for me, represents a third movement, that of intervention or crafting (or “Science” in Deleuze and Guattari’s ‘What is Philosophy?’), the second movement being the creation of concepts (or “Philosophy”). As is common in Deleuze’s works, significance is placed on the conjunction between intuition and analysis: intuition *and* analysis, exploration *and* creation of concepts, thinking *and* crafting. Intuition and analysis are inseparably associated with one another. As Bennett notes: “The richness and the significance of an intuition are dependent upon the amount of analysis that has preceded it” (1916, 52); “Intuition without analysis is dumb and empty; analysis without intuition is fragmentary and unfinished” (Bennett, 1916, 53). In its explorative movement, this research “must transcend concepts in order to reach intuition. Certainly, concepts are necessary to it” (Bergson, 1946). The participant-observer traverses intuition *and* analysis, two heterogeneous methods that come together to become complete.

#### **4.2.5. Generative Pragmatics**

So far, we have seen a variety of different Deleuzian methods, which we bring together under the label “exploration”. This movement of exploring the concrete assemblage or actual organisation using Deleuze’s methods (making visible the invisible, studying affects, dividing into differences in kind, method of intuition, broadening out experience, differentiating desire from interest, criticising representation, being and traversing both the insider-participant and outsider-observer, and traversing intuition *and* analysis or intensities *and* representations) is related to Deleuze and Guattari’s first component of pragmatics: generative pragmatics (2013, 160).

In Deleuze and Guattari words, generative pragmatics (the first of four components of their pragmatics) is “the study of concrete mixed semiotics; their mixtures and variations” (2013, 170) of the concrete assemblages or actual organisations. Here, to study means to abstract the forms of content and forms of expression. In other words, study allows us to distinguish between mixed discourses, narratives, opinions, points of view, values, power relations, or representations.

I first explored Sigma as an insider, working full time as the Commercial Director and a member of the Board of Directors. This position has enabled me the opportunity to interact with Sigma in a different way, in which I am able to know what is happening within the department I lead and with the Board of Directors. Of course, I do not have access to all meetings within Sigma. Nevertheless, I would argue that I possess a fair overall knowledge of Sigma. Since joining Sigma in June 2013, I have worked in several locations and positions within the company. Some of these encounters with Sigma in regular daily work have been recorded as personal field notes, others are stored as emails and documents that I have written or received. I have also recorded some specific meetings, such as strategic reflection meetings or meetings with the Board of Directors’.

In addition to exploring Sigma as an insider, I have interviewed seven external consultants and customers, and as a researcher, I have interviewed more than 10% of Sigma's employees on two separate occasions. I conducted a series of 24 interviews with employees in the summer of 2016, and 23 more interviews at the beginning of 2018. Around 20 employees were interviewed twice. These interviews were conducted in private, either in employees’ offices or, if an employee worked in an open area, in a closed meeting room. If no meeting room was available, interviews were sometimes conducted in my office. Upon reflection, I now regret carrying out interviews in my office, as this environment may have caused interviewees to view me as the Director rather than the researcher. I should not have mixed my roles of Commercial Director and researcher. The interviews were conducted during working hours with no third person present. I used the same open questions for each interview. In some cases, after completing these questions we would continue chatting, only with more interventions from my side. The length of interviews ranged from 10 minutes (the shortest) to almost 3 hours (the longest) depending on the interviewee’s willingness to discuss topics at length. My questions were:

1. What is Sigma for you? What do you feel interacting with Sigma? How would you describe Sigma qualitatively, what impressions you have working here?
2. What is the main challenge for Sigma right now? What is your main professional challenge right now?
3. Do you think Sigma is in a process of transformation? If yes, what is changing? Are those changes superficial or real transformation?
4. What is not changing in Sigma? could be something positive like kind of essence, character, DNA or values or could be something limiting, something that is resisting, and we cannot change.

I did not put too much thought into what the questions should be. I just wanted to prompt interviewees to talk about what they felt was relevant to their own experiences of Sigma. However, the first question was intended to make interviewees share the affects/feelings that emerged out of their encounter with Sigma. The motivation for asking this question came from the study of affects proposed in “Empiricism and Subjectivity” (Deleuze, 2001). The second question aimed to discern what interviewees viewed as the most significant obstacles for their daily professional lives and for Sigma on the whole, which are the problems Sigma are trying to solve. This question was not asked in order

to find a solution to problems but to understand where energy and attention are invested. I do not remember exactly why or when I decided to use this question. The third question asks about molecular escapes, lines of flight or deterritorialisation. This question aimed at investigating the virtual, what is not yet actualised, to what is becoming. I chose this question after reading “Anti-Oedipus” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009), but at some point, I began to explicitly inquire about whether organisational changes at Sigma were superficial or real transformations after some interviewees had made this distinction of their own accord. The fourth question aims to identify the molar organisation, the power relations, the unchangeable essence. It was inspired by “Anti-Oedipus” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009) and “Foucault” (Deleuze, 2006c).

After reading “The Fold” (Deleuze, 2006b) I added an extra question to the second group of interviews:

5. Do you think something very relevant happened during 2017 or is happening right now? Sort of an event that will have consequences, which will be remembered?

This fifth question has proven useful for identifying events Sigma was involved in, and for evidencing that whilst some of these events are very clear or apparent for some employees, they are not at all seen by others.

The interviews were recorded, and during the interviews I also took notes. After each series of interviews, I gathered similar comments into groups of topics, what I would call zones of intensity. Chapter 2 addressed these five zones of intensity: Sigma as a project, as an ever-changing movement, navel-gazing, directionlessness, and its relation to Alpha. In Chapter 5, drawing on the second group of interviews, we will see another differentiation between forms of content and forms of expression.

As well as carrying out interviews, I also conducted cultural assessment surveys following Richard Barrett’s methodology. As seen in Chapter 2, these surveys were conducted once per year over a four year period. The surveys were carried out by myself on three occasions (2014,2015, 2017), with Gamma, an external consultant, carrying out another (2016). The survey contains three questions:

1. With which 10 values do you identify yourself? Select 10 from the list.
2. With which 10 values do you identify Sigma? Which values represent Sigma? select 10 from the list.
3. Which values should represent your ideal organisation? Which values represent the desired Sigma?

For each of these questions, participants were asked to choose ten values out of a list of 100. This survey has thus been very useful for identifying intensities, singularities or differences in kind. We have seen the results of the first two questions in Chapter 2: bureaucracy, hierarchy, commitment, silos, team working, and work-life balance.

Additionally, I have used Lencioni’s group diagnostic tool and Belbin’s methodology for this exploratory phase, the results of which were discussed in Chapter 2. As noted in Chapter 2, these

methodological instruments were not used to capture an accurate representation of Sigma. Instead, I used them to explore Sigma affectively, to make its intensities visible.

#### 4.2.6. Transformational Pragmatics

Deleuze and Guattari describe the first component of their pragmatics as generative. I would argue, however, that their second component, ‘transformational pragmatics’, could also be included in my first movement (explorative methods). If the first component is about differentiating differences, for example, practices and discourses or values of Sigma, the second component consists of mapping the movement, of escaping those practices and discourses or that culture. The second movement serves to sketch out the lines of flight, mapping the potential for change. A deep analysis of the values selected in the surveys illuminates minor values that could become majoritarian. We could also identify new words heard in the interviews which have not yet been developed into discourses but might be sites for potential transformation from which a new discourse can be built. For example, "M&A", "JV", "strategic alliance", "stakeholder" and "people development" were heard in the interviews in 2016, but were not considered to have constituted an articulated narrative. This mapping of the potential transformations—the second component of Deleuze and Guattari’s pragmatics—is called transformational pragmatics, and will be practised in Chapter 5.

"Thousand Plateaus" Pragmatic Components	"What is Philosophy?" Movements	My Pragmatic Movements	Thesis Chapters
Generative	Art	Exploration	Chapter 2 Sigma
Transformative			Chapter 3 Deleuze
Diagramatic	Philosophy	Reflection or Organisation	Chapter 5
Machinic	Science	Crafts	Chapter 6

Table 9: Pragmatics components and chapters correlation

Exploration—the first movement of my research or pragmatics—is to lodge oneself as a researcher in the concrete assemblage or organisation. The researcher seeks a meticulous relationship with it, so as to become an insider-outsider participant-observer. He studies the organisation from inside, making distinctions, differentiating differences, and also from outside, being careful not to be influenced by personal agendas and interests. I hope the reader can recognise Chapter 2 as the outcome of this

explorative movement of Sigma. Similarly, Chapters 3 and 4 are the outcome of the exploration of Deleuze's work.

However, the research is not just explorative. It is not an endless, purposeless, pure experience born out of multiple encounters with Sigma. The research methods are not limited to an exploration and a map of the lines of flight. Those differences in kind come together to produce an idea, a new potential concept of Sigma.

### 4.3. Thinking Sigma

In this second movement of thinking or reflection, those differences in kind, tendencies, affects or intensities are held together to reach a conceptualisation of Sigma. The second movement, "Philosophy", creates concepts, concepts that bring forth events, concepts which

*extract an event from things and beings, to set up the new event from things and beings, always to give them a new event: space, time, matter, thought, the possible as events (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, 33).*

The concept "is not formed but posits itself in itself—it is self-positing" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, 11). It is not created as an abstraction, it is self-positing. The concept is a self-organisation, enjoying "an autopoietic characteristic by which it is recognized" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, 11). Said differently, in this second movement, a concept of Sigma is created but this concept is not posited as an abstraction: rather, it posits itself. The immaterial, incorporeal concept of Sigma is extracted from things and beings, from corporeal encounters with Sigma.

There is an "intuition [that] consists in seeing how predicates belong together." (Bennett, 1916, 52), in other words, in how those affects or intensities are united in a concept. As Deleuze notes, this concept is one that is "modeled on the thing itself, which only suits that thing, and which, in this sense, is no broader than what it must account for" (Deleuze, 1990, 28). It is a conceptualisation of Sigma modelled on Sigma itself, the coming together of affects or pure experiences out of the multiple encounters with Sigma.

The social formation, (or simply Sigma) is divided into tendencies, into differences in kind, but those come together again:

*The tendencies that differ in kind link together again to give rise to the thing as we know it. [...] After we have followed the lines of divergence beyond the turn, these lines must intersect again, not at the point from which we started, but rather at the virtual point, at a virtual image of the point of departure, which is itself located beyond the turn in experience (Deleuze, 1990, 28).*

This intersection of tendencies is real but not actual, it is not experienced, is not given. It is virtual:

*The real is not only that which is cut out (se decoupe) according to natural articulations or differences in kind; it is also that which intersects again (se recoupe) along paths converging toward the same ideal or virtual point (Deleuze, 1990, 29).*

This virtual concept, or abstract machine of Sigma is not reached simply by observation but rather by “conjecture, inference and faith” (Van Maanen, 2011, 3). The concept or abstract machine is created, it is an invention. In “Thousand Plateaus”, Deleuze and Guattari call this method “diagrammatic pragmatics” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 169). This is their third component (out of four) after generative and transformational pragmatics. It consists of taking the molar social formation and extracting from it the molecular line of flights, intensities or tendencies that are no longer formalised or organised. From them, an abstract machine is built, a virtual concept of Sigma. This is the process of inventing a new abstract machine, a new virtual concept of Sigma associating lines of flight. The abstract machine is defined by its components, the intensive features of encounters (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, 33-34), but is not ‘in the world’ as exploration is. It is at once inside and outside the world. The concept or abstract machine of Sigma is extracted from encounters with the actual Sigma, but it is a new event outside the world. The concept or abstract machine of Sigma does not refer to the lived experience—it is extracted from it. It is new, invented, created, built by conjecture or inference. Said differently, *the abstract machine is a thought experiment*.

This is an *immanent* thought experiment. According to Holland, instead of thinking about the world, trying to interpret it or use it as a reference, we should think *with* the world, “in both [the] sense of using the world as a tool to think with, and in the sense of thinking along with the world the way it itself thinks” (Holland, 2013, 37). Thought is an attribute of the world, not just of thinking subjects. We do not think; we are thought. Thought emerges, the world itself thinks. In that regard, it is the third element of the assemblage, the agent, through whom this thought is expressed.

In other words, the agent builds the abstract machine. This is not a detached abstract invention. Abstract machines are extracted, the virtual is extracted from the actual. The agent does not create an event from nothing; her “soul can attain to the interiority of perfect physical causes” (Deleuze, 2015, 175), she intuits the event and she “operates” and wills only what comes (Deleuze, 2015, 151). The agent becomes completely immanent to the situation or to the assemblage. He is not a subject who thinks—thought emerges as part of the world, out of encounters. The world thinks, concrete assemblages are analysed and abstract machines are built. The virtual abstract machine is a thought experiment emerged from the actual world.

As a result, the methodology of this research is not limited to an exploration involving the identification of intensities, affects, or lines of flight. It is also a thought experiment conceptualising Sigma, in other words, building a new abstract machine (or set of potential relations that condition the organisation) that is already within Sigma but still in virtual or potential form, yet to come to the actual or empirical world. The diagrammatic pragmatic is about imagining what Sigma's practices and discourses could be. This is not done through good practices, advice, or a suggested course of action as provided by an external consultant. The diagrammatic pragmatic is an abstract map of potential practices and discourses which are imagined based on the lines of flight or tendencies identified through exploration. This reflective method is abstract, virtual, focused on potential rather than actual practices and discourses. It might best be seen as thoughts and ideas that *could* be done and said, but have not yet

been done or said, or even proposed as advisable options. In other words, this movement of the research is about envisaging Sigma's becoming. What is Sigma, potentially? What could Sigma's practices and discourses be if the abstract machine is effectuated? The next step then is to invent an abstract machine of Sigma, a task that I, as the agent, will undertake in Chapter 5.

Before this, it is vital to introduce the third movement of this methodology: implementation or crafting. If we were to stop here at the two movements covered so far, the risk is that the potential Sigma would remain as just that: a potential, an idea, at best a discourse but one that has not been turned into practices, into actual relations. The abstract machine could simply remain a set of unimplemented pieces of advice and ideas. Without connecting the abstract machine to the concrete assemblage, without connecting the potential to the actual Sigma, the abstract machine would at best only serve as a very good abstract research, but would ultimately fail to impact on the concrete assemblage. In short, Sigma would remain untransformed. This is why the third movement is necessary.

#### **4.4. Crafting Sigma**

The first movement—exploration (section 4.2)—differentiates differences in kind. The second movement—thought (section 4.3)—invents, builds, or creates a virtual or potential Sigma, combining those differences extracted by the explorative encounters. The coming together of lines of flights constitutes a concept or abstract machine of Sigma. But the goal of the research is not to devise an interesting concept of Sigma or a theory of organisational transformation. First and foremost, I am aiming to contribute to Sigma's transformation. Therefore, in this third movement, I intervene, experimenting with the movement from a virtual concept of Sigma to the actual or concrete Sigma. While the first movement (exploration) included the generative and transformative pragmatics and the second movement (thought) included the diagrammatic pragmatics, this third movement (crafting) includes what Deleuze and Guattari call machinic pragmatics, the fourth and final component: “Finally, the last, properly machinic, component [of pragmatics] is meant to show how abstract machines are effectuated in concrete assemblages [Sigma]” (2013, 169).

In simple terms, the three movements of my research (or four components of Deleuze and Guattari's pragmatics) serve to extract intensities, identify transformative intensities, combine them in a virtual concept of Sigma, and finally show how this virtual concept is effectuated or actualised in Sigma. It is the circle actual-virtual-actual (see section 3.5.3).

To go from actual to virtual there is an extraction of intensities, singular pure experiences or differences in kind out of corporeal encounters. But how exactly do we go from virtual to actual? How is an intensive virtual concept actualised? Crafts “[are] inseparable from the construction, nature, dimensions, and *proliferation of axes*” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, 123, emphasis added). In this third movement, the concept or virtual abstract machine is divided again, this time into axes; a multiplicity of independent axes is created. For example, Burrell (2013) differentiates three axes: relationship with time, the valued knowledge, and relation with nature. Laloux (2014) proposes 4 axes: organisational

structure, organisational processes, human resources, and daily life (each axis is further divided into several sub-axes). Those axes must not be confused with zones of intensities. The virtual concept is divided into extensive axes rather than intensive tendencies.

Craftsmen or “science relinquish the infinite, infinite speed, in order to gain a reference able to actualize the virtual” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, 118). Each axis is a reference with its limits or possible values. For example, one axis could be the length and a ruler would be the reference, with its limits and values in centimetres. The intensive feeling of distance is expressed in explicit values. The continually varying differences in kind become possible values. The infinite speed of thought slows down to limits to which all movements are subject. All intensive features are now variables determined as abscissa and referred to the limit. The intensive variation takes a position in an abscissa, a value. “Intensity is canceled by extension” (Deleuze, 1995b, 233). In other words, the intensity is compared, referred to a value of the axis, to a limit. For example, a nurse might ask a patient “how much pain do you feel, on a scale of one to ten?”, or, upon passing through passport control at some airports, passengers might give feedback on the service they received using a four emoji voting system. Similarly, let us suppose you were asked where you would place yourself on an anger scale, choosing between *calm*, *okay*, *annoyed*, *angry* or *furious*. As can be seen here, the fluctuations of an emotion can be given values on a scale. Thus, the intensity of the emotion is reduced to a value in an extensive axis.

Burrell’s axis of ‘relationship with time’ goes from the limit Sedimentism (traditional, conservative) to the other extreme of the axis; Rupturism (open to change). Similarly, his axis of ‘valued knowledge’ goes from Sensibility to Rationality. In Laloux, (based on the work of Ken Wilber) intensity takes on a colour value, such as: Red-impulsive, Amber-conformist, Orange-achievement, Green-pluralistic or Teal-integral. ‘Hierarchy’, for example, is identified as Orange, whilst self-organising teams is categorised as Teal. In Barrett (2013), the ‘bureaucracy’ zone of intensity is compared and identified as level 3 on a 7-level scale. The intensive ordinates are matched up with the extensive values of the abscissa. In the end, to actualise the virtual concept of Sigma (its abstract machine) references on axes have to be produced. In other words, the variable intensity is related to an extensive limit. “It is not the limited thing that sets a limit to the infinite but the limit that makes possible a limited thing” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, 120). It is the limit that makes the actualisation of the virtual possible.

All of these limits and borders constitute the plane of reference (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, 119), (in contrast to the plane of immanence of the concept). These limits or borders give the plane its references, the references which are able to actualise the virtual. The task of the craftsman is to proliferate axes and limits because that is how intensive infinite speed of thought is slowed down and made observable, measurable and comparable; it is made actual. The abstract machine is connected to the concrete assemblage, proliferating axes and limits, referring pure variation to variables, differences in kind to values in the axis, intensities to extensities: virtual to actual. Each intensive feature is identified with a value or label (bureaucracy, hierarchy, positive attitude, commitment, customer satisfaction) and then each value is placed on one of seven levels. This is a means to make the inner intangible world visible, to measure and explain culture. The craftsman or agent (as explored in section 3.5.4.), makes this move

from an intensive, intangible, invisible abstract machine, from a potential Sigma invented as a thought experiment in the second movement, towards an actual, tangible, measurable Sigma. However,

*It is nevertheless intensity that decides where these extensities will be, where the limit will be drawn (or, more simply, just is this extensity and limit, insofar as space itself does not exist before it) (Butler, 2015, 121).*

The notion that intensity decides the extensities is an important deviation from Gibson's and Laloux's approach, who instead posit that the axes and their limits are ready-made, predating the intensities. The craftsman or agent has to proliferate the axes and limits, they have to be created. It is not a matter of connecting intensities to pre-given axes and then comparing them with already existing limits. It is the intensities that decide the extensities, the axes and limits.

Creating and proliferating axes and limits, intensity is cancelled:

*First as single points extended along a line [or axis] and then as coming together of these points in an individual body. But the crucial aspect of this individuation, [...], is that the final body or monad produced is nothing more than the 'sum' of the predicates that make it up (Butler, 2015, 128).*

Intensity is cancelled as values of variables in relation to a limit in an extensive abscissa and then those independent variables enter in relation and create an individual body putting qualities together (Butler, 2015,129). A final Sigma is constituted which is nothing more than the coming together of its predicates (its qualities and extensions), or, in other words, the coming together of the values in the created axes. For example, according to Burrell, an organisation is defined by a point in a cube, three values, one in each axis, coming together at one point.

*However, we must emphasize the absolute condition of non-resemblance [between the Idea, and its actualisation]: the species or the quality do not resemble the differential relations that it incarnates, no more so than singularities resemble the organized extension which actualizes them (Deleuze, 2008, 127) (translation by Butler (2015,126)).*

There is no resemblance between the concept of Sigma and the actual Sigma. Their relationship cannot be conceived as cause and effect, it is not an accurate implementation. There is a translation of the intensity to the extension. It is a process of giving extensive form to the intensive idea, it depends on materials, decisions, execution... it is a matter of craft. It involves creation rather than mere duplication.

The craftsman does not just copy a concept, he creates an event, he incarnates or embodies the event. Relating virtual intensities to actual extensities shows that the potential Sigma is already effectuated or actualised in Sigma. The craftsman creates an event in the extensive material world which is the actualisation, in both practice and discourse, of the virtual Sigma. The event is the actualisation of the concept, abstract machine or potential Sigma. The craftsman or agent creates an event, being able to interact in a new way within Sigma as a result of the actualisation of the new abstract machine or

conditioning relations. For example, the researcher as the agent or craftsman might be able to show that a group works in a self-organised rather than hierarchical manner. Self-organisation is the potential and hierarchy is the actual way of relating, that is until an event of self-organisation is created, showed, measured. To use another example specific to Sigma's organisational structure, currently, there is very little trust between members of the Board of Directors. To resolve this, the craftsman shall create an event whereby the lack of trust is shown to be a practice and discourse of the actual organisation. At the same time, a new, trustful relationship is built, i.e. a new, virtual, potential relation is put into effect. Chapter 6 will address this third movement of the methodology. In other words, how I, as the agent, have intervened in Sigma, creating axes, limits, and embodying events that actualise the potential Sigma. As noted earlier, this potential Sigma is presented in Chapter 5 as the outcome of the second movement of the pragmatics, the thought experiment.

#### 4.5. Conclusion

I have started with the concrete assemblage or actual organisation. I studied its discourses and practices: the molar side of the assemblage. Then I made distinctions, differentiating the organisation's affects and intensities. By dividing the molar organisation a multiplicity of heterogeneous elements has been created. What was a compact entity, a unity, became a multiplicity with loose relations, with molecular lines of flight or potential changes. From there, I have built a diagram or an abstract machine to connect those lines of flight. Using the actual organisation, I constructed a virtual, potential set of relations between those freed lines of flight, conceived as a thought experiment. That is the aim of the pragmatics, to build—like a rhizome escaping from a tree—an abstract machine, a new set of relations independent of the molar organism. Ultimately, I will show how this abstract machine is effectuated in the concrete assemblage. I will make the final connection between the concrete assemblage and the abstract machine that I have built. It is the circle, studying the concrete assemblage by identifying lines of flights, which are then connected in order to build a new diagram. Hence, we show how this diagram is effectuated in the concrete assemblage, how the potential has become actual. In short, I create an event within the actual organisation: an event which is the actualisation of the virtual or potential organisation<sup>49</sup>.

We could consider a linear process from exploration to thought, to crafts. We could also consider it the virtual-actual movement of section 3.5.3:

*The [virtual] event is actualized or effectuated whenever it is inserted, willy-nilly, into an [actual] state of affairs; but it is counter-effectuated whenever it is abstracted [virtualized] from states of affairs so as to isolate its concept (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, 159, original emphasis).*

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<sup>49</sup> As worded in section 3.5.4., we have the actual concrete assemblage, the virtual assemblage or its abstract machine and the agent connecting both.

However, instead of a linear process, the research is the coming together of exploration, thought, and crafts. This is because “*the brain is the junction—not the unity—of the three planes*” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, 38). The three planes are: the plane of composition of exploration (art), the plane of immanence of thought (philosophy), and the plane of reference of craft (science). Each of these planes co-exist and relate to each other. Moreover, I would say that the differentiation between them is an abstraction, existing only in thought. In reality, an interview, for example, is at the same time an exploration, thought, and intervention. Even if I have presented it first as an exploration, then thought up a new abstract machine, and finally crafted the actualisation of the potential organisation, in reality, the three movements are orchestrated without a specific order, even simultaneously.

We must experiment with making connections, or with traversing the different domains.

*But you don't know what you can make a rhizome with, you don't know which subterranean stem is effectively going to make a rhizome, or enter a becoming, people your desert. So, experiment* (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 293).

Pragmatics, then (and this research), is a long experimentation since we do not know in advance which affects, desires or lines of flight can connect, which potential relations will be effectuated, which lines of flight can conjugate, or which methods will work. Pragmatics is an experimental invention of a new assemblage whereby we do not know in advance which heterogeneous elements will connect, compose, or hold together.

The researcher explores, thinks, and crafts. The researcher does not do only one of these things or a combination of two, as to properly account for organisational transformation, all three heterogeneous practices must be traversed. I have explored Sigma according to section 4.2. of pragmatics (the outcome of which has been commented on in Chapter 2). The second movement of thought (section 4.3.) will make up the content of Chapter 5, where I will be building a new abstract machine. Finally, in Chapter 6 I will give an account of the interventions or crafting (section 4.4.) I have so far performed in Sigma.

We have also traversed exploration, reflection, and crafts with Deleuze and the research. The exploration of Deleuze's books gives a multiplicity of intensities or affects, the second movement connects them, organises them, synthesises them, and the third movement represents “a” Deleuze, which is *just* “a” Deleuze, i.e. the representation of the coming together of the intensities created in the encounter between Deleuze and the researcher (Chapter 3). Similarly, as the researcher, I have explored Sigma, Deleuze, and writing drafts. The second movement provided an idea of the research, of the potential thesis. The third movement is then the crafting of this document, the actualisation in writing of the potential thesis, the representation of the research. The challenge is how to represent Sigma, Deleuze, or the research without cancelling their intensities, without reducing multiplicities to a unified closed representation. Ultimately, the challenge is to craft an open document that allows the reader to explore, reflect and discern a representation of Deleuze, Sigma, and the research itself.

The chapter has addressed the pragmatics of the research. Instead of being a defined plan from the outset, the pragmatics emerged out of the encounter with Deleuze's work. It has been evolving

throughout the research. In that regard, the methodology can be considered the outcome of a double capture between Deleuze and I. It could be argued that a different interpretation of Deleuze's work emerged, but more importantly, a different methodology emerged from the encounter, both conceptually and practically. It could be summarised as a three-movement methodology that entails three different types of agent (or practice) in order to foster organisational transformation: explorative, reflective and craftsman.

This chapter ends the first movement, exploration. As a long preparation for the double capture between Deleuze and Sigma, I explored them independently. From my encounter with Sigma (Chapter 2), a different image of the organisation has emerged. The need for change is not limited to growth and selling outside the Alpha Group. There is also a need for changing the culture, leadership style, processes and relations. From my encounter with Deleuze's work (Chapter 3 and 4) an ontology of organisations and (eventually) a transformational methodology emerged. Living Sigma and Deleuze's work independently, I traverse them. As the realiser of the double capture (see Chapter 1), I connect them. The following chapters 5 and 6 show the outcome of the encounter between Sigma and Deleuze's work. The former presents the reflective movement or the outcome as thoughts and the latter the actual (instead of virtual) changes at Sigma.

#### *Final comments*

For the reader who began this chapter expecting a concrete recipe of how to do as I have done, this methodological chapter might be something of a disappointment. Rather than explaining in detail what I have done, I hope the reader is instead able to discern it themselves. A very brief summary of my method would essentially be to observe, think and act. The aim should not be to 'do as I do' but rather to 'do with me', which is what I have done with Deleuze. The complete thesis is the outcome of the research method, and at the same time, is its conceptualisation. The same approach is proposed to the reader: engage with the text, get inside it and interact with it, observe the intensities that it creates and think about it, connect the conceptual understanding of the method (Chapter 4) with the outcome of each movement. The connection of all chapters will eventually posit an understanding of the research. The third movement for the reader would be to actually assess the text and actualise his or her idea of it in a concrete assessment comparing it to other PhD theses. Better said, the reader shall assess the text as a difference in kind standing by its own. Instead of cancelling the singularity of the thesis subsuming it to pre-given rules or 'standards', it is the intensity emerged out of the encounter with the text itself that should be assessed<sup>50</sup>. I think that what it is to assess is the research project's internal consistency.

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<sup>50</sup> Intensity itself creates the referents, rules or standards. Comparing the thesis to external referents would entail to find differences between theses instead of thinking difference in itself. (see section 3.2.)

## Chapter 5. Thinking a potential Sigma

### 5.1. Introduction

As noted in Chapter 1, a double capture entails a long preparation. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 showed that preparation. Chapter 2 explored the actual Sigma. I performed the first movement of the pragmatics by interviewing employees (complemented with Barrett's, Belbin's, and Lencioni's methodologies). We found a number of intensities such as bureaucracy, hierarchy, and rumours, as well as poor and centralised decision making. This surfaced in interviews through the themes of silos, short-term or lacking vision and strategy, directionlessness, and navel-gazing. We have also identified a set of traits shared amongst the Board of Directors that serve to hinder the organisation. These traits include: conflict avoidance, lack of trust, lack of result orientation, lack of accountability, lack of an impulse for creativity, and a need for control. However, Sigma is also characterised by its employees' readiness for team-work, a high degree of commitment, and a sense of fellowship. Sigma as an organisation also encourages a healthy work-life balance. These positive attributes were discussed by employees through the themes of understanding Sigma to be a project or challenge, and its tendency to continuously change and develop. These intensities emerged from my encounter with the actual Sigma.

Chapters 3 and 4 explored Deleuze's work. The former focused on concepts, and the latter on methods. In addition to the concept of double capture that was introduced in Chapter 1, Chapter 3 extracted a multiplicity of concepts. This multiplicity includes, but is not limited to, the concepts of: difference in kind, organisation as assemblage, molar-molecular, abstract machine, plane of consistency, virtual-actual, the agent as the third component of the assemblage, desire, 'puissance', the three syntheses, axiomatic, nomadic traverse, primary order, secondary surface organisation, tertiary arrangement, the absolute outside, resisting points, three syntheses of time, circle, crystal, and lines of flight. All concepts gravitate around the concept of assemblage (which I read as organisation) and its transformation.

Chapter 4 extracted a multiplicity of Deleuzian methods: making visible the invisible, studying affects, dividing in differences in kind, creating multiplicities, the method of intuition, broadening out experience, differentiating desire from interest, criticising representations, being and traversing both the insider participant and outsider observer, traversing intuition and analysis (or intensities and representations), thinking a potential organisation, proliferating axes, and crafting. These methods have been grouped into three movements: exploration, reflection and crafting.

We first traversed theories in Chapter 3 and then practices in Chapter 4. But both of these traversals have been carried out theoretically. I have re-presented Deleuze's concepts and practices. However, Chapters 2, 3, and 4 also performed the first movement of the pragmatics: exploration. The methods of exploration have been represented and practised as a preparation for the double capture between Deleuze's work and Sigma.

As a result, having lived the two heterogeneous elements of the encounter independently (Sigma and Deleuze's work), we performed their traversal. We have connected them. They came together, each affirming their difference and no one taking precedence over the other. Out of this encounter, something new is created; a new concept of Sigma emerges. It is important to note the difference between a multiplicity of intensities (Chapter 2) and a concept. A multiplicity of intensities is an exploration, whilst a concept is a thought experiment. In that regard, drawing on the concept of 'abstract machine', this Chapter performs the second movement of the Deleuzian methodology as discussed in Chapter 4; the thought experiment.

This chapter represents the initial outcome of the double capture encounter between Deleuze's work and Sigma. For the moment, what emerges out of the encounter is thought; a new concept or abstract machine of Sigma. In other words, in this Chapter, Sigma is represented differently. Therefore, this chapter extracts different virtual abstract machines from the actual organisation in order to build a new one. It is a thought experiment that emerges out of the encounter between Deleuze's work and Sigma.

Instead of exploring Sigma as a participant insider, this chapter is a thought experiment that for the most part necessitates the outsider observer. Of course, I do observe Sigma, but I would suggest that throughout this chapter I mainly act in the capacity of a researcher. In principle, the Commercial Director has no interest in, or agenda for, the different abstract machines. However, virtual abstract machines are potentially actualised in concrete assemblages and would, therefore, be instrumental to the practices and discourses of Sigma. As the Commercial Director, I am interested in this potential Sigma that the researcher extracts.

Consequently, as the researcher, I will follow Deleuze and Guattari's methodology by differentiating virtual abstract machines from their practices and discourses. They recognise abstract machines as machinic processes, which, as we know, are effectuated in concrete assemblages or social formations:

*We define social formations by machinic processes and not by modes of production (these on the contrary depend on the processes). Thus primitive societies are defined by mechanisms of prevention-anticipation, State societies are defined by apparatuses of capture; urban societies, by instruments of polarization; nomadic societies, by war machines; and finally international, or rather ecumenical, organizations are defined by the encompassment of heterogeneous social formations (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 506).*

Deleuze and Guattari differentiate distinct social formations (concrete assemblages) and machinic processes (abstract machines):

1. *Primitive societies or territorial communities*, which are defined by abstract machines of anticipation and prevention of 'thresholds' which would make the assemblage change in nature (see section 3.2.).
2. *Despotic State societies or archaic imperium*. These are defined by the abstract machines of over-coding and apparatuses of capture.

3. Urban societies or evolved out of imperiums or networks of cities. These are defined by instruments of polarisation.
4. *Capitalist states, either totalitarian or social democrat*, which are modes of realisation of an axiom or conjunction between free capital and labour (see section 3.4.2.).
5. *Nomadic societies* which are defined by the “war machine”.

I doubt whether the international or ecumenical social formation can be conceived of as a distinct form or as a realisation of the capitalist axiomatic, but this is not relevant for our present discussion.

I am not going to detail each concrete assemblage and abstract machine in Deleuze and Guattari's pragmatics. Instead, I will focus on building my own abstract machines or concepts of Sigma. Nevertheless, my distinctions significantly resemble Deleuze and Guattari's insofar as I took their concrete analysis of society, found lines of flight, and then invented new, slightly different abstract machines to understand Sigma (rather than society as a whole). In doing so, I invented a variation of Deleuze and Guattari's abstract machines, hopefully reaching the required consistency.

I would suggest that there are different coexisting abstract machines in Sigma. Although some of these are more fully actualised, all are present in Sigma's practices and discourses. I aim to extract (or build) abstract machines from these actual practices and discourses. Hence, the abstract machines that I propose are not detached abstract inventions, but rather thought experiments rooted in actual encounters with the company<sup>51</sup>.

## 5.2. The Technological Centre

Although Deleuze claims that abstract machines coexist from the beginning with no evolution between them, I identify the ‘*Technological Centre*’ (or research centre) as the first abstract machine working in Sigma. The abstract machine of the *technological centre* is an engineering group focused on technical innovation through designing and developing new products. Its members are proud to compete with big technological companies like GE or Mitsubishi, but successfully competing here is not something measured in revenue, profit, or size, but rather in cutting-edge technology and products designed in-house. Members within the abstract machine of the *technological centre* are not concerned with the likes of cost, price or revenue; they focus on volts and amps. They contribute proudly to Sigma through innovation and the development of challenging technological products. This machine is not directly connected to markets and business principles.

The abstract machine of the *technological centre* is most central to Alpower's identity in its first years when almost all employees were developers. This company, which became the core of Sigma, had a strong sense of community and communicated well as a team. With the clear objective of developing new prototypes and creating products, Alpower had no apparent management problems. At the time, there was no separate Board of Directors. Management coincided with technical leadership.

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<sup>51</sup> I will use the bracketed capital letter to refer to an interviewee.

Even though it is less central, this technological machine is still apparent in Sigma today. Many staff members still feel that technology is central to the company as a whole. Sigma is still largely considered by employees to be an engineering company, one in which everything is done from an engineering mindset. Sigma is seen by some employees as an isolated team of fellows, always talking about products. There is a widespread belief among staff that an exclusive focus on product development can resolve the company's lack of competitiveness. Whilst this approach might hold some truth, it ultimately has the effect of marginalising approaches to marketing, incentivising the formation of strategic alliances, or changes in the management culture. As such, Sigma's approach has been to focus its investment solely on product development (see Appendix 2.2.), which entails preoccupation with its internal processes rather than engagement with new markets or with its competitors. Moreover, this machine seeks to detach product development from marketing and project management. Granting autonomy for the dedicated product development team is highly appreciated by this machine.

Indicative of the *technological centre's* influence is that professional recognition and promotions are largely motivated by engineering expertise. As one employee notes "If you reinvent the wheel you will be promoted to manage; the technical approach always prevails" (2018.01.04 Interview with O.C.). Sigma leaders predominantly have engineering backgrounds. Expertise in marketing, human resources, administration, or finance is always open to questioning. Technical expertise, on the other hand, often translates into increased managerial authority. As such, engineers in management roles tend to wield more authority.

The *technological centre* holds certain codes, centred around product quality and cutting-edge technologies. The discourse of this abstract machine is focused on platforms, quality, functionalities, technical expertise, modularisation, and software. Indeed, even members of the Board of Directors are preoccupied with semiconductors, motors, locomotive power or batteries.

The approach of the *technological centre* abstract machine is to design a product and then move on to designing the next one. Similar to Deleuze's primitive itinerants, this machine keeps the same codes (or principles like 'quality') from one design to the next, moves from one territory to the next. The development team is exclusively focused on designing prototypes, so much so that in some cases they even neglect to address lateral features of products like documentation, diagnostic tools, warranty costs, or usability. They are protected from interference by customers or other departments within the company that are more involved in project management.

The *technological* machine fights against other abstract machines. A good example of this is the company's annual budgeting process. Sigma's limited investment has to be split between numerous initiatives that address product development, operational efficiency, marketing, investment in foreign offices e.g. in India or investing in joint ventures like in China. As a rule, most of the budget goes to product development (see Appendix 2.2.). In the selection process, technological initiatives are prioritised over more customer-oriented initiatives. The primary focus of the *technological* abstract machine is not on product development for markets, but rather on technological development for its

own sake, implementing developers' interesting ideas. For example, the aim of the modularisation program (see Appendix 2.2.), which is led by people from the technical department, is unclear. Some within the company see it as a means to improve the company's competitiveness. They are concerned, however, that the program could become the end in itself exclusively oriented to product development. I think there is a risk of the company becoming too introverted, where the development of the modular product architecture could fail to engage with the customers' and the markets' perceived needs.

The codes of the *technological centre* abstract machine prevent over-coding. In other words, codes are prevented from being subordinated to other ends. The machine of the *technological centre* withholds its contribution or service to the overall goals of the company, such as increasing revenue flow, profit, or customer satisfaction. This abstract machine of the *technological centre* tries to prevent the company from focusing on marketing or financial results. Instead, the *technological centre* aims to orient the company towards product development.

The discourses and practices of this abstract machine are all about defined codes. For example, the cost of an engineering hour at Sigma is calculated by taking the average salary of the engineering workforce, plus social security and the annual overhead, and then dividing the total by the number of engineering hours available to sell per year. This kind of accounting is characteristic of a *technological centre*, an R&D company or department that sells engineering man-hours. Yet, Sigma as a company is not set up to sell hours—it is set up to sell products. Its revenue and profits derive from selling materials as opposed to engineering services. Other companies would charge the overhead to the systems and products they sell; in Sigma, the *technological* machine claims that it is not possible to do this, and this is a practice that I have thus far been unable to change.

The *technological centre* evaluates and anticipates the threshold that would precipitate a change in its nature. Stated differently, as we have seen in section 3.2. this machine tries not to reach the threshold where a difference in degree would become a difference in kind. Yet the question arises: How many prototypes can be developed without changing the nature of the assemblage itself? The threshold was eventually traversed around 2011-2012 with the significant increase of projects, and this abstract machine started to lose its influence. Employees began to question the *technological centre*'s practices, and other abstract machines started to actualise their own practices and discourses. However, the *technological* machine and its codes are still prevalent within Sigma, they coexist with the other abstract machines. As recently as January 2018, some thought that “there is an involution to being R&D centre and oriented to products” (2018.01.18 Interview with X.M.). What this means is that returning to the *technological centre* is perceived as a step backwards.

### **5.3. The Centralised Organisation**

The other abstract machine that comes historically after the *technological* machine is the ‘*Centralised Organisation*’. At some point, Sigma started delivering the products Alpha needed and the mission of Sigma changed. The emphasis shifted from solely developing technology to delivering

products to Alpha. With this change in Sigma's mission came new challenges. The challenge has now shifted from the creation of technology to the management of several projects. The *centralised* machine is focused not solely on technological development but also on producing for Alpha, yet it still does not take up concerns with marketing, competitive advantage, costs, revenue or profits.

The increase in the number of the company's projects and the subsequent attention these projects required brought about rapid growth in Sigma's number of employees. This growth called for new organisational forms. The number of staff grew exponentially from 30 engineers to 150 employees in total. Unlike a smaller community of engineers, a group of this size could no longer work as a single team, and centralised management was necessary to organise the execution of projects alongside the employees themselves. Thus, a new distinction between managers and managed was introduced within the group, separating the management team from employees. It was at this moment that a Board of Directors was first established, and according to some interviewees, the distance between the centre of power and employees has been accumulating ever since.

The increase in the number of employees and projects brought about not only managers but also other departments, such as human resources, purchasing, manufacturing, commissioning, accounting, and after-sales services, all of which contribute to delivering quality products to Alpha. Product development now coexists as one among many departments. The *centralised* machine "overcodes" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 248) the *technological* machine's codes, which subsist, but as part of a superior unity. The company's overall goal is not technological development but rather product delivery. Development is therefore subsumed into projects.

In this *centralised* machine, even the presales area is subsumed into projects and is led by the project management Director. When preparing an offer, Sigma does not have to consider the market, sales or marketing, since its primary customer is Alpha, its parent company. Therefore, the 'navel-gazing' organisation (section 2.4.3.) is an embodiment of the *centralised* machine. To prepare an offer, Sigma considers previous projects, and aims at delivering the same existing product, thus avoiding both novelty and risk. The company's primary goal is to meet budgets and deadlines, which does not involve either technical excellence or increased competitiveness. As O.A. noted, "we must settle our products, mature them rather than develop new ones" (2017.12.27 Interview with O.A.).

One employee described the effects of Sigma's transition from a centre of technology to a *centralised organisation* as "the garage becoming an elephant" (2017.11.30 Interview with I.S.). Compared to a dynamic *technological centre*, the *centralised organisation* is a cumbersome, slowed down elephant. However, according to several interviewees, the *centralised organisation* improved the execution of projects. Yet, better-managed projects come with the heavy price of bureaucracy, control and rigid processes. The challenge of delivering so many projects called for centralised hierarchy and the professionalisation of management. The challenge has become how to organise resources and projects.

Sigma's need for scalability of the *technological centre* and for the ability to work on many projects in parallel was addressed with the establishment of processes. As we have seen in section 2.2.2. those processes are:

- P01: Strategy
- P02: Sales
- P03: Product development
- P04: Project management
- P05: Accounting
- P06: Aftersales
- And so forth until P11.

These processes were designed with “Asenta”, an external consultant, with the full participation of senior managers and directors. Even the Managing Director participated in defining some of them. In that regard, according to some interviewees, the Board of Directors is reluctant to delegate. Rather than focusing on vision and strategy, they are micromanaging the company. These processes are seen by some employees as a way to exert control and enforce order on processes across the company as a whole. In the internally focused *centralised* machine, the processes have become an end in itself: “There is no questioning whether the tasks defined in the process are necessary, or not. We just have to execute the process” (2018.01.18 Interview with X.M.).

The focus of the management team (possibly thanks to the *technological* machine) has been to design and implement processes so that Sigma can scale the number of projects it can deliver to Alpha. The focus is not on competitiveness, as evidenced by the fact that the process designers do not question whether the tasks are necessary for the business or whether they contribute to profits. Processes are implemented with little regard for their efficiency. Rather than focusing on reducing the number of labour hours needed to deliver a project by continuously removing potentially limiting bureaucratic tasks, this machine simply estimates how many hours it would take to execute the processes as they are defined. These processes and project costs are not conditioned by the market prices; they are calculated based on the time needed to do the project according to the established processes. As noted by I.L.: “the budget estimation for this project is 10,000 hours rather than wondering what can I do? How could I do this project in 8000 hours?” (2018.01.18 Interview with L.N.). This is the *centralised* machine's approach. I would suggest that processes are the answer to the challenge of delivering projects, rather than to innovating or improving competitiveness. The aim is to organise.

Within these processes, the developer's creative activity becomes a task to be performed according to defined procedures. The community of developers and experts becomes a group of employees, parts of a *centralised organisation* performing defined tasks. The employee's role in the *centralised organisation* is treated very much like a state-owned company, performing well-defined tasks. Employees have a defined position in the organisational structure and report to different layers of managers. It is a pyramid organisational structure where each employee reports to middle managers,

who in turn report to senior managers or the Board of Directors, with the Managing Director at the top. Everyone reports directly or indirectly to the Managing Director (the despot in Deleuze's words (Deleuze, 2017, 59)). It is a generalised "servitude" (Deleuze, 2017, 67), each to the Managing Director and all to Alpha.

In contrast to the *technological centre*, the discourse of central organisation machine includes terms such as: processes, productivity, tasks, management, planning, project performance, KPIs, objectives, organisational chart, policies, rules, procedures, protocols, tools, documentation, and so forth.

#### **5.4. The Business-Oriented Organisation**

An interviewee (M.P.) recognised the increase in the number of projects and employees as phase two of the company's evolution. He elaborated that:

*The processes were necessary to solve phase 2. Without these processes, we could not scale from a small group to a big company, but now the processes should be oriented to improving business, to profitability* (2018.01.18 Interview with P.M.).

Now the goal is not just service to Alpha by delivering an increasing number of projects and products. The codes are not over-coded to a concrete high-level goal. Rather, in this '*Business-oriented*' machine (the capitalist axiomatic in Deleuze words), what counts is the increase of capital, an abstract wealth. The goal has moved on from technology, products, projects, management or internal organisation, to profit, cash flow, balance sheets, income statement or EBITDA. The challenge in the *business-oriented* machine is to improve competitiveness and to increase revenue and profitability.

The business machine first started to actualise around 2013-2014 but was not prominent until 2017. It currently coexists with the *technological* machine and the *centralised* machine, but it is quickly gaining a presence within the company. In 2013, selling outside Alpha to become a global competitor was defined as Sigma's goal. According to this ambitious goal, 40% of the company's revenue should derive from customers worldwide. This motivated Sigma to look outside to global markets and increased awareness of customers and competitors. This entailed Sigma competing globally with brands like GE, ABB, Mitsubishi or Siemens rather than comfortably dealing with the parent company. New targets and challenges evoked new discourses and new practices:

*The discourse is changing, now we talk about competitiveness, profitability, customers, selling outside. Before, it was reliability, the range of products, service to Alpha etc.* (2018.01.18 Interview with X.M.).

In contrast to the interviews in 2016 (see Chapter 2), there are many examples of these changes throughout the 2018 interviews: "it is difficult to delegate, the Board of Directors should not intervene in technical or managerial details, they should focus on business vision and strategy" (2018.01.18 Interview I.L.), "every activity should benefit the customer, think on what the added value for the customer is" (2018.01.18 Interview Q). "We need more customer orientation" (2018.01.18 Interview

H) and “market intelligence” (2018.01.18 Interview Z). “The decisions should be oriented to business and profit” (2018.01.18 Interview W). It is also not a coincidence that Sigma’s first annual customer satisfaction survey was completed in 2014. I would suggest that some employees do not just want to sell to Alpha, they want to repeatedly deliver on projects with global customers as well. In 2017, one of the four core values selected by the Board of Directors in the cultural transformation program was ‘customer orientation’<sup>52</sup>, and Sigma’s 2017 vision outlines the need for adapting products and services to customers’ needs. As Sigma’s Managing Director says, “We want to be a global reference and play in the champions league of electronics for the railway industry” (2016.05.05. Interview with Managing Director). I agree with interviewees’ statements that Sigma is trying to form alliances with customers, to connect customers with developers, and to add value to its technological products with engineering and aftersales services.

In 2018 there were a handful of initiatives oriented towards making Sigma a more service-oriented organisation instead of one centred around product development. For example, Sigma was developing tools that would help its local partners in India, China, and Indonesia to support their customers. It was training local partners to provide aftersales support and had developed a remote monitoring solution as part of its ‘condition-based maintenance’ or CBM services. In my opinion, these initiatives were part of the incarnation of a business and service machine, rather than Sigma simply being about products or projects. These do not evolve naturally, however. They need continuous input from either the Managing or Commercial Director. The *technological* machine and *centralised* machine are still stronger than the business machine in many cases.

But even within the Product Development department, there are already some voices claiming that the modularisation program (Appendix 2.2.) should make our products and services more competitive on the global stage. The program will help designers to adopt a more business-oriented perspective, to think in terms of marketable products rather than focusing solely on technology. However, there are other voices, exponents of the *business-oriented* machine who are critical of the modularisation program. They claim that Sigma will not become more competitive with only a product approach, i.e. by just changing product design. To some extent, the *technological* machine does not see this. It mostly develops technology for its own sake, with little regard for budgets or deadlines. The *technological* machine is decoupled from the needs of projects and markets, which are articulated by other machines. The *centralised* machine, on the other hand, meticulously estimates the hours required to complete well-defined tasks—its main concerns are project budgets and deadlines. The *business-oriented* machine seeks competitiveness, striving to make Sigma as cost-effective as its global competitors. Conversely, for the *technological* machine, innovation is the ultimate goal. In the *centralised organisation*, innovation is subsumed into projects. In this organisation, innovation has to contribute to the project solving problems. In the *business-oriented* machine, however, innovation has to be profitable.

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<sup>52</sup> The chosen values were: customer orientation, teamwork, commitment and continuous improvement.

The Presales area in the *business-oriented* machine depends on the Commercial department rather than on the Project Management department. This transformation took place in 2015. I was originally in the role of Pre-sales area Manager reporting to the Project Management Director. I was promoted to Commercial Director, and in this new role, I also kept pre-sales as part of my responsibility. In the *business-oriented* organisation, the presales department must identify possible solutions to meet the new requirements of potential customers. Presales engineers had to develop a more intimate understanding of markets compared to previous projects. The role of a presales engineer shifted from proposing existing products to mediating product and customer needs.

With the implementation of this *business-oriented* machine, the employees' position in the whole of Sigma also changed. They no longer make up a community of designers, nor do they perform tasks within a hierarchised structure. In a *business-oriented* organisation, the employee is a naked, abstract labour force. He or she is not a designer, developer, engineer, manager or any other qualification, but could be any of these at once. This machine is a 'functional' relation between capital and labour force; it must work, give profits, raise capital. There is no superior centre of power: every task is oriented to increase capital. It has to perform. The relations between employees are not readily defined by organisational charts, hierarchies or processes. Relations are functional rather than intrinsic. Employees are not a constitutive part of the organisation. Employees are expendable. If you do not perform your role of increasing profit you will be fired. There are no formal relations, stable ranks or positions. There is no community. All rigid formalisms are broken for the sake of the functional relationship of increasing profits.

However, in Sigma, this expression of the *business-oriented* machine is not very pronounced. People are not dismissed or made redundant if they fail to fulfil their roles. Most employees profit from the internal relations of the *centralised organisational* structure, where they are not moved or questioned in the case of lacking results. They keep their status as constitutive parts of the structure. In the capitalist axiomatic, the *centralised organisation* does not disappear—these paradigms co-exist.

My analysis of the *business-oriented* machine of Sigma is based on Deleuze's notion of the capitalist axiomatic. According to Deleuze, axioms differ from theories. Whilst theories are proven, justified, or reasoned, axioms are instead statements that do not derive from other statements or depend on other axioms. They are not codes born from tradition, knowledge or experience. Axioms must be chosen and tested. The axiomatic is inseparable from a type of experimentation. It is not evident which axioms must be chosen. I suggest that in Sigma's *business-oriented* machine these axioms are 'growth', 'selling outside Alpha' and 'customer satisfaction'. Everything should be organised according to these axioms to increase revenue and grow as a company. Other axioms could be added, for example 'employee satisfaction', but in the capitalist machine all the axioms function to increase capital. In Sigma's *business-oriented* machine, every axiom—including the organisation's culture—must be geared towards gaining competitiveness: "a different culture would be much more competitive, it would be a competitive advantage" (Statement in the annual encounter February 2018 by Managing Director, video recorded). Values, culture, employee satisfaction, customer satisfaction, innovation, and project

management are axioms working to increase revenues and profits. Ultimately, “capitalism constitutes an axiomatic (production for the market), all States and all social formations [organisations] tend to become isomorphic” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 507). They are all actualisations of the capitalist mantra: increase revenue and profits. Until recently, Sigma has been shielded from this machine by Alpha. As such, I would argue that this machine is not predominant in Sigma.

There is, however, a clash between the *technological centre*, the *centralised organisation*, and the *business-oriented* abstract machine. The three clearly do coexist, but they are expressed in actual practices and discourses of Sigma with, I would say, the *centralised organisation*’s primacy (see the value assessment in section 2.3.). The main difference between the abstract machines is the relations they establish. In the *centralised organisation*, relations are internal, well defined and already established. I call these power relations. Who does what and how one relates to another is defined by processes and organisational charts. They are not external relations like the ones in the capitalist axiomatic (section 3.4.2) or nomadic traverse (section 3.4.3). In contrast, the *business-oriented* abstract machine seeks to question those internal power relations, intent on liberating internal links to reach a functional relation, acting not as it is defined bureaucratically, but rather acting to get results in business terms. This clash is most evident in the P02 (‘Selling’) process committee and the Board of Directors. The *centralised organisation* wants to work in a defined way whilst the *business-oriented* organisation wants to work in new ways adapted to the situation at hand to sell and reach targets. For the *business-oriented* machine, the most relevant relations are external, where it acts differently, adapting to the situation at hand. Who should do what task is not something that can be defined because each new offer requires new approaches, tasks, and forms of cooperation. This does not mean that all the actions should be innovations (or lines of flights in Deleuze’s terms). Nor does this mean that we have to destroy the molar organisation, or that there should not be internal relations. What the *business-oriented* abstract machine strives towards is a more flexible organisation that can override internal power relations that are not contributing to sales and competitiveness. The *centralised* machine may aim at a competitive organisation by centrally rearranging its internal relations. The *business-oriented* abstract machine, on the other hand, demands autonomy from these internal power relations to increase capital by acting freely. It is important to note that in the capitalist axiomatic functional relations are not free relations. They are functional in the sense that they aim to reach goals. Therefore, the main difference between the *centralised organisation* and the *business-oriented* organisation is that the former is based on internal power relations, whereas the latter is based on external functional relations.

Another important difference is how the other (such as customers, partners or employees) is seen. The *business-oriented* abstract machine perceives the other as little more than a means to an own end. This abstract machine seeks out functional relations. Within this paradigm, the customer is seen to be a singularity. The *business-oriented* abstract machine treats each commercial opportunity as a singularity that must be handled differently—singularly—for the sake of the objective: to sell. Each employee is also a singularity, to be treated individually according to their contribution to the goal. The relationship with the employee is a functional one. The approach of the *business-oriented* machine is to treat

employees so as to get the most out of them. The *business-oriented* machine seeks the satisfaction and motivation of each employee, but especially those who contribute more to the goal of increasing capital. Salary or wages are negotiated on a case by case basis, assessing the impact that a relationship with each singular employee will have on the organisation.

In contrast, the abstract machine of the *centralised organisation* subsumes all differences into a totality. Here, singularities are amalgamated into a universal or general whole. There is no difference posited between this or that singular customer. Instead, each and every customer is conceptualised as ‘the customer’. The *centralised organisation* considers all customers equals who are to be treated as such. The entity of ‘customer’ is a subsumption of all customers into one generalisation. Rather than treating each customer as a singularity, the *centralised organisation* tries to reduce them to a known category with determinate characteristics. In the abstract machine of the *centralised organisation*, difference is subsumed into a general concept of a ‘customer’.

In the *centralised organisation*, the singular situation of the employee is similarly disregarded. There is no merit for individual employees in the *centralised organisation*. Differences between employees are reduced, again down to a general concept of ‘employee’ under which everybody is treated equally. There is no favouritism; everybody is equal<sup>53</sup>. What this means is that the particular needs of employees are not addressed. Individual needs and personal situations are reduced to a general interest. For the central organisation, all customers or all employees share the same needs and accordingly are to be addressed equally. It is important to note that the *business-oriented* organisation treats singularities as singularities but with a goal in mind. The singularity and the relationship with it is a means to a greater end, towards following the directive of increasing capital, revenue or order intake.

## 5.5. The Growing Organisation

Thus far, I have differentiated between three different coexisting abstract machines: the *technological centre*, the *centralised organisation*, and the *business-oriented* machine. All three are actualised in Sigma to a greater or smaller extent. Nevertheless, their distinct practices and discourses are recognisable. The next methodological step, as we have seen in Chapter 4, is to identify lines of flights that escape these abstract machines. That is, statements or discourses that do not belong to any of these abstract machines. This section is an attempt to build a new abstract machine by connecting these lines of flights. In doing this, I invent a potential Sigma that is not caught up in the *technological*, *centralised* or *business-oriented* machines. I will create a potential Sigma whose relations are unconditioned by products, projects, or business, with practices and statements coming from the ‘absolute outside’ (section 3.5.2.), not captured by the power relations of other abstract machines. These lines of flight, outside power and knowledge, are of course less apparent and recognisable. The

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<sup>53</sup> Yet, this is a hierarchical structure.

extraction of this virtual abstract machine from the actual Sigma is arguably a much more delicate undertaking. I call this new abstract machine the '*Growing Organisation*'.

### **5.5.1. People-oriented organisation**

One might say that this new potential abstract machine is based on people. The Board of Directors is very concerned with employees' motivation, as well as their emotional state. Maintaining employee satisfaction is seen by Sigma as a challenge and a key performance indicator, which is often a discussion point on the agenda of the Board of Directors. It is measured using indicators, action plans, and an annual survey. I do think that Sigma has sometimes failed to retain talented employees, and motivation and commitment among staff may have waned during 2016-2017. The Board might not know how to properly address this problem, but from my point of view as both a researcher and manager, the concern for the people is clear at Sigma.

It could be argued that the people-oriented culture of Sigma is just a strategy to stimulate technological creativity, productivity, or business. Although it is difficult to prove, I would suggest that there is a genuine concern for employees at Sigma. For example, recently, the Managing Director asserted that the prevention of risks in the workplace is the primary concern of the Board of Directors. He stated that "nothing will justify losing someone in this journey" (Annual encounter February 2018). This statement indicates an awareness of the critical need to prevent both workplace injuries and redundancies. I would suggest that concern over growth, revenues, and profits do not come before people at Sigma. The main driver is not profit but the sustainability of Sigma in order to contribute to its employees and to wider society. The main challenge is not selling outside Alpha, or becoming competitive, nor is it project management or technology development. The main challenge is how to build a sustainable organisation (also stated in interviews with P, AA, Z, X and Managing Director). From my point of view, the order of priorities at Sigma is as follows: people, sales, product, and finally, project. Product development, project management and selling outside Alpha could be seen as the means to reach a sustainable organisation for the people, not only for employees but also for the Basque community in general.

An organisation that facilitates people's personal growth or development can be understood to be one that is based around people. An organisation that nurtures the self-realisation of individuals, each following his or her own development and interests, can be seen as a people-oriented organisation. In other words, a people-oriented organisation could be seen as one that posits autonomous self-governed individuals "all coming naturally equipped with some version of 'rationality' and motives of ineffable self-interest, striving to improve their lot in life by engaging in market exchange" (Mirowski, 2013,61). It was noted in section 3.4.2. that capitalism considers the individual to be an economic agent in which relationships with others are reduced to simply being a means to an end, serving a personal interest. However, simply pursuing the best interest and personal development (material or otherwise) of individuals is not what I mean when I say that the organisation is 'based on people'. The Managing Director has clearly stated (personal communication) that Sigma is not where it is today by having the

goal of developing individual persons. ‘Personal development’ looks selfish and could contradict the organisation’s interest as a whole. Even if I acknowledge the merits of an organisation focused on personal development, I do not see this as an abstract machine in Sigma. Stated differently, a goal focused solely on personal development would of course never be authorised by the Managing Director. The potential abstract machine that *could* be extracted from Sigma is: a community-based organisation focusing on organisational or collective development (or growth) rather than personal development<sup>54</sup>.

I would suggest that there are ‘resisting points’ (see section 3.5.2) in Sigma. Forces that cannot be reduced to product development, *centralised organisation* or *business-oriented organisation*. In what follows, I will try to demonstrate that there are people in Sigma who are willing to relate and work differently with one other, willing to connect with others outside of the actual power relations. Some want to work not for the sake of technology or for the sake of rigid processes and procedures, but with the autonomy to create, rather than feeling controlled or used for the sake of profits, or their own salary. Some of them (myself included) want to work for a wider community, seeking joyful encounters, creating and innovating through working together for a greater good. For some people, the ideal working environment is not one that just covers their material needs or provides a substantial salary. It is instead one that conjures a feeling of joy in working together, in satisfying people's needs through connections with others in a collectively growing, evolving organisation. Sigma as an organisation is continuously changing its relations to actualise its potential, always seeking qualitative growth. I admit that it is a minoritarian movement, a not yet visible potential, a “people to come” in Deleuze's words. Nevertheless, it is already recognisable at Sigma. In some of my interviews with employees, this machine started to surface: “Sigma is listening to the people much more than before” (2018.01.18 Interview N). As stated by several interviewees, the care for the people of Sigma is now more evident (for example Interviews with G, I and N). There is a “very good ambience” (2018.01.18 Interview Y), a “human quality” (2018.01.18 Interview U and V) and “fellowship” (2018.01.18 Interview D).

### 5.5.2. Desire for transformation

The *growing organisation* is an organisation that resists other abstract machines. Instead of reacting simply to product, project, or profit, it introduces time and thought before action. In this way, the *growing organisation* acts differently compared to the other machines (see section 3.5.2.). The *growing organisation* introduces ‘reflection’, i.e. thinking before acting. Action plans do not derive merely from concerns with quality, product innovation, authority or axioms like selling outside Alpha or customer satisfaction. Its practices are not derived from *technological*, *centralised* or *business-oriented* machines. It introduces novelty, new proper acts, and these are things that arise in reflection.

The non-conditioned action is a free action, a line of flight, an experiment. It is not clear what has to be done—there is no recipe for people, for sustainability. The *growing organisation* is an organisation

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<sup>54</sup> Similarly, my interest in Deleuze’s work is not on difference in itself (section 3.2) but the relationships between differences (section 3.3.).

that experiments with new ways of organising. It is an organisation that wonders what to do and is open to change (see section 3.5.2.). The *growing organisation* is a learning organisation. It does not know what to do, but experiments and learns. It is a problem-solving organisation that is continuously changing discourses and practices. It is always learning and therefore doing differently, ‘continuously improving’, which is one of four core Sigma values selected by its employees in 2017 (alongside teamwork, customer orientation, and commitment) during a cultural transformation program activity.

Several interviewees talked about how Sigma sees “change as positive” (Interviews Z, W and R), and how it is in “continuous change” (Interviews N, J, F, O, P, R, S, X, AA, E...), “definitely more open to change” (2018.01.18 Interview I) than before. Some voices expressed a “need to leave the comfort zone” (Interviews with Z, W and O), and to develop the potential of the people (Interviews with R and O). According to Gamma:

*The high concentration of votes (27%) at this level 4 of transformation means that there is an important opening to change, a desire for transformation, which is already being felt through current behaviour: new ways of doing things (Gamma, 2017, 21, my translation).*

Looking at the personal values with Barrett methodology:

Participants	88	Participants	88	Participants	185	Participants	95
2014		2015		2016		2017	
Commitment	50	Commitment	45	Commitment	115	Continuous learning	50
Responsability	43	Fellowship	40	Postive attitude	77	Commitment	49
Positive attitude	41	Positive attitude	39	Adaptability	69	Positive attitude	42
Fellowship	41	Responsability	36	Continuous learning	69	Responsability	42
Continuous learning	37	Continuous learning	33	Honesty	57	Fellowship	39
Adaptability	33	Adaptability	30	Respect	54	Employee development	36
Confianza	26	Efficiency	25	Conciliation work family	51	Adaptability	35
Respect	23	Honesty	21	Cooperation	50	Cooperation	27
Profesional development	22	Initiative	21	Logical thought	50	Conciliation work family	26
Honesty	22	Cooperation	20	Listening	48	Family	25
		Profesional development	20			Respect	25
		Family	20				
		Respect	20				

Table 4: Personal values assessment from 2014 to 2017

As can be seen, *continuous learning* has ranked amongst the top five values across four years. In 2017, it was voted the most important value. More than half of the participants chose ‘continuous learning’ as a value they identify with. Adaptability is also present every year with more than a third of votes. Overall, if we focus on 2017, most of the personal values are oriented to change such as learning, adapting, or personal development. Furthermore, many values are oriented to relationality such as commitment, fellowship, cooperation, or positive attitude. It could be inferred that Sigma employees are open to changing, to learning, to improving, to acting differently, and to finding ways to work together cooperatively. On the other hand, as we have seen in Chapter 2, the interviews demonstrated that Sigma is continuously changing and that this presents challenges to which many employees are very committed to overcoming.

These personal and relational values are not satisfied in the actual organisation. The work practices are not suitable for the employees participating in the survey. If we go back to Table 3 (section 2.3) of the actual organisation:

Participants	88	Participants	88	Participants	185	Participants	95
2014		2015		2016		2017	
Bureaucracy	39	Flexibility	43	Bureaucracy	98	Bureaucracy	53
Team working	38	Bureaucracy	42	Silos	90	Growth	48
Lack of decision making	38	Team working	40	Cost reduction	82	Hierarchy	42
Disorganization	37	Disorganization	37	Hierarchy	74	Cost reduction	39
Cost reduction	35	Hierarchy	35	Balance work family	73	Silos	39
Endless meetings	33	Short term	34	Financial results	65	Balance work family	35
Customer collaboration	32	Cost reduction	32	Team working	58	Customer satisfaction	29
Short term	32	Endless meetings	32	Gossips, rumors	52	Adaptability	28
Inefficiency	32	Balance work family	27	Fellowship	52	Team working	26
Innovation	30	Lack of decision making	27	Short term focus	52	Financial stability	26
Hierarchy	29	Inefficiency	27			Gossips, rumors	26

Table 3: Current Sigma value assessment from 2014 to 2017

We can see in Table 3 that employees identify and denounce the *centralised organisation* power relations, shown by the allocation of their votes to bureaucracy, hierarchy, silos, disorganisation or lack of decision making. The company's current culture is not at all people-oriented; it is not satisfying the relational needs of the employees. Rather than highlighting fellowship, cooperation, or commitment, employees focus on relationally limiting values. However, 'adaptability' is present in 2017. I would suggest that Sigma is trying to change, trying to adapt, but that it does not know how to, and is not succeeding in reaching a satisfying way to encourage people to work together.

Participants	88	Participants	88	Participants	185	Participants	95
2014		2015		2016		2017	
Quality	59	Quality	53	Quality	81	Quality	47
Efficiency	51	Efficiency	48	Conciliation family work	78	Efficiency	33
Communication	51	Continuous improvement	42	Continuous improvement	67	Continuous learning	31
Employee development	44	Conciliation family work	41	Customer satisfaction	65	Team working	30
Team working	43	Employee development	40	Communication	60	Professional development	30
Conciliation family work	36	Communication	39	Team working	60	Continuous improvement	29
Innovation	36	Team working	39	Employee development	55	Employee development	29
Continuous improvement	35	Trust	37	Long term perspective	51	Conciliation family work	29
Efficacy	31	Customer satisfaction	35	Efficiency	48	Communication	28
Trust	28	Financial stability	28	Continuous learning	47	Commitment	28
						Customer collaboration	28

Table 10: Desired culture of Sigma value assessment from 2014 to 2017

If we take a look at the desired culture of Sigma employees (Table 10), we can see that the desired organisational values are very consistent over the years. There are 7 values that coincide across all four years: quality, efficiency, teamwork, conciliation, communication, continuous improvement and employee development. The last two are directly related conceptually to transformation. Continuous learning appears three times and it ranks third in 2017. Therefore, I would conclude that Sigma evidently shows a desire to adapt, to learn, to improve, to develop, to change. I would suggest that there are forces

in Sigma that transcend product, projects, and profit towards another abstract machine. There is an openness to experiment beyond the comfort zone. There is a desire for transformation.

But the impulse to learn, to escape the actual organisation towards new territories is not enough. The lines of flight escaping the abstract machine of product, project, and business are still resistance points—their actualisation in concrete practices and discourses is not without conflict. The other machines try to capture these new impulses to subsume them into their practices and discourses, or, stated differently, to their way of relating.

Sigma's *growing organisation* resembles Deleuze and Guattari's "nomadic war machine" (2013, 417). In both cases, "war is against the State" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 417), a line of flight escaping bureaucracy, hierarchy, and centralised decision making. Learning to do things in other ways or to think or speak differently is an act of defiance against the *centralised organisation*, against the company's thirst for control. In Sigma, to work outside the bounds of the defined processes constitutes heresy. Lines of flight, escaping voices, are external to the central organisation's apparatus. Many employees feel misunderstood and isolated, often frustrated or helpless (Interviews with J, O, H, X...). There is a substantial gap between the comfort of those who conform to the status quo of a central organisation and those who are willing to experiment, change, and improve. There is always resistance to change, even if this impulse is widespread amongst employees. Naturally, change will always inspire friction, inertia or reluctance. According to Gamma: "given that people perceive the organisation as excessively rigid, they are likely to need this first impulse [for transformation] to come from the top to follow it strongly" (2017, 9, my translation). The impulse for transformation—the desire to relate and work together differently—is there. However, the *centralised* machine captures these impulses, thus demotivating and frustrating people. Although employees demand other ways of working together, the Board of Directors is paralysed and has not been able to change the company's *centralised organisation* (as we have seen in Chapter 2). According to Gamma,

*Employees have a divided experience: on the one hand, a positive feeling of team working and fellowship, and on the other hand, rigid processes and systems which impact efficiency and motivation at work* (Gamma, 2017, 18, my translation).

Thus, there is an evident desire to change the power relations of the *centralised organisation*. Some would like to go back to the *technological centre*, whilst others would like the processes, procedures, and rules to be *business-oriented*. That is, they desire functional relations oriented towards reaching a vision of increased revenue and becoming a global reference. Finally, some people are willing to relate to each other differently. In conclusion, I would say that there is evidently a desire for transformation in Sigma.

### **5.5.3. Focus on how we work together, on how we come together**

The desired culture of 2016 in Table 10 implicates mainly organisational (8) and relational (2) values. In the culture of 2016 (in Table 3), there are six organisational values listed, two positive and

four limiting (according to Barrett's methodology interpretation). Additionally, we saw in section 2.4.3. that some employees describe Sigma as a navel-gazing organisation. Sigma is very focused on organising internally, but employees are asking for changes to the ways Sigma organises. Most of the survey participants are demanding new practices, new ways of working together more efficiently. Critically, "employees are demanding *management* to review the hierarchical structures" (Gamma, 2017, 30, my translation, emphasis added). Employees are not interested in just talking about transformation and development if it does not change how people work together. As stated by M.R. (2018.01.18 interview), "The discourse is changing but the practices, the way of doing things do not". The employees are expecting the Board of Directors to lead the transformation towards the desired organisation, that is, solving the actual organisation's rigid hierarchy and processes.

I would suggest that the foundation for a *growing organisation* is there. The personal values of commitment, fellowship, responsibility, cooperation, respect, positive attitude, employee development, continuous learning, and adaptability are good starting materials to build a people-oriented organisation. Collectively, the actual organisational values include teamwork and adaptability which provide a solid foundation to build a new organisation. Additionally, the desired organisational culture includes teamwork, professional development, employee development, commitment, customer collaboration, continuous learning, and continuous improvement. The desire, the impulse is clearly there. However, at least one of the challenges lies with the leadership, as the employees see it.

Employees clearly expressed their reproof of the management. (M) and (AB) stated that Sigma has changed over the years, but the management has not, and utilises the same leaders to address very different situations and challenges. Some interviewees (T, J, U, L and E) noted that the management consists of the same people, who are always the right person for everything. There are many different statements along the same lines:

*The managers are the trusted men of the Managing Director, they are chosen for their loyalty rather than merits. Their personal history and relationship with the Managing Director prevails over results. It is therefore very difficult to dismiss them or even ask them to behave differently* (2018.01.04 Interview O.G).

"For a different culture, the leaders should be different, others, and not always the same" (2017.12.22 Interview I.A.). The beliefs and practices of the leaders have not changed, "managers are not trained to lead" (2018.01.30 Interview with A.L.). Based on these interviews, I argue that the employees do not trust the Board of Directors to lead the desired transformation.

This raises the question: Why is this the case? Why do the Board of Directors not lead the transformation or at least change the established rigid structures?

*It is striking that the Board of Directors perceives Bureaucracy + Hierarchy + Confusion (the combination of these 3 values can be interpreted as paralysis) since it is this team that makes the decisions, sets the course and creates the policies.* (Gamma, 2017, 34, my translation, emphasis added)

Why does the Board of Directors not at least change these obviously limiting values that block the employees' impulse to improve? Why is there paralysis in the Board of Directors to change how Sigma employees work together? If the Board of Directors sees it and according to Gamma they do it:

*It could be interpreted that the Board of Directors is aware of the key role that they have in setting an example if we want to change/improve both the technical and relational aspects. In addition, they are aware that they must develop a style of leadership different from that used so far, a style that makes people develop and grow both personally and professionally (Gamma, 2017, 34, my translation)*

So, why doesn't the Board of Directors change the rigid processes and systems? My explanation would be that, on the one hand, the important decisions are not made by the Board of Directors, but centrally by the Managing Director. This is supported by interviews with AA, M, O, Q, T, U, V, and the external consultant. On the other hand, most of the Board of Directors are team workers, coordinators, or implementers, as we have seen in Chapter 2. These management profiles tend to lack the impulse of a shaper or driver. According to "Delta" based on Belbin's methodology results, the driver of Sigma is the Managing Director.

Gamma's research accounts that cultural transformation "can only be possible by developing a style of leadership that inspires, that is cohesive and generates trust, with leaders who set an example" (2017, 9, my translation). The impulse to work together in a different way is present in Sigma. It is possible to connect the lines of flight in an abstract machine, but actualisation depends on the capacity to change things in the actual organisation. In other words, a *growing organisation*, focused on people, can be built as an abstract machine, but to be actualised, the leadership must change. Sigma's transformation towards a *growing organisation* requires, at the very least, a different leadership style.

I would suggest that the Managing Director has to embody or effectuate this new abstract machine and allow other directors to embody it. Additionally, the Board of Directors must develop this new leadership style. This will require the Managing Director to trust new leaders to change the ways Sigma operates, or to manage this change personally. It might be too early to assess, but "the event of the year 2017 has been the change of the Managing Director's discourse from product to people" (2017.12.27 Interview with O.A.). I do think that the Managing Director is changing. As such, I see options for the *growing organisation* to be actualised in Sigma. It depends on the personal transformation of managers and their ability to lead the transformation by relating in a different way.

#### **5.5.4. Traverse of singular perspectives**

Naming this abstract machine a 'growing organisation' is itself a political act, an intervention. I sought a name that could be not only be understood and supported by the resistance points to other abstract machines but could also be authorised by them. My decision was concerned with making its actualisation in Sigma easier, to substantiate a connection between the abstract machine and the actual practices and discourses. The nomadic organisation, inspired by Deleuze, is a more poetic name that

conveys a sense of movement and freedom from rigid structures, as well as a joyful journey. Nevertheless, such a name would hardly appeal to control-oriented employees in Sigma.

I sought a name that could incorporate different sensibilities. My aim is not to fight well-established abstract machines by proposing too revolutionary a name. The focus is not on the lines of flight escaping from those *technological*, *centralised* or *business-oriented* abstract machines. Lines of flight can become lines of destruction (“absolute negative”) assimilated by the central apparatuses (“relative negative”), or can even remain lines of flight without being connected with other lines of flights (“relative positive”) (see Appendix 1.6. for these different types of change). The transformative voice of lines of flight could also become violent, offensive, aggressive and unable to connect with other lines of flights. The *growing organisation* is not about lines of flights, as such, it is about gaining consistency by connecting lines of flights. Therefore, I needed a name that could incorporate lines of flight, and not one which itself sounds like a line of flight. If I had called the new abstract machine the “nomadic organisation” it could have been reduced to a line of flight, which, whilst poetic, would not be connected to centralised sensibilities. Considering this, I have called this new abstract machine the ‘growing organisation’, hoping that different sensibilities will find affinity with this.

The second movement of the pragmatics (see section 4.3.) is not limited to identifying lines of flight: it must also build a new abstract machine. Building a new abstract machine is not about being critical or an outsider. It is about constructing “revolutionary connections” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 550). The new abstract machine cannot be too revolutionary, however. Better said, it cannot go against other abstract machines, but must include them. The *growing organisation* connects lines of flight to reach a new consistency. Rather than going against the other abstract machines, the *growing organisation* not only includes the lines of flight escaping other abstract machines but also connects and traverses them. As we have seen throughout Chapter 3, what is transformative (or revolutionary) is seeking connections, an inclusive disjunction, each term of the relation affirming its difference without one taking over. The *growing organisation* does not exclude the *technological*, *centralised* or *business-oriented* abstract machines, but traverses them all at once. To find this inclusiveness is to transform sad, bureaucratic, or hierarchical encounters into a joyful traverse of those singularities without letting them take over. Without this inclusion, the revolutionary or escaping lines of flight leave, become isolated, dismissed, or assimilated and frustrated. *The transformative voices have to connect with other lines of flights to create new discourses and practices.* The *growing organisation* is the nomadic traverse through all singularities (see section 3.4.3), the established abstract machines and the lines of flights escaping them. The *growing organisation* opens the *technological*, *centralised* and *business-oriented* organisation to new connections, to new relations, to new discourses and practices. Ultimately, to a new consistent way of working together. Stated differently, the *growing organisation* gives voice to the organisation to come, to the potential Sigma as a coming together of *technological*, *centralised*, *business-oriented* and people-oriented sensibilities.

As we have seen in section 3.3.2., an assemblage has both molar *and* molecular sides. Accordingly, the *growing organisation* should not be reduced to lines of flights or the molecular side, but should also

include the *technological*, *centralised* and *business-oriented* practices and discourses. The *growing organisation* traverses technological codes (e.g. quality), the *centralised organisation*'s more efficient processes, the *business-oriented* organisation's goals of increasing revenue and customers and other singularities or lines of flight such as people orientation, desire for transformation, less centralised leadership style and relations, and so forth. *The growing organisation is the nomadic inclusive traverse of a multiplicity of singularities.*

## 5.6. Concluding remarks

In the previous section 5.5. I tried to build a consistent new abstract machine that connects lines of flights already present in Sigma as a thought experiment. Without access to the actual Sigma, the reader might miss comprehensive evidence of the *growing organisation*. The aim of the following chapter is then to ensure that this evidence is well documented. For now, the new abstract machine is just a theoretical definition of a new organisation, rooted in Sigma as it emerges out of its encounter with Sigma. This new abstract machine is based on people, community development, and collective improvement for a sustainable organisation where people collectively realise their full potential and contribute to others'<sup>55</sup>.

It could be argued that this itself could be another axiom, akin to the capitalist increase in revenues and profits. Technology, projects or processes and business could be seen as being subsumed into people development. It could be argued that it is still an axiomatic wherein relations are functional, organised to reach the goal of people development.

However, firstly, we are not selecting a relation. I am not saying how the *technological*, *centralised*, *business-oriented* and people-oriented sensibilities must relate with one another. What I suggest is that all have to be traversed. We call this traversal the 'growing organisation'. Moreover, rather than selecting or imposing relations such as capital with labour in capitalism, I am aiming to open up existing power relations in order to relate in a new way, to seek new connections. Secondly, unlike capital, collective human improvement or community development is not quantifiable. This is in contrast to an axiomatic. Collective human improvement is a quality always open—it is an eternal becoming, experimenting with new practices and new narratives. We never know the destination of the *growing organisation*, as we do not know what a body can do.

The actualisation of employees' actual desires might raise new desires, a new impulse to move beyond the known. It is a circle (see section 3.5.3), the eternal return of difference. Each actualisation of an abstract machine is virtualised in a new abstract machine. The molecular lines of flight become molar and other lines of flight escape it. The *growing organisation* is not axiomatic because the relations do not function to reach a goal like increasing capital, for example. The relationships between the singularities that constitute the assemblage or organisation are a dynamic traverse, experiments to

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<sup>55</sup> I would love to have the time and the space to explore what comes first, the self-realisation or the community development, "liberalism or communism", or their relation in the "crowded anarchy" of Deleuze.

actualise potentials, to increase joy and reduce sadness, for example. As Spinoza (see Appendix 1.5.4.) teaches us, we do not know in advance what is good for us; we can differentiate poison from food only by testing. The *growing organisation* is entirely different from an axiomatic with its selected or organised relations. In the former, we have to continuously experiment with what is good for us. We have to find which relations compose a healthy organisation traversing singularities. To do this, we must experiment.

The multiplicity of intensities that represented Sigma in Chapter 2 has evolved to the coexistence of four abstract machines (*technological centre, centralised organisation, business-oriented* and the *growing organisation*). Sigma is now conceptualised as the traverse of these machines. This representation emerges out of the double capture encounter with Deleuze's work. His concept of a virtual abstract machine and the distinction between four types of societies (primitive, despotic, capitalist and nomadic) has been instrumental in seeing Sigma differently.

However, although a different way of thinking Sigma is already a step towards transformation, it will not be completed unless practices are also changed. Instead of trying to reach a conceptual understanding of how the organisation should ideally be, *we should act*. With this in mind, in the chapter to follow, I will show my interventions for actualising the potential Sigma. However, it is not a matter of trying to actualise good ideas which are not rooted in Sigma (such as concern about next generations, looking for strategic alliances, long-term vision or collaboration with customers or suppliers). Nor is it a matter of introducing good or best practices<sup>56</sup>. *It is about actualising Sigma's own potential. In other words, actualising ideas, narratives or discourses and practices which are the virtual side of Sigma. Not abstract ideas but rather ideas rooted in Sigma, its real (not yet actual) potential.*

Actualising the virtual is the third movement of the pragmatics (crafting). It entails the third element of the assemblage (the agent), who connects the virtual abstract machine with the actual or concrete practices and discourses. In that regard, I would suggest that while the second movement of the pragmatics (thought experiment) has mostly been performed by the researcher, the third movement entails both researcher and manager's interventions. The following chapter will show that the new abstract machine of the *growing organisation* is already actualised in the concrete assemblage. Having thought up the potential new Sigma in this chapter, we now move to the practices and interventions that actualise it. As previously covered, we are aiming for a double capture between theory and practice. We should thus traverse both.

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<sup>56</sup> Like the ones described by Laloux regarding "tale" organisations

## Chapter 6. Interventions: Crafting the transformation of Sigma

### 6.1. Introduction

#### 6.1.1. The implementation of the new abstract machine versus a continuous traverse

The third movement of Deleuze's methodology is crafting, where the researcher connects his abstract machine with the concrete assemblage. In other words, at this point, I had to actualise the virtual *growing organisation* in Sigma's actual practices and discourses. But something was not right. During the writing process of this chapter, I have found making this move from virtual to actual especially difficult. I have experienced this point as a wall or blockage. The process of connecting virtual to actual has felt obstructed somehow, and for a time I did not know how to proceed with writing. However, I found a way out of this impasse: reading Etienne Souriau's "The different modes of existence" with a presentation of the work by Isabelle Stengers and Bruno Latour<sup>57</sup>. Here, I found the inspiration to continue writing. As may have been noticed, this movement is an example of the traverse or relay between theory and practice, as discussed in Chapter 1. The following paragraphs discuss the theories that facilitated acting differently. More accurately, I present the theories that relayed between writing practices.

After rewriting Chapter 5, I found it difficult to connect the virtual and actual, the abstract machine of *growing organisation* to the concrete practices and discourses of Sigma. How might I show that the *growing organisation* is already actualised, in some way? Or, what can be done to actualise it? In the process of constructing this PhD, what should be considered a part of this third methodological movement? Am I trying to implement a thought (specifically, the concept of the *growing organisation*) in concrete practices? Is the abstract machine taking over as a reference to be implemented in practices? Can the *growing organisation* be an objective to be reached by somehow transforming concrete organisational practices? Am I trying to materialise an ideal pre-given form, or did I fall again into the trap of trying to connect theory and practice, misguidedly trying to find their relation? We do know from Chapter 1 that the act of relating is but a traverse or passage from one domain to the other. Specifically, a traverse between heterogeneous terms without resemblance, without one taking over the other.

I feel that, rather than traversing between abstract machine and actual organisation, I have perhaps been articulating my interventions in the actual organisation as a plan to implement an already given abstract machine. That is, I have been implementing a theory instead of traversing from theory to practice. Souriau (2017, 240) calls this a *project*, as opposed to a journey or trajectory. A project requires a plan to actualise the abstract machine within the actual organisation. Stated differently, a project materialises an ideal via a set of interventions. Projects focus on plans that define how to go from an abstract machine to an actual organisation. As such, they extinguish the elements of discovery,

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<sup>57</sup> I read it in Spanish (E. Souriau 2017), but there is an English translation (É. Souriau 2015)

exploration and experimentation. A traverse, however, is simply the process of passing from one domain to the other. I have no doubts about the value of the third movement of the pragmatics. As suggested throughout this thesis (especially Chapter 4), there is (1) an explorative moment, (2) a reflecting or thinking moment, and (3) a third crafting moment. In other words, I do not deny possessing a political agenda, nor do I reject the organisation of encounters around this crafting moment. I do, however, doubt the viability and utility of actualising the abstract machine in concrete practices rather than enacting a continuous traverse between these domains.

I would suggest that the transformative circle (between virtual and actual) discussed in section 3.5.3. should not be traversed just once. It is not simply that the agent extracts the abstract machine from body encounters and then actualises it. Rather, it is a co-creation involving exploration, thinking, and acting. The abstract machine is thought up or constructed by the researcher whilst exploring, acting, or intervening. The abstract machine is neither a discovery nor a construction of a Platonic ideal form which is later materialised. The abstract machine of *growing organisation* is not a complete idea, ready to be actualised by the agent in concrete practices. It should instead be thought of as a “work-to-be-made”. In other words, it is an open process of exploring, thinking, and crafting with an unknown, two-sided outcome—the abstract machine on one side and the actual practices and discourses on the other. Said differently, thought is not the origin of action. The agent should not be considered a thinker who acts. Quite the contrary—acting thought is rooted in bodily encounters. This research is a progressive transposition, a constitutive process of both the abstract machine and the concrete practices and discourses. As we have seen in Chapter 1, rather than one being implemented in the other, it is a double capture between abstract machine and actual organisation, but this double capture happens at each instant. The actual does not follow the abstract machine sequentially—both happen simultaneously. Observations, thoughts, actions, and outcomes happen from moment to moment and at once. In other words, they emerge simultaneously *and* sequentially *as different expressions of the same event*.

The simultaneity and sequentiality between abstract machines and interventions is a key aspect of the transformation. To envisage a fixed idea of the *growing organisation* and then implement it according to a plan would not be a traverse. This approach would not be a transformative double capture, because planning is an expression of a centralised form of organisation. This is in contrast with experimentation, which requires of the *growing organisation* a simultaneity of ideas *and* interventions. Similarly, proposing changes to processes and then going about changing them a year later is not transformative. The traverse between a new vision, strategy or set of ideas, and new practices should happen immediately, as is the case in experimentation. This traversal cannot be done by reviewing the design of processes (e.g. P01) once a year, for example. Different behaviours, as well as new thoughts and ideas, should emerge through experimentation in the midst of action itself. Traversal through experimentation should not be planned and postponed for some time in the future (such as a year later). That is the difference between the *growing organisation* that is open to change and experiment and the *centralised organisation* that plans and projects.

Before I continue, it might be worth noting that I (drawing on Deleuze) use the notion of experimentation throughout this chapter in the following way: to experiment is to try new actions and concepts, or practices and discourses, without knowing what the result will be and without concern for what it should be. In other words, rather than implementing, planning, or projecting, it is played out, with no pre-empted outcomes made in advance. Experimentation is an open-ended constitutive process of exploring, thinking, and intervening. It is a journey, a traverse that entails innovation and discovery. Rather than a plan to ‘reach an essence’, it is a kind of test to determine what Sigma, for example, is capable of. It entails experience rather than interpretation or significance. The experiment is the experiencing of whether the thesis, *growing organisation* abstract machine or the interventions increase Sigma’s ‘puissance’ or power of acting, or if they reduce it. In other words, as noted in Chapter 1 (section 1.6.), whether the encounter between Deleuze’s concepts, Sigma and the agent (I as the realiser connecting both in a double capture type of relationship) allows the new to emerge, i.e. composes a new assemblage or decomposes an existing one. Ultimately, the experiment is considered an event of acting and speaking differently, something that emerges simultaneously along with new ideas as experimentation in the midst of the action itself.

In sum, Souriau’s and Deleuze’s concepts<sup>58</sup> have helped me to realise that when I encounter a limit or obstruction in my practices, I tend to move to another domain—that of theory. Once I have envisaged a new set of ideas, I tend to want to implement them (in this case the *growing organisation* abstract machine). This predilection is a misguided one, however. Deleuze continually reminds me that there is no relation between ideas and practices. There is simply no resemblance between these two things. There is, however, a traverse, a relay, to be explored. Most importantly, Deleuze has illuminated that this virtual-actual circle is not traversed just once. It is a continuous back and forth between ideas and actions, between the virtual and actual—or, between exploration, reflection and crafting. Rather than crafting thoughts into concrete practices, the virtual and actual (or exploration, reflection and crafting) are expressions of the same event. Therefore, there is no need to write this chapter with a presumed connection between the concept of the *growing organisation* and the concrete practices. Rather, the virtual abstract machine (Chapter 5) and the actual practices (Chapter 6) are different domains with no resemblance to one another, with no one taking precedence over the other<sup>59</sup>.

However, the current organisation of the chapters may be confusing in that regard. The division of the thought movement (Chapter 5) from the actual practices (Chapter 6) may mislead the reader, as it did me. The reader should not expect this chapter to be an actualisation of the former chapter. Instead,

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<sup>58</sup> Such as, ‘heterogeneous domains of theory and practice’, ‘blockage, wall or limit’, ‘relay or traverse’, ‘virtual-actual circle’, no relation, no resemblance, but expressions of the same event, ‘art, philosophy, science’ that I transpose to exploration, reflection and crafting.

<sup>59</sup> I hope the reader notes that I am not implementing Deleuze’s concepts. Instead, I suggest that Deleuze’s work makes me understand, experience and act differently.

this chapter is an expression of the same event (or experiment) within a different domain. The notion of the *growing organisation as thought* emerges simultaneously with the exploration and the crafting<sup>60</sup>.

### 6.1.2. Is the *growing organisation* real? An experiment.

At the beginning of my research, my primary aim was to study organisational transformation rather than directly intervening in change. I did not want to manage change—I simply wanted to understand how organisations transform. But while simultaneously exploring, thinking, and crafting, the *growing organisation* emerged as a mission that concerned me strongly. It became the work-to-be-done. Through reading, writing, and interviewing, I found myself committed to the *growing organisation*. However, one can always question whether this abstract machine is just a figment of my imagination, or whether it is indeed a virtual reality that I have discovered. Is the abstract machine of the *growing organisation* a fiction which needs the agent's support to come into being? Or, is it the virtual side of Sigma which exists of its own accord? Does the agent extract the virtual abstract machine from actual bodily encounters with Sigma, or is he merely describing pure fiction that has no link to the real organisation?

During the research, I argued that there was clearly an impulse within Sigma for the *growing organisation* to be actualised. The event of the virtual *growing organisation* was extracted from the actual Sigma, and it was time to “be worthy of the event” (Deleuze, 2006a, 307). The *growing organisation* thus became a mission or challenge. Its actualisation and contribution to Sigma became a *raison d'être*, a strong commitment. But why need I do this? Why should I be so committed and concerned with Sigma's future? Why should I struggle to bring about the *growing organisation*? Moreover, do I have the strength to bear this mission? I have similar doubts with regards to the actualisation of this thesis. Do I have the strength to actualise the virtual or potential thesis in a proper document? Am I able to write a text that can connect with the reader, thus constituting a new “reader-text-concepts-Sigma” assemblage? Can the text enrich the reader's experience? Can my research create an enriching experience for Sigma employees?

It is my hope that the reader recognises some signs of the *growing organisation* in Sigma and that he or she appreciates their encounter with this thesis. However, by the end of the research, I realised that I am not or should not be attached to the idea of the *growing organisation*. The strong commitment I developed for it should be turned into ‘work-to-be-done’ i.e. to exploring, thinking, and acting, and not into adhering to a specific transformation or abstract machine. I am committed to exploring, thinking about, and acting with and on Sigma. Shaping or giving form to a new, ‘better’ organisation—but without a reference to an ideal or essence. Since encountering Deleuze's reading of Spinoza (see Appendix 1.5.4.) I am aware of the risks of trying to somehow ‘reach the essence’ rather than experimenting. Abstract machines—like concepts, ideas, or representations—are always created. They are not eternal essences, and have political consequences. I should not allow the *growing organisation*,

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<sup>60</sup> Perhaps, observations, abstract theories and empirical examples should share single paragraphs instead of each having a dedicated chapter. However, with that approach, I could not practice and show Deleuze's method of dividing into heterogeneous elements that come together.

or any other idea for that matter, to become a fixed representation conditioning the crafting movement that acts upon my actions. In other words, it is important that the *growing organisation* does not become a planned implementation project where an agent tries to actualise it by following a preconceived ideal reference. My commitment, despite my doubts, is to the experiment itself, not to the actualisation of a specific abstract machine.

In this regard, the crucial test for the experiment is what new configuration of bodies could and would arise once Sigma's employees encounter the thesis as discourse and my interventions as practices. Will they recognise the *growing organisation* in Sigma? Will Sigma's practices and discourses of and about the actual organisation shift from the abstract machines of *technological, centralised, or business-oriented*, to a *growing organisation* which (with a more community-oriented sensibility) traverses them all? Deleuze has helped me to see that what matters is whether the concept of *growing organisation* increases or decreases Sigma's 'puissance.' That is, whether it composes new relations that increase Sigma's capacity to affect and be affected. Or, sadly, whether it decomposes the assemblage. Stated differently, what matters is the impact of the concept and practices on Sigma. Ultimately, what matters is the outcome of the experiment and not the content of the concept of a *growing organisation*. Moreover, as we have seen (drawing on Deleuze's concept of double capture), out of the encounter, new configurations of bodies may emerge but also the concept of the *growing organisation* may eventually evolve.<sup>61</sup>

Therefore, the long preparation that the double capture requires entails crafting the thesis (including the *growing organisation* as a concept) and the interventions that emerge simultaneously with the theories. In that regard, success in increasing Sigma's 'puissance' is not guaranteed. It needs the agent's work and effort by intervening in Sigma and writing the thesis. Deleuze taught us that an intervention is not necessarily transformative. It can just be relatively positive, relatively negative, or even destructive (see Appendix 1.6). Any intervention can compose or decompose, can come together, or become a destructive line of flight. We should not be naïve and think that the actualisation of the virtual abstract machine is an infallible creative evolution. The *growing organisation* cannot be actualised by itself. Depending on each encounter (of thought or action) the event might not happen, or it might be realised differently. In this experiment, nothing is given in advance; everything is played out along the way. In this sense, the *growing organisation* is in danger, it is dependent on the traverse that constitutes it. It depends on the strength of the agent to think and intervene. Done correctly, this intervention would not involve actualising ideas with a plan, but rather merely traversing the three domains of exploration, thinking, and action, and connecting them this way—that is, performing the external relation between these terms in constituting the new assemblage.

Despite some doubts regarding the outcome of the experiment, ultimately, it is the continual traverse between exploration, thought, and intervention that truly counts. It is this traverse as an *event* (research

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<sup>61</sup> That is why it is important to observe when the abstract machine becomes a dogmatic idea that conditions Sigma's practices. Instead of allowing the evolution of practices and concepts out of the encounter.

or *growing organisation*) that happens. According to Souriau (2017, 67), the traverse is the experience itself, the event. The oscillation between the sublimity of the potential thesis and the actual text. The oscillation between the *growing organisation* and the actual practices and discourses in Sigma is the “absolute experience”. Living the oscillation between the virtual and the actual, traversing this unstable equilibrium, is life itself (Souriau 2017, 251). My life at this moment is this oscillating journey, between a potential thesis and an actual document, between the *growing organisation* and the actual Sigma. As Deleuze’s account of capitalism has shown (section 3.4.2), for a transformation to happen ‘time, attention and devotion’ must be shifted. My commitment is not to the idea of the *growing organisation*, but rather to the traverse. In other words, to the experiment with its double capture type of relationships<sup>62</sup>.

As a result, instead of discussing the implementation of the *growing organisation* as an abstract machine, this chapter will demonstrate the experience of the interventions of the research experiment. The reader performed the traverse between exploration (Chapter 2 explored Sigma, Chapter 3 examined Deleuze’s concepts and then Chapter 4 investigated Deleuze’s methods) and thinking (Chapter 5 envisaged a potential Sigma). Now, the reader is performing the traverse between the virtual abstract machine (Chapter 5) and the actual practices (this chapter). Hopefully, the interventions and the abstract machine of the *growing organisation* can be seen as expressions of the same event.

### 6.1.3. The interventions

I interact with employees of Sigma every working day. It is difficult to differentiate the interventions of the researcher from my regular work as a manager. Moreover, much of my interventions are unconscious. Nevertheless, I will try to describe the nature of my interventions in Sigma. I will be following Deleuze’s approach to differentiation and as such, I have delineated three groups of heterogeneous interventions: *explorative* (section 6.2.), *political* (section 6.3.) and the *traverse or connecting* interventions (section 6.4.).

Although the differentiation is not made according to some pre-given concepts of Deleuze, his concepts have nevertheless made me realise that there are indeed different types of interventions. I would link the *explorative* intervention to the ‘passive actor’ and ‘time of tradition’ as discussed in Appendix 1.7. It is also related to the primary order. In sum, explorative interventions are actions related to the explorative movement of the pragmatics. That is, they do not aim at changing the actions of the other, or at imposing views. ‘Traditional’ views and practices are respected. The ‘passive’ researcher does not want to change anything as such. The *explorative* interventions are essentially practices of

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<sup>62</sup> I hope the reader notices the evolution from (1) just studying organisational transformation to (2) being strongly committed to the *growing organisation* as a contribution to Sigma, to (3) being committed to explore, think and craft, in other words to the research experiment itself, to (4) being committed to the traverse itself (the relationship) that connects heterogeneous worlds constituting a new assemblage. In other words, to experiment with a new way of relating; double capture or traverse.

observation. Nevertheless, as I will show in the sections to follow, the methods of observation (e.g. interviews or surveys) do have an impact on the observed. As such, I consider them to be interventions.

With the help of Deleuze and Mirowski, I realised that the capitalist ‘axiomatic’ is a politically organised encounter (section 3.4.2.). As we discussed, the Occupy Wall Street movement failed to recognise the need for a political program instead of merely having a self-organising spontaneous order. Similarly, I was blind to the fact that abstract machines are actualised by politically active agents. I naively thought that my vision and proposals to Sigma’s Board of Directors were so clear and self-evidently good that there was no need to convince, negotiate, or compromise<sup>63</sup>. Through studying Deleuze’s work I have realised the need for a well-thought-out political intervention. Of course, that does not mean that there were not any political interventions before. Indeed, my naïve approach was also very much political, but just unconscious. It did not seem political to me, but it was surely seen as such by others.

By *political* interventions I mean actively organising encounters and implementing practices. As may have been noticed, these interventions correspond to the ‘hero’ or ‘active agent’ with interest and an agenda (discussed in Appendix 1.7.). They are related to the ‘time of politics’ instead of tradition. These interventions do not aim at reading signs but to composing them; time and reflection are introduced (section 3.5.2.) and ‘actions upon actions’ (section 3.5.2.) are strategised. However, as we shall see, being aware of the need for political intervention does not equate to being politically skilful.

I called the last group of interventions *traverse or connecting*. Basically, they do not aim at observing or acting upon actions. They are simply expressions of an impulse to connect, to come together traversing singularities. Instead of trying to implement power relations or abstract machines, these interventions just seek new relationships. They are somehow related to the ideas of free actions, encountering the different (or the outside of knowledge and power) or the ‘time of creation’, the time of men. They are interventions in which there is no active agent, just purposeless free actions (see Appendix 1.7.).

I therefore differentiate three group of interventions:

**6.2. EXPLORATIVE**

**6.4. TRAVERSE**

**6.3. POLITICAL**

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<sup>63</sup> Perhaps only an engineer passionately in love with his designs can understand this silly approach.

Figure 14: Three groups of interventions

It is important to note that this distinction between explorative, political, and traversal is artificial. Moreover, as Deleuze has already taught us, there is no linear sequence between these types of interventions. Each action, statement, decision, or encounter is an intervention in itself, which mixes together elements of exploration, politics, and traverse. The division into heterogeneous interventions is a thought experiment that aims for a better understanding of the intervention.

However, the reader should remember that in this third movement of the pragmatics (section 4.4.) it is not a matter of creating a multiplicity of intensities (as in the first movement, exploration) or virtual thoughts (second movement) but rather of proliferating axes. What this means is that *explorative*, *political* and *traverse* or *connecting* interventions are not zones of intensities or ideas. They are extensive axes, i.e. actual visible practices. In that regard, they may seem too empirical and detailed. However, this is a key aspect that I have arrived at thanks to my encounter with Deleuze's work. For transformation to happen, we cannot remain in what we regard as comfortable domains of observation and thought. We have to complete the virtual-actual circle (section 3.5.3.), actually acting or intervening. That is neither a domain of invisible intensities nor virtual thoughts or ideas (or abstract machines), but rather of visible, concrete extensities.

## **6.2. Explorative intervention**

### **6.2.1. New discourses: Lencioni's group dynamics.**

The only purely explorative intervention is the Lencioni questionnaire of the 5 dysfunctions of the Board of Directors, whose group dynamic, as we have seen in section 2.6, is very worrying. Yet, by not showing the Lencioni survey results to the Board of Directors, I limited the available interventions to an explorative practice. My main reason for doing this was my concern that this could paralyse the Board and have no positive impact since the directors would not know how to respond constructively. By 'rendering visible the invisible' dynamics of the Board, they could be a stimulus for change, a basis for a transformative intervention. However, as we have seen in section 3.5.1. the Board of Directors must be ready to hear it for it to lead to a new configuration of bodies, or new practices. Otherwise, the group would remain paralysed, without a transformative event. Practices and discourses have to be aligned in order to produce a transformative event. Stated differently, without changing practices and actions, new statements, discourses, or diagnoses will have no impact (see section 3.5.1.). In this case, I thought that revealing the results would not lead to reflection, or a change in practice. Therefore, it could be said that an intervention (like Lencioni's questionnaire) that does not produce new discourses to render visible the invisible, or that does not act upon action to produce new practices, consequently remains an explorative practice rather than a crafting one. In sum, drawing on Deleuze's work (see section 3.5.1.), I would suggest that in order for organisational transformation to happen both discourses

*and* practices must change. Merely creating new discourses (such as the Lencioni assessment) that do not impact on practices is unproductive.

### **6.2.2. New practices: Mapping relationships.**

Neither new discourses without new practices nor new practices without new discourses are transformative (or in other words, actualise a new abstract machine). For example, between April and June 2017, I (as a researcher), together with three colleagues, tried to map the relations between the product development process (P03) and the project management process (P04). This was a very interesting exercise. However, in the end, we did not complete the map and it did not really contribute to the transformation of the organisation. At the end of the process, we had nothing to show. Even though we recognised the intensities through the mapping exercise, we failed to make them visible to the organisation. It was an interesting exercise but did not lead to any specific statements being made. This was in spite of the fact that throughout the process of mapping we firmly believed that there was potential for a new relationship between products and projects, one which could potentially have a considerable impact on the efficiency of Sigma. Such practices of a small group are not enough to transform an organisation as a whole—unless they are spread through other organisational practices *and* are accompanied by associated discourses.

### **6.2.3. New practices and new discourses: Barrett’s cultural assessment.**

The main interventions that went beyond exploration have been the cultural assessment (conducted following Barrett’s methodology) and the one-to-one interviews (see section 4.2.5.). I have drawn on these methodologies to learn about Sigma (Chapter 2) and the abstract machines that condition it (Chapter 5). The reader might wonder why these explorations are considered to be crafting interventions. I suggest that these practices (of assessment and interviewing) have had an impact on Sigma. For example, the survey was conducted for the first time in December 2014, when I was not yet a member of the Board. I reported my results directly to some of the directors. Whilst they appreciated my work and found my results intriguing, no transformative event ever happened. The following year, in December 2015, the survey was conducted again and found similar results, again without much impact. Nevertheless, the Managing Director, Deputy Managing Director, and HR Director, to whom I reported the results, started to question the methodology, e.g. the way the list of values was selected, how values were defined, etc. The following year, the directors decided to repeat the survey with more professional support. In December 2016, Gamma, an external consultant, was commissioned to conduct the survey. Although expressed in a more professional manner, the results were consistent with my findings from previous years.

Gamma’s diagnosis was reported to the Board of Directors as a whole, which, by this time, I was a member of. Compelled by the results of the survey, the board embarked Sigma on its “Cultural transformation program”, which was led by the Deputy Managing Director. The first phase of this program started in April 2017, with the help of another external consultant: “Delta” (see Appendix 2.2.).

The cultural transformation program, which I do not consider an explorative intervention, will be discussed in the next sub-section as *political* intervention. However, I would like to highlight here that *new discourses* (such as assessment of Sigma's culture using Barrett's methodology) *may lead to new practices*—in this case, to the cultural transformation program<sup>64</sup>. Subsequent to my reading of Deleuze, I would suggest that an 'illocutionary' speech act happens when what is said configures bodies, but only if they share the same abstract machine (see section 3.5.1.). In other words, the Board already shared employee perceptions and concerns about Sigma's culture. They were already ready to tackle it.

As noted before, it is difficult to differentiate explorative from political interventions. I would suggest that conducting the survey and revealing the results are explorative interventions. Of course, presenting a diagnosis has a political component. However, I would differentiate that from actively trying to act upon actions or organising encounters. Nevertheless, convincing the Board to conduct the survey annually is a political intervention.

Unlike the result of the Lencioni questionnaire, I would suggest that in the case of the cultural survey, new discourse did motivate new practices. It could be argued that the Board was closer to acting differently at an organisational level in attempting to change its culture, than it was as a team in changing the group dynamics. It must be noted, however, that it took the Board two years and three surveys to decide to embark on the cultural transformation program. Moreover, the survey was outsourced to an external consultant before they thought to change any practices. In retrospect, I regret not having performed Lencioni's questionnaire annually, from the beginning. It could have impacted on the Board's dynamics. Reflecting on this experience, I would suggest that any *disruptive new discourses have to be repeated periodically and time and reflection are needed to finally change practices*. Perhaps, for organisational transformation to happen, there is a need to be insistent with new discourses (and practices) and to also be patient<sup>65</sup>.

#### **6.2.4. The embodiment of the *growing organisation*: Interviews and surveys**

The main reason I consider the values survey to be a crafting intervention is not that it led to the cultural transformation program, or to an explorative organisational practice. Rather, I would suggest that the values survey (and also the interviews) create events that actualise the *growing organisation* abstract machine. These practices give voice to the employees. Through them, they can speak freely and affirm their different views, which is a feature of the *growing organisation*. I think that when I interviewed employees, they felt that I listened to them, respected and trusted them. The interviews also allowed me to learn more about my colleagues, and my encounters with them shaped my views of Sigma in addition to our normal daily interactions during work. Their opinions matter to me in the sense that I was able to build the abstract machines based on those encounters and surveys. I think that my

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<sup>64</sup> My new practice of cultural survey led to a new discourse about Sigma's culture (see Chapter 2), the discourse led to a new practice for Sigma, they conducted an external assessment with Gamma. Gamma's narrative (a discourse aligned with mine) led to a set of new practices: the cultural transformation program.

<sup>65</sup> Even if I repeatedly hear and admit that my writing is difficult to read, which constituted a new discourse for me at the time of my first draft, I am still struggling to change my writing practices, hence the resultant text.

interviewees felt the same during the interviews. I would suggest that these practices showed that I care about people, inasmuch as these practices can be seen as events of fellowship and commitment—and as acts of care for Sigma and its employees.

Moreover, the interviews revealed my desire for the transformation of how Sigma employees work together, a feature of the *growing organisation*. Yet, with questions like “What is Sigma for you?” or “What do you think is changing in Sigma?” I also made my interviewees think about themselves within Sigma. My aim was to make my interviewees reflect on Sigma with these simple open questions. As we have seen in section 3.5.2., the introduction of time and thought is a transformative practice.

The explorative practices of interviews and surveys are also power relations. They make the employees see and speak (see section 3.5.2.). However, they are power relations of a different abstract machine, a different way of relating. All those events of introducing reflection, giving voice, listening, the desire for transformation, the starting of the cultural transformation program, trust, fellowship, commitment, and care for Sigma and its employees that we have discussed in this section, are all features of the *growing organisation*. They come together in the event ‘*growing organisation*.’ They are expressions of a people-oriented sensibility. The fact that Sigma has adopted these practices shows that they are not only actualised in my practice but that they are already actualising the *growing organisation*, thus crafting a new, people-oriented Sigma.

In section 5.5. I sketched the main features of the *growing organisation* abstract machine. I suggested that the abstract machine emerged out of the double capture type of encounter between Sigma and Deleuze’s concepts. I also noted earlier that instead of the abstract machine being actualised in the concrete organisation, both ideas and practices are expressions of the same event. In my case, the *growing organisation* is expressed as theory (section 5.5.) and as practices. I would suggest that from the beginning of this research, before the idea of the *growing organisation* was even articulated, my explorative practices were already an expression of this event that I later called *growing organisation*. I started exploring-observing, thinking and acting differently the moment I started the research. However, as we shall see, one feature of the *growing organisation* was missing. Although my practices as a researcher are people-oriented (section 5.5.1), desiring transformation (section 5.5.2.) and focused on how Sigma works together (section 5.5.3.), I would say that for the practices commented on this section to be a complete actualisation of the *growing organisation*, the traverse of singular perspectives (section 5.5.4.) must also be present.

However, as previously noted, I included *traverse or connecting* interventions in the third group. Before discussing them, the following section addresses the second group, the more active ‘political’ intervention practices:

- 6.2.1. New discourses: Lencioni's group dynamics
  - For actualization of abstract machines discourses *and* practices must change.
  - The new discourse must emerge together with the possibility of new practices
  - Not only "rendering visible the invisible" intensities with new discourses.
- 6.2.2. New practices: Mapping relationships
  - For actualization of abstract machines discourses *and* practices must change.
  - The new practices must emerge together with new discourses
  - Not only "invisible" practices
- 6.2.3. New practices and new discourses: Barrett's cultural assessment
  - New discourses (cultural assessment) may lead to new practices (cultural transformation program)
  - If they share a common abstract machine, new discourses are considered 'illoutionary' speech
  - They reconfigure bodies
  - New discourses have to be repeated, time and reflection are needed to finally change practices
  - There is a need to be insistent and patient
- 6.2.4. Embody events that are expression of the Growing organisation: Interviews and surveys
  - Researcher behaviour as actualisation of a new abstract machine
  - However, one of the key features of the growing organisation was missing: the traverse

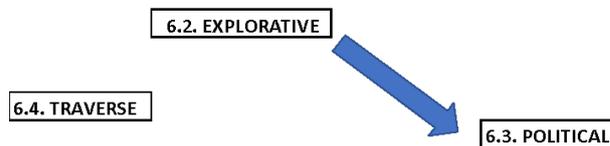


Figure 15: Explorative interventions

### 6.3. The political intervention.

#### 6.3.1. From exploration to crafts

As I argued in section 6.2., I see the interviews and values surveys as partial expressions of the *growing organisation*. One might claim, however, that they do not have much of a direct impact on Sigma. Explorative interventions may remain simply part of the researcher's practice (e.g. Lencioni's questionnaire or mapping P03-P04 relationships). Nonetheless, in some cases explorative practices can be adopted by the organisation, leading to new discourses emerging, for example, the cultural survey. Furthermore, these might start moving to crafting and experimentation with different ways of how Sigma's employees can work together—as the cultural transformation program. Better said, the *growing organisation* can be actualised in some side practices without unsettling the *technological, centralised* and *business-oriented* abstract machines as predominant core practices. Such explorative practices risk being decoupled, outside of 'real work' practices, remaining just as observations that do not change working relations.

Explorative interventions that create new discourses can eventually facilitate new 'side' practices. However, organisational core practices do not change by merely stating new visions or commenting on the results of the explorative practice. For example, establishing a sales target and stating an ambitious vision of growth alone is not transformative without actually changing core practices. I would suggest that changing core practices is something that involves actually acting differently in high stakes meetings. For instance, in strategic reflections in September 2018, there was a substantial argument between the product Platform Manager and the Commercial Director about the usefulness (for the product platforms) of the commercial strategic plan. The next day, the Managing Director told me that even though I (as the Commercial Director) was right in some instances, staging this argument openly

might have a negative impact on the Board as a whole, and thus, on reaching the sales targets. In this instance, the Platform Manager and I were not “composing” with each other. We were focused on the argument rather than on our relation. I, for my part, was preoccupied with ideas and discourses when I could have been focused on practices and on what was happening as an event between bodies. In this sense, that moment was not an expression of the *growing organisation*. I was not oriented to transforming Sigma by working together. I was not acting differently. Rather than traversing all sensibilities, I was strongly affirming my difference. This is a potentially destructive line of flight insofar as it is unable to connect with other lines of flight to reach the consistency of a new abstract machine. *The way in which we acted—merely stating new discourses without changing practices—was and is not a transformative event and not an expression of the growing organisation.*

Transformation entails introducing new statements *and* acting differently in core practices (for example in Board meetings). In that regard, I suggest that directors can intervene in high stakes meetings more effectively than explorers, since they are not limited only to exploration, to stating new diagnoses, or to the implementation of side explorative practices. Directors can potentially change core practices along with discourses and create transformative events in their area of influence.

In conclusion, the explorer can introduce and implement new practices in the organisation, but these practices remain explorative, which are always somewhat marginal. In this sense, the explorer’s role is limited to the first movement of pragmatics. His or her explorations are actualisations of the *growing organisation* (see section 6.2.). However, as noted before, I suggest that a key feature of the *growing organisation* is missing from its actualisation in explorative interventions: the traverse of singularities. As the other abstract machines are not traversed or included in these new practices, in reality, how the organisation works is not transformed. The actualisation does not necessarily impact on the organisation's core practices. As such, the *technological*, *centralised*, or *business-oriented* abstract machines would be more relevant as they are actualised in core practices. To change how we work together and to truly actualise the *growing organisation*, core practices and discourses must be changed. This requires directors and managers to use their agency to act (and make others act) differently—or skilful convincing by a researcher or consultant.

### **6.3.2. Trying to change practices and discourses: The researcher’s proposals**

As discussed in section 2.2.2., being the Commercial Director, I have not participated in the management model committee, where the decisions about internal organisation are made. As a result, I have had limited oversight of its managerial and cultural characteristics. Somehow, I acted as a researcher rather than as a member of the Board.

As stated in the previous section, a researcher (or consultant) could produce new discourses and potentially implement new side or explorative practices. However, regarding the core practices of the organisation, he or she may find it difficult to act upon the actions of others and consequently might struggle to change core practices. As a ‘researcher’ I was limited to proposing or advising. In other

words, I was trying to act upon actions (that is why I consider them *political* interventions) but without the power to actually implement new core practices or making others act differently.

The reader can find a detailed account of the interventions as researcher trying to change practices and discourses in Appendix 2.3.

In sum, in the role of researcher, I have found affecting organisational change to be rather difficult. I could only create new discourses, implement side practices, and propose or advise about new practices such as the ones discussed in Appendix 2.3. I also found it difficult as the Commercial Director to work with the cultural transformation program team (arguably, due to my lack of political tact). In sum, I have found it hard to impact on the management model and culture as neither are part of my job description. Other directors lead them and may feel uncomfortable with my involvement. Despite this, I would suggest that I at least made visible some invisible intensities regarding values and culture. In addition, starting the values survey influenced the unfolding of the cultural transformation program. Although the program provides a good context to experiment with new practices, the necessary work to transform the culture is still pending. At least the need for the cultural transformation program and the challenge that it represents is acknowledged by the Board and by some employees (a minor success of my intervention).

### **6.3.3. Implementing practices as the Commercial Director**

I would suggest that my implementation of practices as Commercial Director (see detailed interventions in Appendix 2.4.) has had a limited impact. New practices such as the three-part methodology or new questions in performance review meetings can be proposed or even imposed. Nevertheless, such practices can be performed as an obligation or as a real expression of a new abstract machine. For example, the implementation of processes (see section 2.2.2.) did entail new practices but they were an expression of the same *centralised organisation*. In other words, new practices by themselves do not necessarily constitute an expression of a new abstract machine. The same practice (and also discourse) can be an expression of different abstract machines. For example, one can practice yoga as a religious, sporting, or therapeutic activity. However, the way the practitioner relates to her body is different in every instance.

I would say, drawing on Deleuze, that what matters is not just the practice (or material interaction of the ‘primary order’) itself but the effects (the expression, the ‘secondary surface organisation’) that emerge out of the practice (see section 3.2. and Appendix 1.1.). Deleuze proposes that we experiment (see Chapter 1): practise yoga and see what happens—what are the effects? In our case, looking outside, communicating differently, carrying out the three-phase methodology or performing review meetings differently are examples of experimentation. Practices and discourses (and representations in general) have to be criticised (section 4.2.3.) and experimented with. They should be judged by the effects they produce. In this regard, I would suggest that for most practices there is often a technique or method that can be learned and practised with the help of an experienced practitioner. For example, being required

to write 80,000 words for this thesis could be seen as implementing a practice. However, the effect of the practice may not be an expression of a ‘proper’ thesis. The writing technique is learned through practice and through developing the ability to interpret its effects. In my case, I have relied on continuous input from readers to come closer to actualising the potential thesis, and my writing skills.

I would suggest that for the implemented practices to have the desired effect—that is, to actualise a new abstract machine—supervision or support is advisable<sup>66</sup>. For this reason, I met weekly with and closely supervised the communication group. I also supported the marketing activity and the three-phase methodology performed by the Presales area. However, I did not guide other areas performing the methodology, nor the meetings with direct reports. As a result, I would suggest that the impact of the implementation of these practices is limited to the areas where I have interacted much more intensively.

However, I would suggest that when the potential to act differently is accentuated, given the right opportunity, the new abstract machine can be expressed. It tends to come easily, there is no need to impose it, or even guide it. I would propose that some directors wanted to conduct different performance reviews, employees wanted to relate differently to customers or wanted to communicate differently. The implementation of new practices opened up an opportune space to experiment with new behaviours and to actualise their potential.

In sum, practices are expressions of abstract machines, but new practices are not necessarily expressions of new abstract machines. Drawing on Deleuze (section 3.3.3.) we know that abstract machines are conditioning relations. The abstract machines are differentiated by the relations they entail (see Chapter 5 for the different relations that each Sigma’s abstract machine entails). Therefore, to force or impose practices is to relate to the forced in a specific way, as an expression of a specific abstract machine (no matter the merits of the imposed practices themselves). Implementing practices could be a way of controlling (*centralised organisation*) or reaching a desired result (*business-oriented axiomatic organisation*). Therefore, I would suggest that the implementation of practices is best seen as an opportunity to experiment. Only in that spirit will it function as an actualisation of the *growing organisation*.

Similarly, I see yoga as an experimental practice, not as a method to reach a healthy body or meditative state. However, there is no need to repeat thousands of years of yogi experiments. Over the centuries, a practice has been codified, which represents Deleuze’s ‘tertiary arrangement’ (in contrast to the ‘primary order’ and the ‘secondary organisation’). Likewise, the experiments with the new practices proposed in Appendix 2.4. can evolve to well-established and codified practices. Out of the experiment of writing this thesis, I could gain techniques and become a writer. There is no need to experiment further (I suppose only great writers or artists do that). In the ‘tertiary arrangement’, the potential is actualised; the experimented practices and discourses are expressions of the new abstract

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<sup>66</sup> Few people have learned yoga practising alone.

machine.<sup>67</sup> *The growing organisation is actualised if the implementation of practices is seen as an experiment, and if these experiments are interiorised and represent a new way of relating.*

In retrospect, thanks to Deleuze's concepts, but also to the practice of writing this thesis, I realise that I did not approach the implementation of practices as experiments. Rather, I made up my mind about the benefits of these practices and tried to implement them. It remains to be seen what happens with them when I am no longer present. They could become side practices of the *centralised organisation*, strategies of the *business-oriented organisation*, or eventually succeed as the *growing organisation's* practices.

Still within the political interventions, we now turn to the last group: organise encounters.

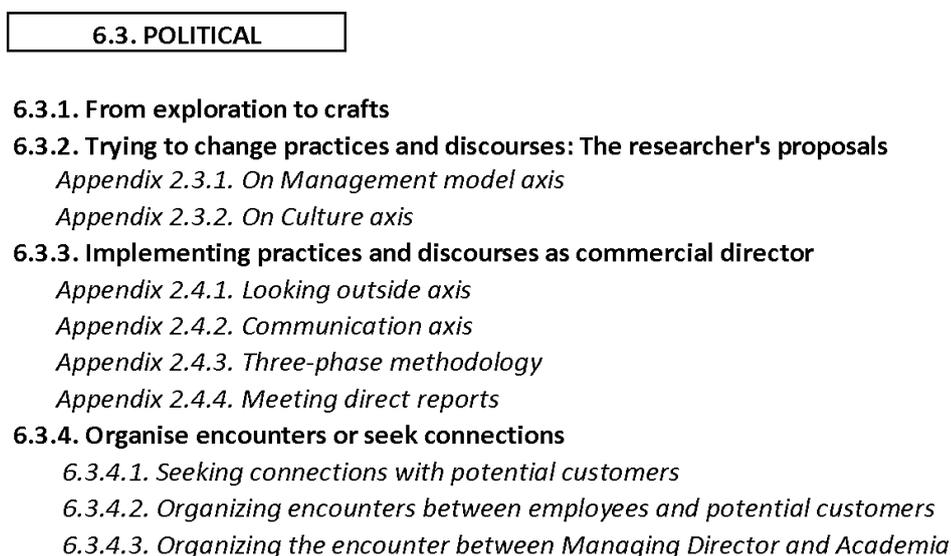


Figure 16: Political interventions

### **6.3.4. Organise encounters and seek connections as Commercial Director.**

#### **6.3.4.1. Seeking connections with potential customers**

Not limited to intervening in implementing practices on “Looking outside” and “Communication” axes, or practices such as the “Three-phase methodology” or “meeting with direct reporters” (see Appendix 2.4.), in this section I argue that there has been an important intervention specific to the Commercial Director.

My primary concern as Commercial Director is building profitable long-term relations with customers and partners. As Deleuze has made me see, there is a difference between action-reaction types of interactions with the market and organising encounters in order to compose a new assemblage

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<sup>67</sup> Experiments become the norm, molecular molar or virtual actual.

with the customer. The former entails transposing it to my context, receiving a request for proposal or a tender document, and preparing an offer based solely on information specified in that. The tender can be won or lost and Sigma just suffers the effects of the encounter with the market. Organising encounters is different: it entails exploring and “knowing” the other, thinking of a strategy to compose with the other, and crafting or building a relationship. In other words, organising encounters aims at a different type of relationship (arguably double capture type) with customers instead of just a transaction or sale.

With this in mind, commercial activity is not limited to a financial transaction; the customer cannot be reduced to an account. Rather, the commercial department maintains relationships with the customer or partner in order to work together. Over the last few years, I have built long-term professional relationships—in some cases friendships—with people in Poland, India, China, USA, South Africa, Russia, Turkey, and Indonesia. I have also explored many other countries, including Iran, Taiwan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Argentina, Ireland, Ukraine, Croatia, and South Korea. Some of them were countries not previously explored by Sigma; they constituted the ‘absolute outside’ (see section 3.5.2.).

These countries are culturally very different from the Basque Country, and the companies I have had an interaction with are very different from Sigma and Alpha. As we have seen in section 5.4., the *centralised organisation* treats different customers as a universal or general ‘customer’ rather than as singularities. Through Deleuze, I realised that different customers need different approaches in order to build a relationship. As we have explored, long and careful preparation is needed for a double capture type of relationship to happen. Thus, I have treated customers as singularities. This new practice entails that Sigma adapts its products, scope, and business models to the customer’s needs, singularly.

Some sales area managers of my team sell outside but not inside Sigma. As a Sales area manager stated in one interview, the organisation should be at the service of Sales. They think that all of Sigma should be oriented towards the customers and that other departments should help the Sales department. That is not currently the case in Sigma. The Sales area managers and commercial activity do not have the full support of the company. As sales managers, we can complain about the lack of support from other departments, the cost of products, or long delivery times. However, drawing on Deleuze, I would say that the focus should be on composing a relationship and not only on customer needs. This is just one of the elements of the relationship. Instead of just seeing the customers’ needs, I would suggest that sales managers also have to see Sigma’s limitations and figure out how to build the relationship.

I, as an active agent (see section 3.5.4. for assemblage’s agent and Appendix 1.7. for the distinction between passive, active and no-agent) with a political agenda, intervene in composing relations, or in other words, organising encounters. Not just positioned with customers, I am in the middle, bridging or connecting different worlds, traversing them like the ‘nomadic empty element’ (see section 3.4.1.). The agent has to abide by both worlds that he or she seeks to connect. This involves an active effort to “sell” externally, in the market but also within Sigma; both worlds have to be known and traversed. My engineering background and technological knowledge are key to me connecting Sigma with potential customers. Knowing Sigma’s products but also its internal politics is essential to designing a good

proposal for the customer. Deleuze teaches us that a deep knowledge of both worlds is necessary for the agent to successfully connect them.

I argue that as a commercial agent I find more resistance and difficulty in negotiating and relating with members of the Board than with potential customers. For example, in August 2015, before my first trip to China, the Managing Director stated: “I do not know why you go, it is going to be a waste of time”. After some months, beginning 2016 Sigma had its first contract in China. However, the Chinese company requested a Joint Venture. The Managing Director’s initial response was: “No, we are not going to enter in a JV, no way”. Later in 2016, I promised the Chinese company management that while a JV was not possible for the first project, Sigma would consider a JV agreement after three successful projects together. My proposal was agreed upon by the Sigma Managing Director and by the Chinese company. By December 2018, the Chinese company and Sigma completed their second shared project and we are close to reaching a JV agreement—even without a third project<sup>68</sup>.

The case of the Indian company we have worked with offers another example. Sigma was approached by them (the Indian company) to submit a traction converter tender together. They requested to manufacture Sigma’s control electronics in their facilities in India. Sigma’s Managing Director did not consider this offer because he did not want to manufacture control electronics in India. I agreed with the Indian company that the control electronics would be manufactured wherever it was most competitive. Sigma had a profit margin to consider for both control and power electronics. However, I reduced the price and therefore the margin of control electronics and also increased that of power electronics. Thus, a very competitive control electronics was offered to them and they did not ask for local manufacturing anymore. With this offer, we won the tender together.

There are further examples within Sigma of being in the middle, organising encounters to connect two different worlds. For example, the presales department is between products, projects, and customers. Being in the middle of the *technological* machine, the *centralised* machine and the customer, the presales department communicates customers’ technical requirements with platform and project managers who design products. The presales department is continuously negotiating customer requirements with Sigma’s product features.

In sum, I would suggest that the work of Deleuze has made me see and act differently in my role as the Commercial Director. Firstly, it has helped me to see that potential customers are singularities that Sigma has to adapt to—they are different from Alpha, and that entails different singular approaches. Secondly, commercial activity is not about ‘sales’; it is about building long term *double capture* types of relationships. This takes time. It requires the organisation of encounters to explore and ‘know’ the potential customer, and to craft the relationship. Commercial activity should not be focused solely on the customer. It should instead be focused on the relationship between Sigma and the customer. This

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<sup>68</sup> It was finally constituted in July 2019

entails 'knowing' Sigma as much as it means knowing the customer. This involves living both worlds, being in the middle. Not just the customer and not just Sigma.

#### **6.3.4.2. Organising encounters between employees and potential customers**

I felt neglected by the Board when, after a business trip to India or China, I informed them about customers' requirements, but my discourse was ignored because it was not considered to be impartial enough. What I said had no influence on what other members of the Board thought. Therefore, rather than trying to connect the potential customer with Sigma via the active role of being in the middle, translating each world to the other—or stated differently, instead of transmitting what the potential customers had to say—I organised direct encounters between Sigma and its potential customers, allowing the Board to get a first-hand impression. For example, I invited the Managing Director to visit potential customers regularly. Designers and product developers have been meeting potential customers to learn about their needs directly from them. It is easy for an engineer to tell sales that completing a task needs 12 months, or that it is impossible. But when the engineer is meeting with customers in Shanghai or New Delhi, such refusals become more difficult. Directly meeting potential customers can change an engineer's perspective. Through organising personal encounters between Sigma, employees (at all levels) and customers contributed directly to the company's openness and changed its orientation towards customers.

#### **6.3.4.3. Organising the encounter between Managing Director and Academia**

Similarly, there has been another political intervention in convincing the Managing Director to join the IMPM Masters program in September 2018, the same Masters program I joined in 2011. I have organised the encounter between the academic world and the Managing Director. Thus, he will study and visit companies in England, Canada, Japan, India and Brazil, meeting senior managers and enacting new practices. He will be exposed to different mindsets and cultures. Sigma's Managing Director is an action-oriented manager who has spent his entire career in the same company; his encounter with management theories and alternative practices could be very transformative. I would suggest that if and when his transformation happens this could transform Sigma more than any other single event. However, the impact of the IMPM Masters program on him and his impact on Sigma will have to wait for future research as his joining the 18-month program occurred at the end of this research.

#### **6.3.4.4. Outcome and conclusions of organising encounters**

The practices of the Sales and Presales departments have been fairly successful in connecting with customers. In 2017, agreements were reached with four new customers in India, China and Belgium. In 2018, Sigma's biggest ever contract was signed with an Indonesian company. Hence, Sigma's very ambitious sales target was met that year.

As a result, when asked in interviews: "Do you think something very relevant happened during 2017 or is happening right now? Sort of an event that will have consequences, which will be remembered?",

17 employees (interviews C, E, G, H, J, K, M, N, O, P, Q, S, R, T, V, W, Y) highlighted that entering relations with external customers, growth in revenue, and an overall orientation towards external customers were the most significant events of the year 2017.

Looking at the actual culture of each year of the annual survey:

2014		2015		2016		2017	
Bureaucracy	39	Flexibility	43	Bureaucracy	98	Bureaucracy	53
Team working	38	Bureaucracy	42	Silos	90	Growth	48
Lack of decision making	38	Team working	40	Cost reduction	82	Hierarchy	42
Disorganization	37	Disorganization	37	Hierarchy	74	Cost reduction	39
Cost reduction	35	Hierarchy	35	Balance work family	73	Silos	39
Endless meetings	33	Short term	34	Financial results	65	Balance work family	35
Customer collaboration	32	Cost reduction	32	Team working	58	Customer satisfaction	29
Short term	32	Endless meetings	32	Gossips, rumors	52	Adaptability	28
Inefficiency	32	Balance work family	27	Fellowship	52	Team working	26
Innovation	30	Lack of decision making	27	Short term focus	52	Financial stability	26
Hierarchy	29	Inefficiency	27			Gossips, rumors	26

Table 3: Current Sigma value assessment from 2014 to 2017

In December 2017, ‘organisational growth’ ranked second, something that was not present in previous years. Arguably, this shift in opinion is linked to the positive annual sales results. For the first time in four years, a change of opinion was measured in Sigma employees’ perception. Also, customer satisfaction was seventh in the 2017 top ten most marked values. Out of 95 participants, 29 believed that customer satisfaction was one of Sigma’s top ten most marked values. In 2016 and 2015, this value was not considered to be in the top 10 values. Therefore, I would argue that according to its employees, the value of customer satisfaction is becoming more prominent in Sigma.

New relationships with customers, as mentioned earlier, have been established and contracts have been signed during 2017 and 2018, but now product development and project management departments have to perform and deliver products. The future of the relationship and the long-term impact of those projects on Sigma is not in the hands of the commercial agent. Quality issues in India, delays in China and Indonesia, and/or budget drifts in all of these could jeopardise both relations and expected revenue. Although I would suggest that Sales and Presales seeking connections with customers has been successful in building relationships, it could also be argued that they were limited to the commercial department and had not necessarily made Sigma as a whole more market-oriented. With time, it will become clearer whether these agreements and contracts will form the basis for long-term relationships, and what the overall impact on Sigma might be.

I would suggest that in building relationships with customers and partners, I (as the Commercial Director) have been actualising the *business-oriented* abstract machine (see section 5.4.). However, the impact of the commercial interventions is limited to organisational growth, revenue, order intake, and above all relationships with new customers. There have been no significant changes in other values highlighted by the survey, such as bureaucracy or hierarchy. The KPIs of ‘time to market’, ‘non-quality cost’, and ‘development or non-recurrent cost’ (see Appendix 2.1. for their description) did not change

considerably over the last 4 years. I would suggest that Sigma's internal product development and project management did not change substantially.

I do, however, expect further changes following 2017 and 2018's commercial success. I would suggest that the dealings with new customers will lead to the development of new products. For example, the traction converter developed for the Chinese market is a different design compared to the standard design that Sigma produces for Alpha. With new heterogeneous projects due to commercial success, Sigma's employees are exposed to new customers. That entails dealing with new ways of working, cultures, requirements, and uses. I expect that Sigma employees will act differently in front of Chinese or Indian people than they do with Basque engineers from Alpha—that is, processes and ways of working will vary to adapt to new customers. For example, the Engineering department has not performed some activities of the process P04 (such as the structural vibration test) required to meet the delivery date of our Indonesian customer. I would suggest that practices and discourses will change due to this encounter with the 'absolute outside' of existing knowledge and relations (see section 3.5.2.) and as a result, Sigma will be transformed. That is, not only politically implementing or proposing new practices, or reaching agreements and contracts with new customers, but also with the new practices Sigma employees will enact due to these new projects. A double capture (see section 3.5.3. or Chapter 1) can be expected between Sigma and new customers such as those in China, India, and Indonesia. However, this is true only to the degree that the other is treated as a singularity, only to the degree that existing processes and ways of working are not imposed onto the new and different customers and projects. In other words, the degree to which the different customers are not subsumed into the well-established *technological* and *centralised organisation* abstract machine. To that degree, a double capture between Sigma and new customers can happen. Nevertheless, encountering the *absolute outside*—or in simple terms, new relations with very different new customers—could potentially be a transformative practice. There must, of course, be a 'threshold.' There is a limit to the number of new customers that can be faced under the existing P04 process. The difference in degree of the number of customers must become a difference in kind at some point (see section 3.2.), and when this happens, existing practices will be transformed. It is possible that sales will remain a side or marginal activity, unable to change product development and project management practices. However, drawing on Deleuze's concept of the 'absolute outside' I would suggest that encountering or being exposed to new customers and projects could eventually transform Sigma's core practices and discourses—that is, potentially more than just signing the aforementioned contracts.

We have covered the explorative (6.2) and political (6.3) interventions. We move now to the third group of interventions—traversing, connecting and the double capture:

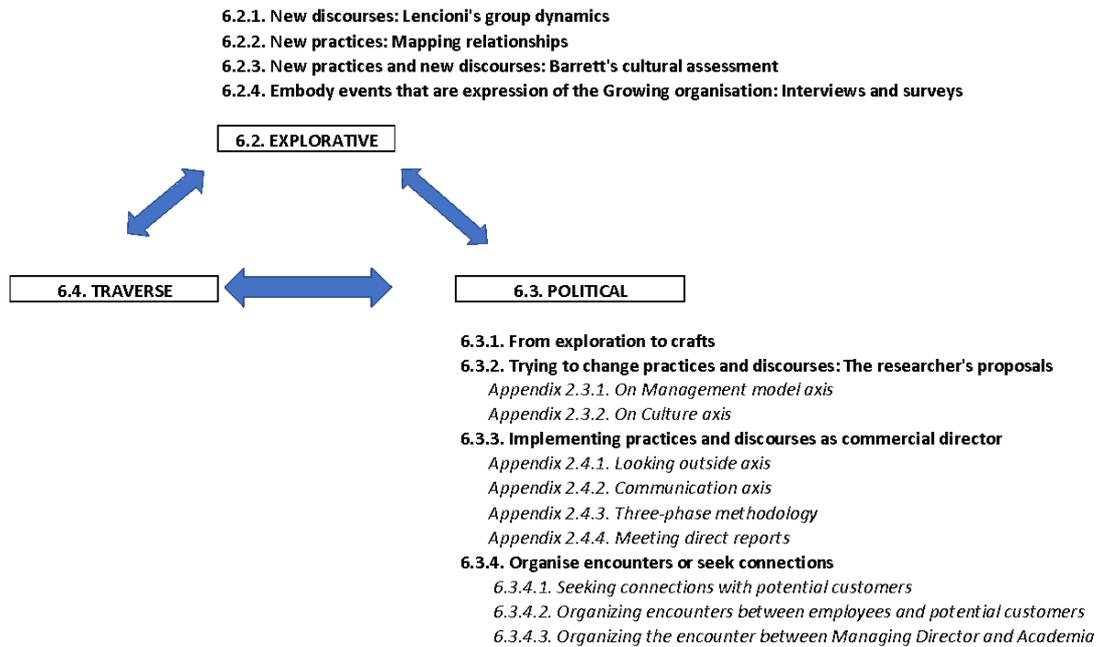


Figure 17: Explorative and Political interventions

## 6.4. Traversing, connecting, and the double capture.

### 6.4.1. Traversing singularities

When I was promoted to Commercial Director in 2015, I thought that to reach the sales targets of 2016, 2017 and 2018 more effectively, Sigma's approach to offers and sales opportunities had to change. Nevertheless, as we already know (see section 6.3.2.), simply highlighting the need for new ways of working did not lead to new practices. They had to be implemented (see section 6.3.3. on implementing practices). However, even though I am responsible for the outcome of the process and sales activity, I was not allowed to change the P02 process unilaterally, or impose the changes. How we prepare an offer is defined by the P02 committee where most of the stakeholders are represented: sales, presales, purchasing, project management, after-sales, engineering and product platform (see section 2.2.2.). These offers include a very detailed budget, design concept, risk assessment and planning schedule of the project. Thus, they depend on the *technological* machine and the *centralised organisation* machine (see section 5.2. and 5.3.). Whilst I, as Commercial Director, can intervene by changing practices in order to build relationships with potential customers, ultimately making an offer involves the whole P02 committee—only they can establish new practices for the offering.

I would suggest that the P02 process and committee exemplify the clash between Sigma's three abstract machines. The *technological* machine insists on using product 'configurators' (software tools to facilitate the product design) and existing products. Indeed, it is very reluctant to develop new things within the project's timeline. Designers prefer to complete developments prior to the start of specific projects relating to specific clients. They prefer to follow an R&D approach. The *centralised* machine,

in turn, puts emphasis on control, accurate budgeting, planning, and risk management. The *business-oriented* machine is focused on securing the order and maintaining and improving relationships with customers.

The process is designed collectively; each department participating in the P02 process has a voice that must be listened to. All sensibilities have to be acknowledged and inform the P02 process. Thus, the committee has to work as a team. Changing the P02 process has been a very long and arduous journey. It took two years, from 2016 to 2018, with many arguments and polarised points of view being expressed. Each singularity affirms its difference and is generally very reluctant to change how it works to prepare the offer. The commercial and presales agents have to traverse the many sensibilities of Sigma in order to make an offer.

I suggested earlier that to be people-centred (see section 5.5.1.), to desire transformation (section 5.5.2.), and to focus on how we work together (5.5.3.) requires traversing singularities (section 5.5.4.) and constitutes a core feature of the *growing organisation*. As previously noted, the researcher's explorative intervention (section 6.2.) actualises the first three features of the *growing organisation*, but it fails to traverse the other abstract machines in their core practices. In that regard, I see the P02 committee as an opportunity to actualise this traverse between heterogeneous singularities.

We may tend to see this traverse as a political intervention where singularities “hash out their differences and try to convince one another” (Mirowski, 2013, 80). Although it is difficult to distinguish its actualisation, I would claim there is another kind of intervention that is not explorative or political: the nomadic traverse of singularities. Drawing on Deleuze, I see this traverse, at least conceptually, as different from proposing (section 6.3.2.), implementing practices (section 6.3.3.) or organising encounters (section 6.3.4.).

In addition to the specific section 3.4.3. on the nomadic traverse, we have also discussed the concept of the traverse in several sections. For example, it constitutes a rhizomatic or molecular consistency<sup>69</sup> (section 3.3.2.) and as the three syntheses of conjunction, connection, and disjunction<sup>70</sup> (section 3.4.1.). It could also be seen as self-organisation by chance encounters (section 3.3.3.2.) or as purposeless free action without the actor (neither passively nor actively) creating a new assemblage as an event (section 3.5.4). Also, I had the concept of the traverse in mind when discussing the double capture between theory and practice in Chapter 1. As previously stated, the double capture is a traverse, relay, or connection between heterogeneous singularities. As such, we have used it to conceptualize the relation between the virtual, the actual, and the agent. In other words, between abstract machines and concrete practices and discourses (section 3.5.2.), between tradition, self-organisation and politics<sup>71</sup> (section 3.4.3.), or, passive, active, and non-actor (Appendix 1.7). We have also even seen the traverse between

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<sup>69</sup> Instead of molar or arborescent and axiomatic.

<sup>70</sup> Adding more singularities (Connection), each affirming their difference and distance (Disjunction) and traversing or consuming them (Conjunction)

<sup>71</sup> In other words, intrinsic relations (molar), external change encounters (molecular) and organisation of encounters (axiomatic).

the primary order, the secondary surface organisation and tertiary arrangement (section 3.4.)—or differently stated, material interaction, virtual thoughts and representations. I transposed these to be the traverse between the three movements of my pragmatics; exploration, reflection, and craft (Chapter 4). I even suggested that the reader traverse all chapters of this thesis. In sum, *the nomadic traverse is the principle of organisation that I have extracted from Deleuze's work* in contrast to the molar or arborescent (section 3.3.2.) and axiomatic (section 3.4.2.) organisations<sup>72</sup>.

I hope that by now the concept of the traverse is becoming clearer. Interestingly, my hope for clarity is not a strictly Deleuzian approach. For him, concepts should be somehow 'obscure' (Deleuze, 1995, 213)—I would suggest that if a concept is too clear, then it has already been reduced to a rational understanding. It becomes a molar discourse without being practised or experimenting with. I have crafted the text in a way that the reader can also experience the concepts (as opposed to merely understanding them). As such, the reader shall explore, reflect, and finally represent for him or herself the meaning of the concept, and indeed of the overall thesis. However, in somehow betraying Deleuze's approach I will describe or clarify now what I consider to be the actualisation of the concept of traverse in the P02 committee's concrete practices.

Rather than making the reader live the concept, I opt to write about it, to represent it. The reader may notice the difference between reaching a meaning or representation of a concept by exploring and thinking out of an encounter—in other words, actually traversing it—from reading a representation of the traverse. Said differently, instead of an intensive concept, I will discuss the actual qualities of what we might call a 'traverse type' of committee:

- Be inclusive. All points of view have to be included. All singular perspectives have to be present. All voices are heard and no speaker is excluded.
- Affirm difference. Each participant speaks out their different view without trying to influence each other.
- Notice the assumptions that each person holds or the beliefs one is identified with. Mostly with an emotional charge, a strong reaction when questioned.
- Do not convey or defend these rigid assumptions or ideas. Instead of trying to impose one's view, hold contradictory thoughts at the same time.
- Freely listen to each other. Without prejudices or judgement.
- Introduce time wisely. Not jumping too fast nor holding too much.
- Stay sensitive to what is happening, inside yourself and in the group. See the tensions arising in the body or bodies.
- Focus on relationships. Maintaining feelings of friendship in the group is much more important than maintaining any position.

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<sup>72</sup> Later named the centralised and business-oriented organisation. The nomadic traverse would be the molecular or rhizomatic that I called the *growing organisation*.

- Aim for no goal or useful purpose, which entails having assumptions about what is useful.
- Accept no authority or established power relations. All voices are in principle equally valid.

We have seen in Chapter 2 that I, as the Commercial Director, used to lead the P02 committee. However, at the end of 2017, I decided to experiment with the notion that 'all voices are equally valid', and I left the committee. That constituted a new practice in Sigma. P02 was the only process not led by a member of the Board. Some directors thought that I was neglecting the process and failing in my responsibilities (personal communication from the Quality Director). However, I see it as an empowerment of the team; without me, the ultimate responsibility of the process P02 was with the committee. All committee members were equal, having to reach an agreement without waiting for a leader to decide. With my exit from the committee, I think I was creating the constitutive conditions for the traverse to happen.

The outcomes of the traverse of the P02 committee members are decisions and meanings. In other words, new concrete practices and discourses: a new organisation. However, it does not mean that they necessarily constitute a collective mind. Each individual might hold a separate opinion. The traverse is something *between* the individual and the assemblage (the relations are external to the terms and are not intrinsically internal relations, see section 3.3.1.). As I see it, drawing on Deleuze's concept of second-degree difference or 'dark precursor' (section 3.4.1.), *singularity A* (a member of the committee) for instance, affirms her difference, whilst the rest of the committee listens. *Singularity B* expresses what has been understood from *A*'s statements. There emerges a second-degree difference, a difference between what *A* said and what *B* said. This new difference is created together. I would suggest that this traverse between each difference, the back and forth between the differences of singularities, is the continual emergence of new differences of a second order. In other words, new content emerges out of the encounter of singularities. Through these second-order differences, the group creates something collectively, each member participating in something shared with others and taking an active part in it. Each individual opinion is absorbed into the group, creating new differences (and eventually meanings) distinct from that of the individual. Listening to each others' assumptions, observing (differentiating) differences instead of defending a viewpoint, attunes the whole group to an attitude of observing, which in turn enables new meaning to emerge collectively. I would suggest that cohesion, alignment, and shared vision can emerge from a traverse type of relationship.

Of course, this type of relationship is arguably impossible in a company. It requires psychologically mature individuals to be sensitive to both their own and the group's feelings, assumptions, and purposes. The description of the concrete traversal is a theory, a potential hardly visible in actual meetings. However, we should aim to just experiment with it. The reader may notice the traverse between theory and practice we have just performed. We went from the concept of the traverse drawing on Deleuze's work to actual practices in the P02 committee. However, encountering the walls and limitations of these

practices, we come back to another concept of traverse. This time, the new concept of traverse emerged out of the encounter with Sigma's practices<sup>73</sup>.

I would nevertheless suggest that the P02 committee's meetings from 2016 to 2018 contributed to transforming Sigma into a more customer-oriented organisation. This was accomplished by demonstrating the need for more adaptability and customer orientation rather than decoupled product development and excessive control and risk avoidance in project management. More importantly, the P02 committee worked together as a team, without anyone imposing control over the others, and with a strong desire to transform the preparation of an offer not only into a more customer-oriented process but also into a process that was more satisfying and motivating for the employees participating in it.

Arguably, this is not the case for other processes in Sigma. Usually, one singularity takes precedence over the others. The *technological* machine has the priority in the P03 process and makes up the majority in the P03 committee (see section 2.2.2.) that organises product development. Similarly, the *centralised organisation* leads the P04 process of project management and the corresponding committee (section 2.2.2.). I would also suggest that the P01 process (strategic reflection) is designed and controlled by a part of the Board of Directors who are the exponents of the *centralised* and *technological* machines. It is difficult for the *business-oriented* machine and the new *growing organisation* machine to be heard and considered in this process. It could be argued that the P02 process is the most inclusive process of Sigma, where a higher number of singular sensibilities have to work together (only 37% of members of P02 belong to the commercial department (see section 2.2.2.)). As we have seen, P02 is a process where the most difficult discussions between different sensibilities emerged and a traverse over all of them has been performed. The same cannot be said about the Board of Directors; as indicated in Chapter 2, their avoidance of conflict and lack of trust for one another makes it impossible to affirm their differences and to traverse these differences.

Unfortunately, I cannot back up, with meeting recordings and exhaustive interviews with the members, the P02 committee practices<sup>74</sup>. These kinds of interventions are difficult to report. They are somehow unconscious, no actor is aware of the actions. Nevertheless, I would suggest that the P02 committee managed to work together and produce a new P02 process that works, even if no one is fully satisfied with it. The heterogenous *technological*, *centralised*, and *business-oriented* abstract machines come together as what I see as the actualisation of the *growing organisation*. The multiplicity of singularities has been traversed without anyone taking over, each affirming their difference. I hope that a clear difference can be seen between this action and a political intervention where one acts upon the actions of the other.

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<sup>73</sup> In all, this discussion on practical traverse David Bohm's book "On Dialogue" has been instrumental. Without a doubt, theories and practices are inseparable.

<sup>74</sup> Could be a further research but necessarily retrospectively. How each member of the committee rationalises the practice of how they worked during the last two years would be a different thesis, I think.

#### 6.4.2. Balancing the traverse

Most of the topics raised at the Board by other directors are related to the *centralised* and *technological* machines. We have seen in Chapter 2 that most of the Board members are engineers and most of the investment and strategic initiatives are product-oriented. I would suggest that, with the exception of the Managing Director and myself, most of the Board members are less business-oriented. That is at least my feeling.

That makes the Sales, Presales, and Marketing department (around 20 people) and me, as Commercial Director, feel somewhat disconnected from the rest of the Board of Directors. Sales area managers have been asking for a shorter delivery time, less engineering hours or lower quality cost without any significant change to these key performance indicators over the last few years. As M.G. (a sales manager) stated during an interview (09.05.2016), sales demand a huge effort, and this lack of alignment with the rest of the organisation usually leads to fatigue and frustration. Sales managers do not feel supported working in what they feel is a centralised, technology-focused organisation. In that regard, most of the current sales managers have considered leaving Sigma at some point. I would suggest that the reason they have not left is due to the fellowship within the Sales department as well as their commitment to the company as a group of colleagues (see Chapter 2).

As a result, I have tended to support the commercial department. As noted before, I focused my activity on selling externally *and* internally, being in the middle of the customer and Sigma. My role on the Board of Directors has been to represent or even strongly defend the views of sales, presales, and marketing, in addition to customers' point of view. In that regard, I would say that I intervened in Sigma significantly as a commercial agent connecting Sigma with customers and engineers with the market. One might argue that my work was mainly aligned with the *business-oriented* abstract machine, and my intervention aimed at moving Sigma from a *technological* and *centralised organisation* to a more *business-oriented* organisation. This is true, insofar as I tried to make Sigma more market-oriented, competitive and global. It is also true that some of my interventions aimed to achieve Sigma's vision and the challenging sales targets of 2017 and 2018. Moreover, the success of these interventions can be traced to the growth in Sigma's sales and global customer base. Therefore, I would suggest that the result of these interventions are explicitly visible for employees (as stated also in interviews) and thus, I am recognised as being business-oriented. As such, I have helped to actualise the *business-oriented* abstract machine.

However, from my point of view, my interventions as a Commercial Director are not limited to the business-oriented abstract machine, even if in some cases this machine took over. As the company's Commercial Director, I am supposed to be strongly focused on sales. Sometimes I as the Commercial Director represented customers against internal voices of Sigma. Sometimes the commercial agent—who connects and builds relationships with customers—is not aware that he does not include all perspectives such as the *technological*, *centralised* or *growing organisation* machines. The commercial agent is wont to inordinately focus on customers. Thus, instead of a nomadic traverse of all singularities,

the commercial agent acts according to power relations described in Appendix 1.5. In other words, he demands changes in Sigma, but only based on the rationale of increasing sales and problematising the lack of customer orientation within the company. Some aspects of my interactions are conditioned more by business and commercial targets than the possible impact they have on personal relationships. As a result, instead of traversing, there is a clash between abstract machines. This is of course because prioritising the *business-oriented* machine over others is not an expression of the *growing organisation*.

Stated differently, it has been very challenging for me to embody or actualise the *business-oriented* machine *and* care about relationships with colleagues at the same time. To simultaneously affirm the *business-oriented* and the *growing organisation* has proven challenging for me. Somehow, balancing the affirmation of one's difference and the traverse of all other singularities is a difficult task. When I feel that the *business-oriented* machine is neglected by the Board's decisions, my traverse over other sensibilities and care for my relationships within the Board is forgotten. I have struggled to pursue very challenging sales targets as the Commercial Director and at the same time traverse all the sensibilities of the Board of Directors to actually come together and work as a team as an expression of the *growing organisation*. Perhaps I lack the skills to simultaneously pursue sales targets and actualise the *growing organisation*. Moreover, no one asked me to actualise the *growing organisation*—as noted in the introduction of this chapter, it became the 'work-to-be-done' for me. Paradoxically, my impulse for and success at achieving sales targets compromises my contribution towards a more community-oriented organisation.

Evidently, my leadership style does not fit with the features of the traverse discussed in section 6.4.1. I feel that I have to strongly defend the commercial activity in front of the *technological* and *centralised* machines. I cannot suspend my assumptions of what Sigma should be doing, and so I tend to try to impose my views. In retrospect, and drawing on Deleuze, I think I should divide my role as a director into two: The Commercial Director *and* the member of the board. More accurately, a third person differentiating differences. In other words, I must observe both the Commercial Director's assumptions and the community-oriented Director's assumptions. A traverse of my different roles. I should keep acting as the Commercial Director, but be attuned to when that goes against or impedes acting that is focused on relationships with a community-orientation. I should be aware at all times not to be a barrier to the actualisation of the *growing organisation*. Somehow, I feel the paradox between reaching commercial targets and results in general that are expected and explicit *or* focusing on relationships<sup>75</sup>.

Deleuze's work has shown me that instead of the exclusive disjunction *either/or* we should embrace the *and* (connective synthesis, section 3.4.1.), i.e. multiple roles, each role affirming their difference (disjunctive synthesis, section 3.4.1.) and nomadically traversing them as described in section 6.4.1. However, as Deleuze has also taught us, the roles are not only played sequentially but also simultaneously. In a meeting, the explorative researcher, the reflecting manager, the business-oriented Commercial Director, and the agent actualising the *growing organisation* are enacted at the same time.

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<sup>75</sup> Simplifying, I see the dualism 'task' or 'people'.

Therein I find the beauty and difficulty of Deleuze’s proposal. That is, as we have seen in sections 3.1 and 3.2, I extracted two principles from Deleuze’s work. First, differences are differentiated to make a multiplicity—in our current case, a multiplicity of roles for my person. In other words, being able to hold a multiplicity of perspectives, sometimes even contradictory ones. Secondly, all of these roles come together in a specific way that I have called a double capture or traverse. The multiplicity is brought together, synthesised into a coherent and meaningful whole: my individuality (in this case or the P02 committee, in the example above).

Instead of being identified with one of the roles (Commercial Director who reaches targets) and passionately defending it whenever I feel that this identity is questioned, a new assemblage, subject or identity emerges out of the specific type of encounter between heterogeneous roles. The differentiation and traverse constitute new assemblages—organisations or individuals. Ultimately, they become transformed.

## 6.5. Conclusions

In this chapter we have seen the three groups of interventions:

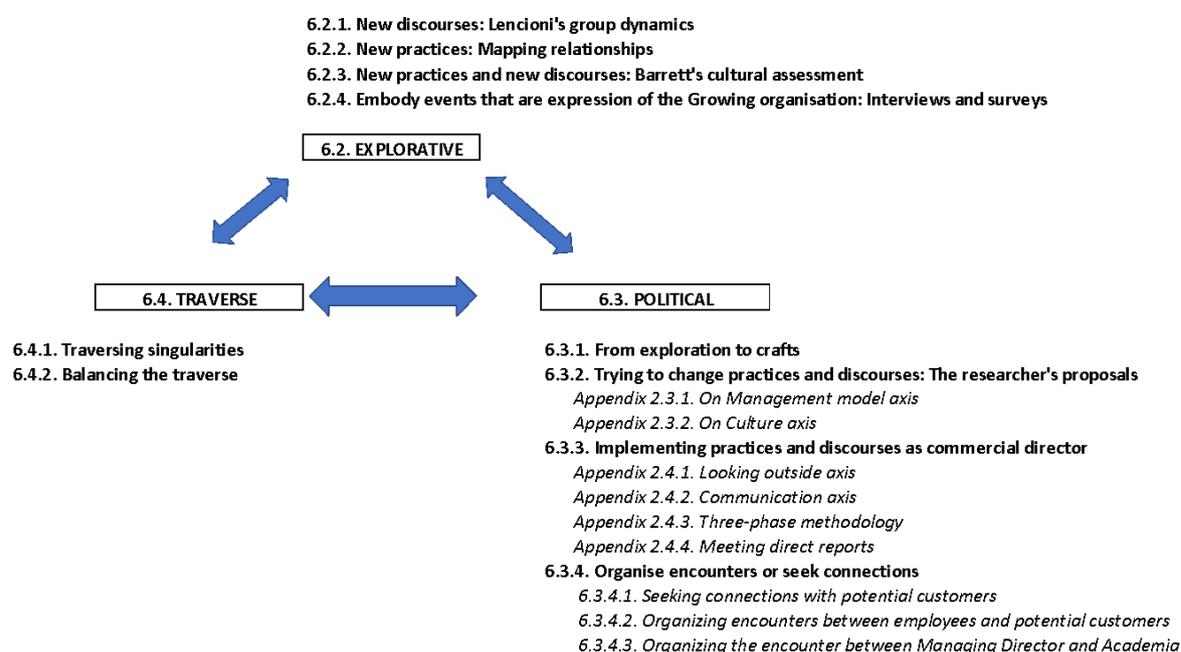


Figure 18: Explorative Political and Traverse interventions

I have suggested that the interventions of this chapter and the *growing organisation* abstract machine (Chapter 5) are heterogeneous expressions of the same *experiment*. The former is *not* an implementation of the latter. Concrete practices and discourses emerge simultaneously with abstract machines in a continuous back and forth between virtual and actual sides of the assemblage. What counts is the experiment itself, the *experience of the traverse* between different worlds.

*As an explorer*

In addition to the traverse between virtual abstract machines and concrete interventions, we have traversed three groups of interventions: explorative, political, and traverse or connecting. On the one hand, I found the *explorative practices* (1) producing new discourses with no impact on practices (Lencioni, section 6.2.1.), (2) reduced to small group practices without producing new discourses or impacting organisational practices (mapping P03-P04 relations, section 6.2.2.), (3) leading to explorative practices at an organisational level (cultural assessment section 6.2.3.), (4) eventually leading to practices as the cultural transformation program. On the other hand, I argued (section 6.2.4) that some explorative practices were partial actualisations of the *growing organisation* but not in Sigma's core practices. Overall, I suggested that explorative practices only impact side (or marginal) practices decoupled from the core practices of Sigma. Eventually, with patience and insistence, they could finally contribute to Sigma's transformation. Specifically, I am thinking about the future impact of the cultural transformation program. In that regard, I would conclude that the agent's intervention as an explorer should not be limited to 'rendering visible the invisible' intensities with new discourses. The new discourses (cultural assessment for example) should be introduced when the possibility of new practices is potentially present (the cultural transformation program). For the actualisation of a new abstract machine (thus, organisational transformation), both discourses *and* practices must change.

#### *As an active political agent*

I have suggested that the explorer may introduce new discourses or side practices. But I have argued that changing core practices entails acting and making others act differently in core practices themselves. I have called this *political intervention*. Rather than a researcher limited to proposing or advising, skilful persuasion is needed, or alternatively, a director with the authority and ability to act and make others act differently. My political intervention as a researcher was limited to making visible invisible intensities (as in explorative interventions) whilst hoping to impact others and produce some change (no exploration but some politics). I have had only minor success, getting recognition from most of the Board of the need for a cultural transformation. I argue that my other proposals as a researcher (section 6.3.2.) had no impact at the time, only some years later. This might have been because of my lack of skills at promoting practices when I am not in charge or when they are not part of my job description. In retrospect, I also understand that in political interventions it may take time to build trusting relationships. I did not see the researcher's proposals as a double capture type of relationship with Board members, they were just discourses. I had hoped that they would be followed simply because I proposed them, which is clearly very naïve.

However, as the Commercial Director, instead of proposing, advising or convincing, I *intervened politically in implementing practices* (section 6.3.3). I would suggest that it was reasonably easy to implement new organisational practices within the director's area of influence. In my case as the Commercial Director, I could influence the sales, presales and the marketing department. To change processes within my area of responsibility (as in the case of P02) is more difficult, but still possible. However, for the researcher, as for the Commercial Director, it was very difficult to change the P01 process, the organisational design, the team dynamic of the Board of Directors, the relationship between

P03 and P04, and many other things at a company level. Nonetheless, I also found that the implementation of practices had a limited direct impact. They were mostly aimed at relating differently—with customers, the marketing mindset, or employees. Ultimately, they aimed at creating events of trust, motivation, support, care, inclusion, recognition with employees and double capture types of relations with potential customers.

Nevertheless, I argued that new practices are not necessarily the actualisations of new abstract machines. Instead, I have suggested that it is best to see the new practices as opportunities or excuses to experiment, to act differently. Implementing practices could be the actualisation of the *centralised organisation* or the *business-oriented* one. Only experimenting would be an actualisation of the *growing organisation*. Eventually, these experiments can be codified and established as practices expressing the new abstract machine. I would say that organisational transformation happens when experimental practices become standard practice, not when new practices are implemented or imposed by a powerful agent. Unfortunately, I realised retrospectively that, at that time, I did not approach the implementation of practices as experiments, nor did I focus on the relationships with my colleagues at the Board. The practices were implemented, yes, but I do not know what impact they will have if I am not there.

The political intervention was not limited to research proposals (section 6.3.2.) and implementing practices (section 6.3.3.). It also included *seeking connections or organising encounters* (section 6.3.4.). I would say that Deleuze has made me see (and act on) commercial activity differently. The interventions of organising encounters aimed at building relationships with customers. By treating the customer as a singularity and focusing on the relationship, I prepared a double capture with them. I tried to ‘know’ them, and I made Sigma adapt to them in order to ‘compose’ a beneficial relationship for both. Arguably, this ended up being a very successful intervention; Sigma met its very challenging sales targets and the organisational growth was highlighted as the event of 2017 (and also 2018). Additionally, we closed several agreements with customers in different countries. In that regard, I suggest that there have been changes in Sigma towards being a *business-oriented* organisation. However, it could be argued that these interventions changed the outcome of the commercial activity but not the company as a whole. Although the discourse and some practices may have changed, other core practices may still be controlled by the *centralised organisation*. However, I argued that being faced with new customers, countries, or product requirements may constitute an encounter with the absolute outside and eventually precipitate further changes.

#### *Actor-less traverse*

However, not all interventions are limited to explorative and political practices. Instead of (1) the passive agent for whom political intervention ‘is too big’ and is limited to observation (see Appendix 1.7.) or (2) the active agent with a political agenda, or hero with a mission, there is (3) an actor-less traverse of heterogeneous singularities. This traverse (see section 6.4.) entails suspending power relations, inclusiveness, purposeless affirmations of difference, listening, sensitivity to effects, noticing

assumptions, avoiding defensiveness and judging, and focusing on relationships (in other words, on the traverse itself).

I found this last type of intervention difficult to account for. After all, it is an actor-less intervention. Besides, it seems more an ideal intervention than an actual practice. However, I suggested its constitutive conditions of the not yet finished outcome, of the back and forth between Deleuze's concept of nomadic traverse and an organisational practice in Sigma. The nomadic traverse is the organisational principle that I have extracted from Deleuze's work and experimented with. The traverse emerged as a double capture between theory and practice. It is expressed as theory and practice. The concept and the practice of the traverse evolved out of their double capture. In other words, out of the experimentation with the continuous traverse between theory and practice (of traverse).

As the Commercial Director, I have found performing the traverse with the members of the Board very difficult. I could not meet the constitutive conditions mentioned above. In retrospect, I wonder why I was able to treat customers as singularities and prepare a double capture type of relationship with them, but I was not able to do the same with the members of the Board. I would suggest that although the relationship with customers comes close to a double capture or traverse, they are indeed an actualisation of the *business-oriented* organisation. After all, it is a political intervention with a goal: to meet sales targets. In that regard, the relationships are a means to an end. However, I do not treat customers just as a means. As noted before, the focus is on building relationships and not on the immediate transaction or sale. As a result, I would suggest that commercial activity entails both political interventions (which aim at sales targets) and an inclusive traverse of listening to customers, a traverse that is focused on the relationship. Somehow, I feel them aligned; the focus on results *and* relationships comes together easily and simultaneously in the same commercial activity. It is the same role for me, building long term double capture type relationships is not in contradiction with meeting sales targets. However, I did feel an exclusive choice between focusing on achieving Sigma's vision and objectives (not only sales target, although as the Commercial Director that was my primary concern) and focusing on my relationships with Board members. In other words, I could treat singular customers as means *and* ends simultaneously but not the Board members. I suggested in section 6.4.2. that since the Commercial Director is not able to traverse singularities at the Board, a new role should be differentiated: the member of the Board actualising the traverse between singularities.

Although it is true that I established a good relationship with some customers, I have undoubtedly failed with many others. Treating customers as singularities and preparing the double capture is not a guarantee to success. The outcome of the encounter is not known in advance. In that regard, the Board's singularities and the general dynamics of the team may not allow that traverse. I would suggest that the traverse is easier to actualise with customers. The absence of trust, fear of conflict, inattention to results, and avoidance of accountability in the Board's team dynamics (as seen in section 2.3.3.2.) are somehow contrary to the constitutive conditions of the traverse. Moreover, I would suggest that the power relations that are already established within Sigma (for example between the *technological centre*, *centralised organisation* and *business-oriented* abstract machines) are not present in a new encounter.

The beginning of the relationship with potential customers is less power centred than with the Board. In sum, to relate in a new way (traverse), the existing power relations must be questioned and changed. This paradoxically entails politics and not just traverse. Or maybe not? If one acts according to the constitutive conditions of the traverse, would that not naturally change other's behaviours and Board dynamics? Unfortunately, I was not able to experiment with it because I realised, too late, the need for the extra role as Director.

*The traverse of explorative, political and traverse*

Nevertheless, although it seems that the traverse type of intervention is a priority for transformation, what counts is the traverse of the different types of interventions; explorative, political, and traverse. Arguably, that is the case for commercial activity. It entailed an exploration of the market as preparation for a double capture (Appendix 2.4.1.), a political intervention of organising encounters (section 6.3.4.1.), and moreover, the constitutive conditions of the traverse (section 6.4.1.) were met. I would suggest that this facilitated the commercial success and eventually the actualisation of the *business-oriented* abstract machine.

The methodology proposed in this research needs (1) an empirical researcher at the exploration movement, (2) a visionary, reflective leader to build a new abstract machine as a thought experiment, and (3) a powerful manager to craft practices and discourses, or a skilled external consultant to propose them and be accepted. However, in addition to the three movements of pragmatics, I would suggest that the crafting movement needs three types of interventions or agents to actually transform: explorative, political, and traverse. This is the most challenging intervention, traversing or combining the three elements: the politically active agent, the passive agent, and the embodiment of a purposeless affirmation of difference, unwilling to impose changes but also leaving things neither unsaid nor untouched. The *growing organisation* should include all three agents, not as exclusive options but as the traverse of all of them. Organisational transformation entails the traverse of the time of tradition, the time of politics and the time of creation (gods, heroes and men or passive, active and non-actor). No agent has to take over the others. Trying to actively implement the *growing organisation* is not a type of relation representative of the *growing organisation*. Similarly, trying to convince others of the benefits of one's proposals directed at imposing ideas is not an expression of the *growing organisation*, even if the ideas (and practices) themselves are features of that abstract machine. If an active agent is too active it could be perceived as aggressive, exclusionary and not listening to others, and that would not be an actualisation of the *growing organisation*. Similarly, if the passive agent is dominant, there is no actualisation of the *growing organisation*. Yet, a purposeless action without a political agenda, regardless of the consequences, might not be an actualisation of the *growing organisation*. Or could it be? I conclude that, yes, the researcher has to propose practices, the Director has to propose and try to implement practices, and both must share their ideas, their points of views. However, new ideas and practices have to be conceptualised and practised as *experiments* without knowing what the result will be and without concern for what it should be. New ways of working and being must be attempted with

no agenda or pre-empted outcomes made in advance. The traverse (or experiment) is an open-ended constitutive process of exploring, thinking, and intervening.

Unfortunately, I was not able to practise that purposeless traversing role in core practices. As a result, the *growing organisation* was actualised, but only through side practices such as my new explorative practices as a researcher (section 6.2.4.), some of my eventually implemented practices (e.g. looking outside, communication, the three-phase methodology and performance interviews) and arguably the P02 committee and process.

### *I as a singularity*

However, I, in the coming together of my roles of researcher, reflective manager, Commercial Director or member of the Board, constitute a singularity. A singularity that Sigma encountered. To some degree, I acted and spoke differently, not always caught up in the power relations of existing abstract machines. I somehow behaved regardless of the consequences, trusting my colleagues in the sense that I believed that what I do or say would not affect our relationship. Not avoiding conflict, being result-oriented, seeking accountability in myself and others, I expressed a different abstract machine to the Board. This machine was perhaps not the *growing organisation*, but it was a singularity that the Board had to traverse and deal with. Arguably, affirming my difference represented the absolute outside for the Board. Eventually, the encounter with the different (in terms of sensitivity, ideas, proposals, ways of acting, thinking or leading, in addition to the discussed absolute outside of new customers, countries and requirements, and even the academic world) transformed Sigma beyond the *business-oriented* organisation. However, persistence and patience are required to actually see the changes in core discourses and practices and become visible in KPIs, surveys, interviews or diagnoses.

The challenge is double. First, for me, as a different singularity, *not to become subsumed* into existing power relations (in other words, mainstream discourses and established practices). Second, to listen and acknowledge the others as singularities and *to try not to subsume them* into my views and practices. Out of the traverse of a multiplicity of new statements and actions a new assemblage can be constituted, with its discourses and practices, not implemented but emerging out of the experiment, the encounter, or the traverse.

As we have witnessed, the ultimate intervention is (1) differentiating differences (theory and practice, roles of my individuality, virtual or potential from actual or concrete, abstract machines, movements of pragmatics, types of intervention, and so forth), (2) the affirmation of difference, and (3) the traverse of differences without any one taking over.

While this chapter has shown the outcome of the interventions, Chapter 7 (the final chapter) turns to the conclusions of the research experiment as a whole. It tackles the different double captures that have been experimented with: (1) the relationship between theory and practice, (2) between reader and writer and (3) the double capture between researcher and manager or between the research and Sigma.

## Chapter 7. Conclusions

### 7.1. The relationship between theory and practice

#### 7.1.1. The initial relationship between theory and practice: theory serves practice.

As noted in Chapter 1, at the outset of the research I aimed to contribute to Sigma. A willingness to impact positively on the group to which I belong is quite a pronounced inclination of mine. This has also been the case for me at my former employer and even at the IMPM master program. I often tend to intuit practices that, from my point of view, are not working<sup>76</sup>. They affect or bother me. Somehow, they concern me to the extent that I realise a need for change<sup>77</sup>, I ‘see’ the lack of effectiveness of actual practices<sup>78</sup> and the potential to improve them. Unconsciously, I tend to get insights<sup>79</sup> and subsequently set targets. I set out an objective<sup>80</sup> for how I think practices and discourses *should be* instead of accepting them as they actually are. I see that as my contribution to the group.

Once the target is set, I try to reach it, I am eager to implement it<sup>81</sup>. I try to change practices and narratives or to actualise the potential. But often I cannot. I lack the practical knowledge to make others act differently.<sup>82</sup> When I cannot change practices, I tend to withdraw to theory, aiming to gain knowledge that could impact on practices. I seek in theories or concepts tools to develop both my own and the organisation's practices. In that regard, I embarked on this research hoping that it would contribute to Sigma.

Said differently, I have unconsciously carried the notion that theory should serve practices. This was my implicit assumption. Theory could be more ‘advanced’, it could represent an ideal, a potential or insightful vision. However, I have always held the view that its ultimate goal is to serve practices. Theory is a tool to improve practices. I have valued practices, or the interaction between bodies, more so than I have theories. What happens in the material world is surely more important than the theory that conceptualises it or envisions it improved. This is how I have (sometimes unconsciously) understood and practised the relationship between theory and practice<sup>83</sup>.

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<sup>76</sup> The list is endless: board dynamics, lack of customer orientation, centralised organisation culture...see Chapter 2 for my views on Sigma.

<sup>77</sup> In Chapter 1 the need for change in Sigma was ‘selling outside Alpha’, however in Chapter 2, I claimed that Sigma needed a cultural transformation. Sigma needs to change how it is organised.

<sup>78</sup> See my critiques of the technological and centralised organisation abstract machines and the potential growing organisation as improvement of actual Sigma.

<sup>79</sup> In other words, feel or intuit intensities.

<sup>80</sup> The coming together of the insights is a new understanding of the potential organisation. I build a new abstract machine as an idea (see Chapter 5)

<sup>81</sup> See Section 6.1. about implementing growing organisation abstract machine.

<sup>82</sup> I cannot act differently myself.

<sup>83</sup> This relationship was not clear at the beginning, it emerged during the research.

### **7.1.2. A new theory of the relationship between theory and practice: double capture.**

I knew that a PhD award is not given for changing practices, but this did not concern me; the manager had priority over the researcher. In the role of the researcher, I was at the service of the manager. However, during the research I have struggled to find the connection between theory and practice, or between the concepts and their contribution to Sigma's practices. I was repeatedly asked: why are these concepts useful for Sigma? I had no answer. So, again, the implicit assumption that theory serves practices did not materialise in practice. No matter how overwhelming the argument, theory was unable to change practices. I thus began to question that assumption.

Through my reading of Deleuze, a different notion about the relationship between theory and practices emerged: the double capture type of relationship. This theory states that theory and practice are independent, heterogeneous, without hierarchy or resemblance, each operating according to its own laws, without influence, interaction etc. At the same time, theory and practice are inseparable, united, two attributes of the same event. There is harmony, correspondence, even communication between them. They are connected, joined in the same assemblage (see Chapter 1), and out of their encounter both theory and practice could evolve. So, somehow, practices were expected to be changed. The manager captures the theory of the researcher and tries to implement it. In other words, I sought double capture types of relationships. However, as a researcher, I felt that the double capture relationship is both a concept and a practice, involving the traverse of both domains without one taking over the other, without hierarchy or resemblance. I had to live theory and practice independently, traversing between them. I would say that the double capture type of relationship was expressed in theory but not in practice. Practices were expressions of the former relationship between theory and practice, that is, the manager's implementation of how theory<sup>84</sup> contributes to practices. Therefore, the first understanding of the relationship between theory and practice is that the former serves the latter. The second understanding, the double capture type of relationship, emerged fairly early in the process of this research but was not actualised in practices. The double capture concept was seen as a tool for changing practices. The implementation practices remained, and still, theory was resigned to serving practices.

### **7.1.3. A new practice of the double capture between theory and practice.**

However, I suggest that this research did practise a double capture type of relationship. As a researcher, I have observed, listened, reflected. I have not acted as the manager, have not been so oriented towards results and tasks as the manager. I have tried to connect with the reader, to focus on relationships... these practices have been new for me as the manager. Furthermore, these practices emerged in parallel with the theories of double capture or traverse. This research is complete, and the thesis was written by the researcher-manager. Both views and practices are mixed, not fully differentiated<sup>85</sup>. The researcher created a theory (double capture concept) whilst practising. The

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<sup>84</sup> This time the new theory of a double capture type of relationship.

<sup>85</sup> Which is one of my self-criticisms.

researcher's practice<sup>86</sup> was not an implementation of a theory, nor was theory a tool for changing practices. I suggest that the researcher's conceptualisations and practices express a double capture type of relationship. The researcher changed intervention practices after reading theory, not through implementation, but simply through the encounter with theory. Additionally, new theories were built not as conceptualisations or representations of practices but out of the encounter with practical experiences.

As I write these conclusions, I am now aware that the researcher was theorising and practising a double capture type of relationship. I (as a mixture of researcher and manager) had a 'movement' at the beginning of Chapter 6, when it seemed that the *growing organisation* had to be implemented by the researcher-manager's interventions. Instead, I realised that interventions were simply another domain that had to be traversed. Better said, the manager realised what the researcher knew: practices and concepts emerge simultaneously. The *growing organisation* abstract machine as a concept and the interventions as practices are independent, heterogeneous etc. Both emerge as an expression of the same event, without relation or resemblance. The same *growing organisation* is expressed in two different domains: theory and practice. The manager knew this in theory but was not able to act differently. I was not able to give up seeking to ensure that the research would contribute to Sigma.

In my case at least, a 'movement' in thought is easier than acting differently. The theoretical understanding of the *growing organisation* or the double capture type of relationship emerged more easily than practising it naturally as an expression of the same event. Better said, the researcher thought *and* acted differently to the manager and he was able to create new theories (this thesis) and new practices (the methodology of this research). The manager was able to accept the researcher's theories but was not able to act differently.

However, as Kuhn (1970) suggested, "no one willingly abandons a paradigm without having before him or her a fully plausible alternative that effectively removes or displaces the problems that had surfaced in the previous paradigm" (Frisina, 2002, 3). I think that as a manager I have been able to change my view on—and practice of—the relationship between theory and practice, having had experience with it as a researcher. This could be seen as a double capture type of relationship between researcher and manager.

#### **7.1.4. The evolution of the double capture concept.**

I hope that the theory and practice of a double capture type of relationship between theory and practice is clear. It has been presented since Chapter 1 and practised throughout this thesis. However, as we know, a double capture entails that both theory and practice evolve out of their encounter. Having practised a double capture type of relationship throughout this research, I will reformulate its theory. Therefore, I will again traverse to theory—a new relay between practice and theory.

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<sup>86</sup> See Chapter 4 for the researcher's practices, above all the explorer's one; interviews, surveys etc.

I see the relationship between theory and practice (the double capture) as an experiment. Rather than moving to theory to change practices or act differently, rather than withdrawing to theory as a tool to change practices, the experiment *is expressed in theories and practices*. In other words, instead of theory serving practice, I experiment with both at once: I act differently, try out new practices and explore new concepts, theories, or discourses. I experiment and see what happens. The experiment expresses in theories and in practices new intensities that are not caught in existing abstract machines. I proposed new words or concepts like cultural entropy, or the dysfunctions of a team, and I experimented with new practices such as interviews, the P02 committee etc. As a researcher, I performed a different relationship between theory and practice.

I sum, I would say that in a double capture type of relationship, theories and concepts do not impact or serve practices. They have no relation; both express the same event (in my case, this experimental research). I intervene with theories that could potentially represent hidden intensities or abstract machines (which as we know are a set of conditioning relations). The employees could be unaware of these intensities, feelings or experiences until they recognise them conceptually. Theories produce intensities, reactions, a 'movement' in thought. We can see things differently after understanding a concept. At least in my case, I found intensities through reading Deleuze. I also find intensities through the practice of working with others.

Ultimately, I would personally say that theory and practice are, on the one hand, the same search for intensities in two different domains. On the other hand, they are expressions of the same intensities (abstract machine, event...) in two different domains. I have conceptualised and practised the relationship between theory and practice as an expression of a new way of being, expressing and seeking intensities that escape the *centralised* and *business-oriented* abstract machines. I have theorised and practised (with more or less success) a different way of relating theory and practice, but also a different way of relating with my colleagues. Ultimately, I have experimented with a different way of relating, or in other words, with a different abstract machine. This new abstract machine was built by connecting the intensities that emerged through experimenting with new concepts and new practices. It was built with intensities that escaped existing abstract machines. This new abstract machine (a different set of conditioning relations) could be called a double capture, traverse, or even *growing organisation*.

#### **7.1.5. From double capture to traverse.**

I would add, however, that I have differentiated a new relationship between theory and practice, but as we have seen throughout the thesis, that is not the only possible relationship. Sometimes, practices are conceptualised or theories are implemented. The double capture type of relationship co-exists with other types of relationship. The relationship between theory and practice is a multiplicity that is traversed. The manager will continue trying to implement theories; the researcher will try to conceptualise and represent what organisational practices are. The pure academic could neglect or even resist practices, whilst a very action-oriented manager may not be interested in theories at all. My claim is that the relationship between theory and practice traverses several types of relationships between

theory and practice. The relationship between theory and practice is not one but a multiplicity. As discussed in Chapter 5, there is a clash between abstract machines, and it is not a matter of actualising one of them but of traversing them all (as is the case for the *growing organisation* with the *technological, centralised* and *business-oriented* abstract machines). Eventually, intensities (or lines of flight) will escape the existing abstract machines and a new relationship between theory and practice could emerge.

#### **7.1.6. Conclusion to the relationship between theory and practice.**

In conclusion, I would say that the relationship between theory and practice is complicated. What is said, a statement, might look like a theory, but it is also a practice. Though they may not resemble one another, theory and practice are expressions of the same event. So, to conclude, I would ‘express’ (in theories and practices) that elucidating the relationship between theory and practice is a matter of being open-minded, experimenting, trying new concepts and new practices, with no relation between them other than the fact that they belong to the same event. Both express the same abstract machine and are built from lines of flight escaping already actualised mainstream theories and normalised practices. The virtual or potential new way of being is fed from intensities that emerge from theories and practices. Out of their encounter, “something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental *encounter*” (Deleuze, 1995b, 139, original emphasis).

I suggest to express or actualise the world’s own potential or “transform the world itself using both theory and practice, side by side” (Nail, 2012, 7). This differs from wondering whether theory has changed practices, or whether Deleuze’s concepts have contributed to Sigma, or whether the concepts and the research, in general, have been useful. Instead of trying to link theory to practice, assessing to what extent a theory can serve to alter practices, I encourage a sensitivity to feeling, being aware of the event and the effects of the encounter. The key question is: has the experiment (with theories *and* practices) produced a becoming on Sigma, on Deleuzian thought, on organisational studies, on the reader, or on myself? As this section has tried to show, the experiment certainly changed my views and practices on the relationship between theory and practice. Moreover, I suggest that a new theory about the relationship between theory and practice has emerged out of the encounter with managerial, organisational, and research practices. In other words, new theories and new practices emerged as expressions of this new experiment or event.

In the following sections, we will explore the effects of the experiment in the other entities or domains that I have just mentioned.

## **7.2. A Deleuzian research and thesis**

### **7.2.1. Thought process. The emergence of a thesis**

What is a Deleuzian research orientation? It is certainly not just a theoretical matter. It has to do with vital problems. Problems that trouble us, that are felt.

*It is true that on the path which leads to that which is to be thought, all begins with sensibility. Between the intensive and thought, it is always by means of an intensity that thought comes to us* (Deleuze, 1995b, 144)

That which can only be sensed moves the soul, perplexes it, forces it to pose a problem. The thesis is linked to that problem, it is constructed as a response to a problem. However, the problem evolved through the research. Better said, multiple contingent bodily encounters forced thought to rise up and experiment, creating concepts through the journey in response. Eventually, the multiplicity of concepts and arguments becomes the thesis itself. The thesis is the synthesis, the coming together of a multiplicity of thoughts that emerged out of physical encounters.

In that regard, instead of a representational thesis with a clear and concise linear argument, or with a rational pre-given logic and structure, Deleuze suggests we be open to non-reason (not reason or unreason), open to chance bodily encounters that force us to think rather than voluntary abstract self-contained and self-sufficient thinking. This thesis does not only represent a thought process and its outcome but also constitutes an affective encounter, making the reader live the thought process in addition to understanding it cognitively.

What is this thought process? I would say (and I tried to craft the thesis to make the reader practise it) that thought emerges out of encounters producing a multiplicity of insights or ideas. In that regard, thought is unplanned, divergent, experimental and open to experience. At the same time, connections, associations are made at an infinite speed of thought, producing meaning, sense, or a new representation of thought. The thesis is the unity that emerges out of the nomadic connections (traverse) of the multiplicity of insights, ideas or concepts. Ultimately, the thesis is a creative (experimental) respond to the encountered problems rather than an intention to escape from the past or control the future.

### **7.2.2. Writing process. The relationship between reader and writer.**

The thesis is not just composed of affective encounters or explorative embodied experiences (the first movement of pragmatics) and reflections (the second movement) of the researcher. Thoughts, concepts have to be articulated, ‘the infinite speed of thought is slowed down’ to a written text (third movement). But, as previously noted, the thesis is not just a representation of explorations and concepts. It is not a tool to communicate the thought process. I realised that the thesis, to be Deleuzian, needed to make the reader live the research and the concepts. At some point during the research it became evident that I had to include the relationship with the reader as a lived experience of a double capture type of relationship, and at the same time make the reader explore and reflect<sup>87</sup>. In that regard, the text constitutes an affective encounter with the reader and provokes a traverse at infinite speed of thought of a multiplicity of chapters and ideas by the reader. Therefore, the thesis is somehow incomplete; it

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<sup>87</sup> The reader could write down his or her thoughts as the third movement of the pragmatics.

asks the reader to experience the emergence of an eventually consistent, coherent argument as the synthesis of the multiplicity that constitutes this text.

I have found constructing a Deleuzian thesis very challenging. I like challenges, but this turned out to be too demanding. On the one hand, I had to be faithful to my interpretation of Deleuze. I wanted to demonstrate what a Deleuzian thesis looks like, and I had to do it right. I didn't want to betray Deleuze and disappoint scholars of Deleuze. It is challenging enough to vividly express what is working and to do research on Sigma, but writing to create affects and to make people think is a different challenge altogether. To craft a double capture relationship with the reader that makes her or him evolve constitutes a higher degree of difficulty still. Even Deleuze's writing is not for everyone, it is often difficult to discern any meaning or appreciate what he is trying to do. In sum, I would suggest that it is not easy for the reader to connect with Deleuze's texts, and I aimed to do just that: to connect with the reader, to compose a double capture relationship. On the other hand, the thesis is a PhD research project—and it will be assessed by academics. One of the proofreaders was an academic, with a very analytical mindset. He struggled with my drafts, he missed a linear argument, a given structure, the literature review, definitions, and so forth. He demanded more clarity, less repetition and more support for the reader to follow the text. My text was extremely hard to read, very difficult to connect with. I felt frustrated.

In addition, the text not only had to be Deleuzian and up to PhD standards but was also intended to be read by Sigma employees. As noted before, I aimed to impact on Sigma positively. I believed that the thesis could inspire change and action, or at least I hoped the *growing organisation* would appeal to Sigma employees as an escape from the frustrating and controlling *centralised organisation* and the unsatisfactory *business-oriented* organisation. Ultimately, the thesis also aimed to somehow mobilise Sigma employees.

In sum, this thesis has aimed at satisfying Deleuzian scholars and practitioners, as well as academics of organisational studies, who will assess the coherence of the argument. It has also aimed to seek more or less substantiated claims and to in some way be a political speech centred in affects and bodily actions that aimed at moving Sigma towards the *growing organisation*. I had to write not for a universal or general reader but for a multiplicity of singular readers. How could I compose double capture relationships with heterogeneous readers to consider? This has been the ultimate challenge. I had to start more humbly, just writing 'for' the reader.

I am used to writing for myself. I enjoy writing my thoughts, making connections between them, seeing them develop in a free flow of writing. I write to explore ideas, to better understand things, to clarify concepts. I find writing useful as a practice oriented to reaching an understanding. The conclusions, the insights were important, not how I reached them. I did not describe or represent. I gave no context, no information to the reader to understand. I had no interest in writing about things I already knew, like boring details of Sigma processes, strategic initiatives etc. My writing was a spontaneous

free flow of impressions and reflections, and I enjoyed it. Evidently, it proved inaccessible for the reader.

The problem emerged when I realise I have to write for the reader. The self-organisation of the text, the emergent structure, the ‘stream of consciousness’ worked only for me. I needed to craft a message, a structure, ultimately a text for the reader. There was a movement in thought— I needed to write differently. However, as we know, and David Bohm recalls:

*changing the abstract thought is one step, but unless it also changes the way the body responds, it won't be enough... You need the tacit knowledge which you get by actually riding, and then you are sort of correcting the previous knowledge. There is a movement in that tacit knowledge moves and finds a result in the direction you have been aiming for, it then continues – it goes in that direction some more. That's the way it learns, until you finally find yourself riding the bicycle. You may be guided by the abstract map, but you need the tacit knowledge as well.*  
(Bohm et al. 2004, 90)

It seemed that I shall gain proficiency in writing for the reader through actually writing for the reader. It is a tacit learning process, a movement in my writing that corrects previous writing technique. Somehow it is a body movement towards the other, not just an intellectual understanding of the need to write differently. I had to embody, actualise the orientation to the reader, to the relationship. The text is the ‘realiser’, the ‘nomadic empty element’ that connects me with the reader. It is in the middle. The text had to be the actualisation of the potential relationship with the reader. I had to help the reader, host her, support him, guide her through this unorthodox journey.

I should add ‘the writer’ to the multiplicity within me. I want to think that the intensities, the impulse, the potential is there, asking to be actualised, to be expressed in a proper document. I am trying and I think I am learning. But it is not easy. I have had a few readers of my drafts, and the signs they emitted for me to learn were still fewer. How do I observe my own writing as a new reader, without any previous knowledge of Deleuze, Sigma or this peculiar researcher-manager? How do I detect what was wrong with my writing? I do not know. It just happened; a ‘movement’ happened. I have started developing a sensitivity to the quality of my own writing. Could I say that the practice of writing evolved out of the encounter with theory and early readers? Certainly. But it evolved also because I was able to dedicate time, attention and devotion to writing instead of following the manager’s agenda. He wanted to finish this painful experience that was not contributing to his managerial practices. Observation of my actual writing, time and reflection, and practising a different writing style were introduced.

I, in my different roles, have struggled with ‘acting differently’, with the third movement of pragmatics. Crafting, actualising, communicating, representing, embodying the double capture, traverse or *growing organisation* in concrete practices and discourses has been the most difficult part of the research. I enjoyed exploring and reflecting. But that is not really changing, unless the body expresses the new abstract machine.

From the beginning of the research, my body and thoughts certainly expressed the intention to contribute to Sigma. I might also be a Deleuzian thinker from the outset, but I was definitely not an academic or researcher when I embarked in this journey. Perhaps, the thesis has mostly been an actualisation of that part of me. Although it does not show everything, the thesis expresses what I am, actually and potentially. My singularity is a synthesis of Deleuzian (potential) academic manager (among other things). Perhaps, instead of struggling to connect with the multiplicity of singular readers (Sigma employees and directors, examiners and Deleuzian scholars) I just need to let go of the part of me that ‘wants’ connect with the other in a specific way. Give up on striving to compose relationships and just affirm my singularity, express my uniqueness, embody in concrete practices and discourses what I am. Some readers will connect, others will not. Some will be upset and defensive, some will be moved to action and change, open to experiment. Eventually, instead of I connecting with the other, I, as a singularity, will be traversed and therefore connected composing a new assemblage.

In sum, this thesis is written as an expression of a singularity. A singularity that emerges as the synthesis of a multiplicity of intensities. Some more actualised; Commercial Director, explorer, reflective manager and some less; member of the Board, writer. Ultimately, the thesis shows the strength of the most actualised—the task-oriented self-centred—and the full emergence in theories and first tries in practices of the second less actualised—the community or relationship-oriented. I hope that the reader can appreciate my struggle throughout the thesis to first differentiate the potential intensities escaping my actualised identity and then in making the first steps to actualise them in concrete practices and theories.

Therefore, I suggest that a Deleuzian thesis is a singular expression. It is not a means to another end but the affirmation of difference in itself. One writes one’s self; his feelings, impressions, reflections, insights, struggles, desires, frustrations, interventions, hopes, expectations, mistakes etc. In that regard, I exposed myself, my strengths, my weaknesses, the intensities that run through me, my potentials. The text is not a tool to connect with the reader. Ultimately, I should not aim at impacting the reader; the goal is not a specific relation with the reader, no power relation is desired. The text is a singularity, standing on its own. I finally liberate the text from any purpose, I relate to it without expectations. Now, how do you, dear singular reader, relate with this other singularity? What is the effect of the encounter with the text?

### **7.2.3. Personal-Collective**

Something emerges in my relation with this thesis as I read it again. I feel a movement in thought and practice. I stated in the Preface that “having dedicated two decades to my own development, I now feel an impulse to explore new ways of relating”. Since 2001, I have practised non-dual Kashmir Shivaism tantric yoga as a self-knowledge and self-improvement practice, but my dedication to it substantially reduced when I started this research. I felt a movement towards the other, towards collective development that my yoga practice as a student could not satisfy. However, I started teaching

yoga more or less when I began this research. With some friends, I also founded a cross country skiing club for kids.

However, after 5 years of research, I feel again a movement towards myself, towards more personal transformation. During 2019 I returned to meditation, training in Claudio Naranjo's enneagram as a personal transformation tool, more intensive personal yoga practice, and intensive training in Marshall Rosenberg's nonviolent communication. The thesis that was an attempt to contribute to Sigma ultimately became sometimes autobiographical. I as an individuality became very present and central to this research on organisational studies. As I have suggested a transition from 'the thesis as a tool to connect with the reader' to 'the thesis as a self-affirmation and difference in itself'. Ultimately, I do not subsume to the relation or the collective. Lately, I have been wondering: why should I impact the reader, or Sigma? Why do I need to change Sigma's culture? How did 'culture entropy' become my concern, or the *growing organisation* the 'work-to-be-done'?

Trying to change others, acting upon others' actions (politics), trying to reach, connect and impact the other makes me critical, aggressive, stubborn, demanding, rigid, among other things (personal communications from colleagues). The strained community orientation grows the distance between myself and others. Instead, at the end of this research I claim that I should humbly start changing myself, just embody the potential, express in theories and practices the new abstract machine (*growing organisation* or otherwise), affirm the event of community orientation in theories (and thoughts) but also in personal actions, body language, statements etc. An event (*growing organisation* for example) is expressed in (1) individual invisible thoughts, feelings, emotions etc. (2) individual visible actions, behaviours, habits, (3) collective invisible culture and (4) explicit organisational norms, rules, policies, processes etc. Therefore, I shall start acting aligned with the *growing organisation* before I force the change of organisational practices. I must admit that in aiming for a *growing organisation* as a concept my body has expressed resistance to *growing organisation* features. In sum, instead of collective transformation or just personal transformation, we can witness the continuous traverse between personal and collective, not one *or* the other. Ultimately, personal and collective are two expressions of the same event<sup>88</sup>.

#### **7.2.4. Methodology**

The relationship between personal and collective is a complex philosophical topic that I do not dare to open now. However, regarding a Deleuzian methodology, I do want to stress the importance of the researcher's intensive participation in the object of study. The research is a traverse between personal and cultural (invisible, internal) experiences, and between personal and collective (visible, external) practices. I, by a sustained immersion, got a sense of what it feels like to work in Sigma, how organisational culture and practices affect me and other employees or how it feels to embody the

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<sup>88</sup> From Deleuzian view I would say, that impersonal forces are expressed in individualities and collectives. With no direct relation between them.

different abstract machines of Sigma. I suggest that it was necessary to become involved in the daily life of the object of study. A Deleuzian research is not simply about reflection or abstract thought—that is just the second movement of the methodology. It starts from an intensive bodily engagement, with formal interviews, but above all, with being one of them.

This approach does not come without its challenges. It is difficult to observe and participate at the same time, but also difficult to differentiate pure observation from participation. Observation and participation come together inseparably. However, one of them may be unconscious. When we just observe we may think we are not participating. But we are—in a different way, perhaps—nevertheless, we are participating. The Deleuzian approach I propose would be: differentiate and traverse. I have differentiated observation, reflection and participation (which I called exploration, reflection and crafts or intervention) and traversed them all. That is ultimately my methodology.

However, I do not want to be normative. The methodology has been emergent. I have not applied it. Practices (exploration of Sigma and Deleuze's work in Chapter 2 and 3 respectively, reflection in Chapter 5, craft or intervention in Chapter 6) and the theory of the methodology (Chapter 4) emerged simultaneously. In that regard, the theory might not completely resemble the practices. Chapter 4 is not a representation of exploration, reflection and intervention practices nor are those implementations of the methodology (as theory). Another research project might be a different abstract machine and will be expressed in different practices and theories regarding methodology. Ultimately, the essence of my methodological approach would be to encounter a different domain and see what happens, whether theories and practices evolve<sup>89</sup>.

Moreover, if I was to repeat the research I would do it differently. At least the reflection movement. I regret that the *growing organisation* concept was built, invented by me. Yet, it is based on the exploration. Thought emerged rooted in bodily interactions with Sigma employees, it was not an abstract thought. However, I think it could be beneficial to practise a collective thinking exercise, something like David Bohm's proposal in "On dialogue"(2004)<sup>90</sup>. The potential Sigma, the new virtual abstract machine (*growing organisation* or another) should be emerged out of a collective reflective practice with the direct participation of more employees. Ideally, a higher number of employees should perform an exploration, reflection and intervention methodology on Sigma, checking with each other the outcome of each movement. This way, personal assumptions, blind spots, character traits etc. would be mitigated and a more 'impersonal' abstract machine could be built. A collective vision for Sigma could emerge instead of my personal vision (although rooted in a sustained immersion in Sigma).

In the end, what has the research become for me? It is the actualisation in theories and in my own practices of a new 'abstract machine' or event. An experiment with theories and practices that somehow

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<sup>89</sup> For example, I would like to experiment with the encounter between Deleuze and Yoga, and I do not foresee conducting interviews.

<sup>90</sup> David Isaacs, Juanita Brown, Margaret J. Wheatley, Otto Scharmer come also to my mind.

try to satisfy ‘emergent’ needs (personal and arguably collective) or express intensities that escape actual mainstream narratives and practices of the organisation I work for.

### 7.3. Organisational transformation

I hope that the reader has been able to discern the meaning of the new concept of organisation and organisational transformation that this thesis puts forward. Nevertheless, as the reader of Deleuze knows, I will betray the Deleuzian approach to conclusions and will instead articulate the concepts that (for me) this research and thesis expressed in theories and practices. I would be pleased to hear that you, the reader, reached a different understanding or concept<sup>91</sup>. It would mean that the thesis is open, full of lines of flights that can be connected in a different way than I did.

#### 7.3.1. Organisational ontology

An organisation is an assemblage, a multiplicity of singularities that come together, a synthesis of heterogeneous elements. It is defined by the external relations between these singularities rather than by the singularities themselves. The organisation is the emergent outcome of these relations when they reach a consistency. That could be (1) intrinsic or molar, (2) axiomatic or functional, or (3) nomadic traverse or molecular. In other words, (1) the noun organisation as stable relations already established, (2) the verb organising as the organisation of new encounters with a goal, and (3) the self-organisation: encounters that constitute new assemblages. I suggest that an organisation is the coming together of these three types of relationships.

We have called to the set of conditioning relations the organisation’s abstract machines. I have differentiated between four abstract machines within Sigma: *technological*, *centralised*, *business-oriented* and *growing organisation*. Although some are more actualised than others, I have suggested that Sigma is the traverse of all the coexisting abstract machines, that I named *growing organisation*. That is the ‘concept’ of Sigma, its potential. It is the virtual side of the organisation. It is Sigma’s hidden ‘essence’ which is not fully actualised. Only thought can gain access to it indirectly creating a concept for it.

However, it is not abstract thought. The creation of the concept is rooted in the effects or intensities out of bodily interactions. Thought emerges out of material encounters of bodies immersed in the field. The concept of Sigma (the *growing organisation*) is immanent to the actual Sigma. Although it is not fully actualised, it is not transcendental detached abstract thought. Deleuze calls this reign of the abstract machine *the virtual*, which is real but not actual.

Throughout the thesis, I have differentiated between three domains. The virtual side, potential, abstract machine, thought experiment or concept is one of them. I call it *the subtle* domain. The other two domains are *the supreme* and *the corporal* (expressed in Table 11 below).

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<sup>91</sup> I believe you can ‘see’ or ‘read’ me better than I do.

Supreme	Subtle	Corporal
Primary Order	Secondary Surface Organisation	Tertiary Arrangement
Pure Virtual	Virtual	Actual
Disorganisation	Potential Organisation	Concrete Organisation
Plane of Consistency Desire Body without Organs	Abstract machines	Concrete Practices and Discourses
Absolute Outside of Power and Knowledge	Forces, Power	Knowledge
Chance encounters	Makes See and Speak	What is said and seen
Chaotic bodily interaction	Set of potential relations	Actual relations
Exploration	Thought	Representation
Observe the effect of encounters	Reflection	Crafts
Feel	Built a concept	Embody the event or abst. mach.
	Think	Act

Table 11: Three domains

As the reader might notice, each group is a multiplicity, the concepts are not synonyms and their differences cannot be subsumed to a common label. However, I suggest that there are three distinct domains. The supreme is the absolute outside, it is unknown and unknowable, there is no access to it. It is constituted by all the chaotic movement, total freedom outside any form of power. The unity of the assemblage has not yet emerged. There is no individuality or organisation, only material body interaction without any concept of ‘I’, the organisation or the world. It is a non-conceptual domain. It has been called pure virtual, the plane of consistency, pure desire or body without organs.

The supreme domain is the base for any organisation to emerge. The abstract machines, the virtual side of the organisation, are developed on the plane of consistency, they are a set of virtual conditioning relations. The chaotic encounters (supreme) are caught in power relations (subtle). The subtle domain is what makes us see and speak, the forces that condition the actual organisation, its concrete practices and discourses, what is said and seen.

In sum, an organisation is a synthesis of three domains, (1) the supreme pure virtual absolute outside of power and knowledge, open to spontaneous encounters (that constitutes the plane of consistency), totally disorganised where self-organisation emerges, (2) the virtual abstract machines as sets of conditioning relations and (3) the concrete practices and discourses. In other words, disorganisation, potential or virtual organisation and actual organisation. Stated differently, an inaccessible mystery, a thinkable invisible concept and visible practices and discourses.

We have also seen that there is another element of the assemblage—the agent. He, she or it is responsible for connecting the other three elements. The agent extracts affects, intensities from the primary order outside power and knowledge, builds the virtual abstract machine as a thought experiment and embodies the concrete practices and discourses of the actual organisation. In other words, spontaneous encounters with the unknown and outside of power relations compel thought: thought emerges, and a new potential concept of Sigma is invented. The *growing organisation* is not composed

of thoughts or perceptions *about* Sigma. For the agent, it is Sigma itself, and he must be 'worthy of the event' or embody it.

In sum, a new concept of Sigma emerges out of the singular encounter between Deleuze's concepts, actual Sigma and myself. However, this concept only *seems* to give us Sigma; eventually, it can be actualised in visible qualities but may not be. Which concept, abstract machine or potential Sigma is actualised in concrete practices and discourses is a matter of politics. The organisation is constituted by encounters, thoughts and politics. Or, exploration, reflection and crafts. For me, Sigma is the *growing organisation*.

### **7.3.2. Theory of organisational transformation.**

The ontology of organisations will not be completed without an account of its transformations. I have suggested that an organisation is a traverse of its molar and molecular sides. Stated differently, it is a relay between stability and change (not continuous change as stated in Chapter 3). This research shows that rather than a stable being or continuous change, the organisation goes through many stages; its abstract machines. I have differentiated four abstract machines in Sigma: (1) *Technological Centre* in 2002 (Altic) and 2007 (Alpower), (2) *Centralised Organisation* in 2012-2013, (3) *Business-Oriented Organisation* in 2017 and eventually (4) the *Growing Organisation* in 2018. These abstract machines coexist, and they are actualised in more or less degree in concrete practices and discourses.

We could differentiate two moments of the organisation's transformation. Firstly, the change of abstract machine: A different abstract machine is a transformation of the concept of the organisation. When the organisation is thought differently, it is a conceptual transformation. That could eventually also change the mainstream discourse. However, the new abstract machine or concept is a thought experiment, it cannot be claimed until it is embodied and made visible in concrete practices and discourses. This constitutes the second transformation, the actualisation of the new abstract machine in concrete practices and discourses. Therefore, organisational transformation occurs when a new abstract machine is actualised, when a new concept is effectuated in concrete practices and discourses.

Firstly, a virtual or potential new organisation emerges and secondly it is actualised. In the case of Sigma, Alpower and Altic were born as *technological centres* with the clear mission of developing technology to make Alpha Group independent from global electronic product suppliers. I suggest that the *centralised organisation* abstract machine emerged because of the need to manage an exponentially increasing number of projects and people. It might have started as virtual potential around 2011 and has been actualising since then. It became predominant around 2014-2015 with the implementation of processes (P04, P03 etc.) and the development of the management model. The need for a *business-oriented* abstract machine came in 2013 with the new objective of selling outside Alpha Group. However, its actualisation happened in 2017 and 2018. I have suggested that a new abstract machine has emerged: the *growing organisation*. However, only a few practices and discourses are actualised in Sigma at the end of 2018. There could be a change of the abstract machine that is not visible for some

years. A transformation that is not historically noisy but quiet. It is real but virtual until it is actualised and can be acknowledged as organisational transformation.

Therefore, there are two key movements; the emergence of a new abstract machine, and its actualisation. The second movement entails embodiment, politics, crafts, acting upon other actions etc., incarnating the abstract machine in concrete practices and discourses. However, the first movement is more mysterious. How is the new concept of an organisation created? Or emerged? I have suggested that the agent extracts the abstract machine from the actual organisation, he thinks of it as a thought experiment immersed within the organisation. Thought (or concept) of the *growing organisation* emerges from the actual Sigma. Somehow, the agent is sensitive enough to appreciate the intensities or lines of flight that escape the actual abstract machines. The actual organisation (or what it does) does not exhaust its abstract machine. Somehow there is an impulse that is not caught in the existing abstract machines, or in the actualised practices and discourses. It is the primary order, the supreme, the absolute outside that is not caught in power and knowledge.

For transformation to happen a new abstract machine must emerge. For that, there have to be intensities escaping existing abstract machines. I would say that the existence of these intensities is the necessary condition for transformation to happen. In other words, singularities, intensities, differences in itself that are not subsumed to existing abstract machines (or power relations) or actual practices and discourses have to be extracted. The agent connects with the supreme domain, brings some ‘chaos’ or disorganisation: new thoughts, new actions, new words, etc. In that regard, I suggest that outsiders (as I was at the beginning of the research) bring new needs, thoughts, practices and discourses to the organisation and consequently constitute resisting points. The double capture type of relationship or the traverse of heterogeneous singularities cannot easily fit in the existing organisation because the singularity is outside power and knowledge—it somehow must be problematic, a failure to integrate the difference in existing practices and discourses. The double capture is between heterogeneous elements, however, somehow the organisation cannot avoid encountering this difference in kind. The outsider cannot be rejected, it must at the same time be an insider. Ultimately, the agent as outsider embodies a resisting point and connects a multiplicity of resisting points building a new abstract machine from within. It is an experiment, it entails acting differently without knowing or expecting a specific outcome.

However, according to Deleuze (2013, 71), this extraction from the primary order is performed according to the needs or transcendental sensibility. In that regard, I suggest that the needs of *technological, centralised* and *business-oriented* organisations were Sigma’s needs, or at least its Managing Director’s needs. However, it is debatable whether the *growing organisation* is Sigma’s need or just mine. What I claim, and I hope I have shown, is that there are intensities escaping the existing abstract machines. There is the potential for something else in Sigma.

So, *how can we account for organisational transformation?* Transformation starts from the actual organisation, from concrete practices and discourses. It is the actual organisation that transforms and is transformed. Needs that are not satisfied, intensities escaping the actual practices and discourses have

to be there, brought by outsiders or extracted from outside existing abstract machines. Connecting these lines of flight, a new abstract machine, a new vision or potential has to be thought, envisioned. And finally, approaching them as experiments, new practices and discourses must be actualised. One being worthy of the event embodies the new abstract machine. This entails thinking and acting differently, speaking and seeing anew without being affected by power and knowledge. Somehow, existing power relations and assumptions have to be suspended. For transformation to happen established relations, habits, practices, narratives, representations have to be criticised and suspended. The new singularity should not be reduced to the existing knowledge (practices and discourses) and power relations (virtual abstract machines). Ultimately, new practices and discourses are performed for their own sake, as expressions of a singularity.

In sum, organisational transformation is the circle of virtualisation and actualisation. The virtual emerges from the encounter between the absolute outside and the actual organisation and it is actualised. I would suggest that the actual practices and discourses of the circle virtual abstract machine are performed a few times across the lifetime of the organisation. Most of the time the organisation is a stable entity. Of course, with relative positive or negative (superficial) changes but without absolute positive or negative transformations.

When the virtual coincides with the actual, when the abstract machine is literally the actual practices and discourses the transformative circle stops. There is no transformation if there are not intensities escaping the existing abstract machines. In other words, there is no transformation if there is no potential for a new organisation. Furthermore, as noted before, there is no transformation if the new abstract machine is not actualised in concrete practices and discourses. This is the main challenge for me. I think everyone in Sigma would agree with a *growing organisation*. Why then do we not actualise it? What are the barriers to relate in that way? So, *why is it that some organisations resist much-needed change?* Because transformation entails actually acting and speaking differently. Not only feeling the potential but actually doing it. This research and the writing of this thesis has shown me that acting differently can be painful, often necessarily entailing frustration, a lot of practice, time, attention, and commitment. Transformation entails experimenting with novelty without the comfort of the known. I think that embodying a new abstract machine entails care for what is missing right now that you would be keen to see actualised. Also, creativity to experiment without an agenda, and above all courage to leave the comfort zone and walk into your fears and confidence in being who you really are. How is this courage and confidence transposed from personal to organisational? I do not know. Yet, I will keep experimenting with the traverse between personal and organisational transformation.

### **7.3.3. Further research.**

I find the abstract machine of Sigma more interesting than what Sigma does as the latter derives from the former. However, more fascinating than that is the transition from the pure virtual or plane of consistency to the abstract machine, in other words, the creation of the abstract machine out of the

spontaneous encounters. Stated differently, the transition from disorganisation to a potential organisation.

The raw materials for a new abstract machine (or potential organisation) are the intensities perceived in the interaction with the actual organisation that are not caught in existing abstract machines. As has been observed, we perceive intensities or differentiate differences according to our needs or transcendental sensibility. The needs are key to perceiving lines of flight or intensities escaping the actual and virtual organisation. The needs (or sensitivity) become instrumental to building a new abstract machine, and consequently for organisational transformation. I would suggest that transformation is a transformation of needs. It at least starts with it.

*It is not the consciousness of men that determine their existence, but, on the contrary, it is their social existence that determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of their development the material productive forces of society come into contradiction with the existing productive relationships. ... From forms of development of the productive forces these relationships are transformed into their fetters. Then an epoch of social revolution opens. (Fromm and Marx 2013)*

The agent perceives needs, intensities or lines of flights which transcend the *technological, centralised* and *business-oriented* organisations. However, they are not the agent's needs. The agent is determined by his 'social existence', by his immersion in Sigma, by bodily encounters. Thought emerges out of body encounters. The agent is the bearer of the new needs, which are collective. Sigma itself (as *technological, centralised* and *business-oriented*) gives rise to the new needs. These new needs are unsatisfiable within these abstract machines, they are motives towards a different organisation. The abstract machines condition the relationship between employees, but at the same time, they produce the consciousness of the limitations of these relationships: the need to transcend them. Somehow, the agent becomes conscious of the need to escape the subordination to the existing abstract machines. The actual relations become fetters on the impulse or developmental forces.

It is the simple consciousness of recognising that the actual relations are reduced to the existing abstract machines that constitutes the base for the need to create new types of relationships. In other words, the need for an organisational transformation.

In sum, this thesis shows a transformation of needs. It began as organisational sustainability (unconsciously) understood as economic or financial sustainability, aiming at selling outside Alpha. In other words, I was mainly focused on actualising the *business-oriented* abstract machine. However, throughout the thesis another need emerged, organisational sustainability understood as social sustainability. The focus being how we work together, how we relate with others. This new type of relationship has been developed conceptually and practically as double capture or traverse. I claim that the transformation from *business-oriented* to *growing organisation* is the result of the transformation of "needs" that emerge out of body encounters. This new need first emerges as intensities or lines of

flight escaping the actual organisation, then they are connected building a new abstract machine that is actualised in concrete practices and discourses.

The *growing organisation* will be actualised in Sigma only in so far as it actualises the needs of its employees. The bearers of these new needs become the agents who can actualise the *growing organisation*. Stated differently, this thesis, if read by Sigma employees, could become a force towards the *growing organisation*, but only if the need already exists for them to take it up. I hope this is the case. Though it could be argued that there are many respects in which this thesis is utopian, I hope they are nonetheless fertile.

I suggest that how needs are transformed, or how transcendental sensibility is developed, requires further research. I intuit that Deleuze's approach can be enriched with Marx's views on alienation and social-productive relations. In that regard, I deeply regret that Deleuze had not accomplished his project "The grandeur of Marx". I would love to explore the encounter between Deleuze and Marx from an organisational point of view.

## **7.4. Conclusions**

### **7.4.1. Some blind spots.**

In May 2019, Sigma's Managing Director was promoted to a high-level position in Alpha Group headquarters. This change precipitated other changes: a new Managing Director in Sigma, who also brought with him a new Deputy Managing Director. In addition, I fell skiing in March 2019 and had knee surgery in July 2019. I remained on leave for many months. For different reasons that I am not going to articulate now, the Managing Director and I agreed that I should leave Sigma and join his team in the headquarters. Reflecting on this journey (and the experiment) I realise that this research has perhaps been too focused on intensities or minor politics. The Managing Director's promotion was unexpected and externally decided. I would suggest that it will have a high impact on Sigma. Now, Sigma has a new Managing Director, a new Deputy Director and a new Commercial Director. It seems that I was too internally focused, paradoxically, as this is one of Sigma's features. On reflection, I realise that I did not focus enough on Sigma's relations with external entities such as Alpha Group, customers, suppliers, partners etc.

One might also suggest that my focus on intensities, feelings, and events meant that I wrote mostly about intuitions and impressions, whilst analytical readers require more data-based arguments, representations, and descriptions. I tried to include more representational content—beginning in Chapter 2 and Chapter 6—but arguably perhaps not enough. My thought process may not be as analytical as it should be. However, I have done what I was moved to do. I expressed my singularity. My regret is that the more analytical reader will perhaps not connect with the text. I created from my experience and my felt intensities. As such, I was less interested in existing abstract theories of transformation. Perhaps I should have compared these felt intensities and experiences with the existing

literature on transformation. And perhaps, in that sense, the research is incomplete? Similarly, I have not been interested, in any significant way, in how other scholars of organisation studies have interpreted Deleuze as I viewed their work as differing greatly from what I wanted to do. Thus, it might be possible to argue that to complete the thesis I should compare my approach with theirs. I would suggest, however, that doing so would not be Deleuzian.

I regret not having better differentiated between the researcher and manager roles, as well as between the Commercial Director and board member roles. I now realise that throughout the research process I might have been more focused on my own personal contribution (commitment, workload, intellect and results) in order to be accepted by the group rather than focusing on our collective development, or on traversing singularities. I would suggest, however, that being aware of these different roles, being able to observe these parts of myself from outside has indeed been a contribution of the research. What I regret is not having the opportunity to continue the research (having left Sigma) to experiment with the inclusive traverse with the other members of the Board.

Conceptually I think there is a contradiction or paradox in this thesis that I did not tackle. Further thinking and practising would be necessary to articulate it properly. For now, I feel some intensities with the fact that the transformative circle is traversed a few times (four times in Sigma history to date). However, I also stated that the circle is continuously traversed. That thought and practices emerge simultaneously, and sequentially—moment to moment. On the one hand, the abstract machine does not change that often. Abstract machine and interventions emerge simultaneously, moment to moment. Perhaps there is a smaller and faster circle between observation, thinking and acting, and another slower circle between an abstract machine and its actualisation. Perhaps, the fast thoughts and actions are expressions of more stable abstract machines and its actualisations?

Finally, I did not at all foresee the risk and difficulty of this ambitious, creative, experimental, and very different approach to research. Indeed, how intellectually demanding and time-consuming it would be might have been my biggest blind spot. Only the realisation of how rewarding the PhD research process has come close to it.

#### **7.4.2. Transformation performed**

I started the research intending to just understand how organisations transform: “how can we account for organisational transformation, or the lack thereof?” was my initial concern. However, it very soon became: “How can a PhD research account for *and facilitate* organisational transformation?”. I wanted to contribute to Sigma’s transformation towards sustainability. However, I understood sustainability to be economic sustainability. I focused on selling outside the Alpha group in order to grow. The researcher, however, started exploring Sigma, and, as Chapter 2 shows, other challenges emerged. The cultural transformation seemed more necessary than growing financially. That was 2016. It took me two years to fully realise that I was more concerned with social sustainability than economic. Over these years my commitment has shifted to contributing to Sigma’s transformation towards the *growing*

*organisation*. However, at some point, struggling with the implementation of the abstract machine, I saw for myself that my commitment, instead of being to the *growing organisation*, was to explore, think and act. My commitment was to research itself, to the experiment. Surely, my commitment was not to a specific new concept of Sigma. At that stage, what mattered was the outcome of the experiment, the impact of the research on Sigma. Does the research increase Sigma's puissance? Somehow the focus shifted to the relationships. However, at some point, I relaxed the need to impact on the other (Sigma, reader etc.). Ultimately, I am a singularity, a resisting point to existing abstract machines and an expression of a new abstract machine. However, I do not end this journey only caring for myself; I do feel attracted to enriching others (readers, employees and Board members) *and* my own experience. A traverse between collective and personal becoming. I think the key is to treat myself and others as singular multiplicities, acknowledge (or differentiate) my needs as a researcher, reflective manager, Commercial Director, member of the board, and researcher-manager concerned with social sustainability etc. and prepare double capture or an inclusive traverse between them. It is also critical to acknowledge others' needs as I did with customers as the Commercial Director, with employees as a researcher, hopefully with the reader and (my biggest regret) as I failed to do with Board members, relating with them as a double capture relationship.

Throughout the research and thesis, I have realised the need for politics. I felt I was good at exploring and reflecting but not at all at crafting. However, I also recognised the limits of politics. Instead of implementing practices and discourses, I suggest that the proposed practices and discourses have to be proposed as experiments. Moreover, they have to be expressions of the new abstract machine. Ultimately, this research constitutes practices and discourses as experiments, enabling the room to act differently, embodying the new abstract machine. I (as a singularity) explored, reflected and crafted different types of working relations (escaping *technological*, *centralised* and *business-oriented*), a different manager, different researcher and writer. Ultimately, I embodied a different possibility of being in the world. In that regard, at least on a personal level, a transformation has been performed.

I also think that this research performed a transformation on how the relationship between theory and practice can be conceptualised and practised (see section 7.1). The research also transformed research methodologies, at least I would say it performed a new one (see section 7.2.). Whether Sigma has been transformed is more complex. I would say that Sigma is clearly more *business-oriented* and some new practices and discourses escaping the existing abstract machine have emerged, arguably not fully actualising the *growing organisation*. In sum, I claim that the encounter of a heterogeneous domain in a double capture or nomadic traverse type of relationship does indeed make them transform<sup>92</sup>. I will conclude with the affirmation that I am looking forward to hearing your opinion also, dear reader.

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<sup>92</sup> Unparallel and asymmetrically though.

# Epilogue

## 8.1. From singularity to double capture

“We are not good at thinking *movement*” (Chia, 1999, 209, original emphasis). According to Chia, “there has been little attempt to understand the nature of change *on its own terms*” (1999, 209, original emphasis). That has been the aim of this research: to identify the nature of change, of transformation *on its own terms*. In other words, I have aimed to “get at the heart of the phenomenon of change itself” (1999, 210), specifically organisational transformation. How then could we research the notion of change? Said differently, can we think difference in itself, the absolute novelty? If so, how? An insight that arose from reading Deleuze’s work is that we cannot intentionally think transformation. Instead, a vision (or concept) of transformation arises in thought when it is lived, experienced. As Deleuze explains: “Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental *encounter*” (Deleuze, 1995b, 139, original emphasis).

Thought emerges out of an encounter with the ‘absolute outside’, external to existing knowledge and not caught in power relations. I suggest that acting and thinking differently emerge out of a specific type of encounter: a double capture. With this in mind, instead of building upon existing knowledge and methods, this thesis is the synthesis (or coming together) of practices and concepts that emerged out of the encounter with Sigma and Deleuze and Guattari’s work. I suggest that thinking *movement* or change entails a lived experience of transformation that is expressed in new concepts and practices. This thesis expresses and eventually produces a transformative journey.

Deleuze’s ‘desire’ lacks nothing; the impulse to engage intellectually and practically with a problem does not come from its absence in existing literature (in terms of theories, methods, practices or outcomes). Research—like change or difference in itself—does not necessarily emerge to fill a void in the existing theoretical or practical knowledge. It simply happens. Rather than coming from a dialectical antagonism with existing knowledge, the creation of the new comes from *resonance* (Chia, 1999, 223), from the coming together of a multiplicity of differences in kind. The world is an emission of difference in itself *and* the coming together of these differences in a double-capture or traverse type of relationship. Change has two movements, the multiplicity of differences in kind and their coming together or organisation producing new knowledge.

In that regard, this thesis is a singularity, a difference in itself. It exists on its own terms. The thesis, somehow, creates its own method and conceptual framework. New theories and methods just emerge independently, not building upon existing literature but as the outcome of a fundamental encounter with a real problem. The thesis is a real movement or ‘duration’ in Bergsonism, lived experience of transformation expressed in practices and theories. It is *change in its own terms*.

In sum, I posit that the conceptual contribution or becoming of theories comes about as the coming together of a multiplicity of insights emerged out of a fundamental encounter external to existing knowledge and power relations. I acted differently, diverging from the established relations and

standards that a thesis is typically expected to have. As noted earlier, this was not done as a dialectical movement against—or to differentiate myself from—others. It is simply the case that I resonate with some authors (such as Deleuze) and not with others. Consequently, the thesis does not engage with secondary literature on Deleuze and organisational change, nor does it include a secondary literature review. I decided to limit the encounter to Deleuze's own work (including his work with Guattari).

However, we are not good at thinking difference in itself, or change on its own. Thinking difference in itself entails letting thoughts or insights emerge out of the encounter (for example with this thesis as a singularity). Instead, we think movement as a change of position, from the existing configuration of knowledge (theories and methods) to a new one, from one model to a new model of organisational transformation. In other words, instead of assessing the thesis in itself, what is assessed is the difference between the existing literature and its contribution to a particular body of knowledge. Instead of thinking novelty in itself, we tend to think novelty in comparison to another previous position. What is assessed is not the creation of a new concept (and its pragmatic effect) but the extent to which a concept differs from existing theories.

In that regard, this singular thesis is incomplete in that it fails to engage with secondary literature. However, drawing on Deleuze, I suggest that there is nothing missing. It is a type of relationship with difference in kind that claims a singularity lacks something. Therefore, when constructing this thesis I have been unconventional in my methods; instead of conforming to the views of the examiners, instead of subsuming difference to established standards, practices and knowledge, an epilogue emerges out of the encounter with examiners and reviewers.

This singular thesis enters into a double capture relationship with the academic world. It becomes out of the relation. Instead of simply affirming its difference and resisting change, the thesis evolves with a new chapter. This epilogue is the outcome of that encounter, traversing both singularities (the thesis from chapter 1 to 7 and supervisors and reviewers' requirements and feedback) and eventually constituting a new thesis. It is the next step in the experiment or the ongoing transformative journey. It is important to note that the thesis does not change due to an antagonistic relationship between thesis and examiners. Instead, the 'becoming-academic' of the thesis emerges out of the encounter. As in the case of the orchid and the wasp, there is no dialectics, the thesis takes a form that appeals to the examiners, it becomes.

The thesis then *becomes* in the sense that, with this epilogue, it demonstrates my knowledge on the latest developments in the literature on Deleuze and organisational transformation. In my own words, 'my' Deleuze encounters the multiple Deleuzes of Organisation Studies. From that encounter, my Deleuze might become; at the very least, what is 'my' interpretation in contrast with others' emerges more clearly. Consequently, the contribution of this thesis to organisational studies is made more evident. This is, I think, ultimately what the examiners anticipated: to engage with secondary literature and evaluate the conceptual or methodological contribution of this thesis.

## 8.2. Deleuze in Organisation Studies

An initial reading of secondary literature on Deleuze and Organisation Studies pointed to Robert Cooper as pioneering a line of thinking organisation that bears some striking similarities to Gilles Deleuze's philosophy of difference (Linstead and Thanem 2007). As early as 1998, Cooper wrote a paper on assemblages (Cooper 1998) drawing (not exclusively) on Deleuze's work. In the same year, an interview with Cooper (Cooper, Chia, and Kallinikos 1998a) was published by Robert Chia (1998), the author of the paper "A 'Rhizomatic' model of organizational change and transformation: perspective from a metaphysics of change" (published in 1999).

Cavalcanti's "Organizational Studies and Philosophy: Deleuze's contribution" (2016, in Portuguese), Vergne's "Gilles Deleuze Contribution aux sciences de l'organisation" (2013), and Linstead and Thanem's "Multiplicity, Virtuality and Organization: The Contribution of Gilles Deleuze" (2007) all seem to point to Cooper and Chia as the pioneers of relating Deleuze's concepts to organisational studies<sup>93</sup>.

I accept Thanem's claim when he says: "Cooper has inspired and/or provoked these and others [authors of organizational studies] to adopt a processual or generic focus in the study of organization and to do so through serious engagement with thinkers outside organization theory ( e.g. Foucault, Derrida, the Frankfurt School, Whitehead and Bergson)" (Thanem 2001). I think it is fair to include Deleuze in this list. Thanem was the guest editor of the "Special Issue Deleuze and Organization Theory" of *Tamara Journal* Vol. 3 No. 4 in 2005.

In sum, I suggest that Cooper (and Chia) are the central pioneering references for the prominence of Deleuze in Organisation Studies. Thus, I engaged with "the 'Cooperian' paradigm in organisation theory" (Thanem 2001) as a review of the secondary literature on Deleuze and Organisation Studies. A further review included the references listed below:

Aroles and McLean (2016), Barreto et al. (2020), Bougen and Young (2000), Brigham (2005), Burrell (1988, 1994), Butler, Jeanes, and Otto (2014), Carter and Jackson (2004), Cavalcanti (2012, 2016), Chia (1995, 1998, 1999), Clegg, Kornberger, and Rhodes (2005), Coleman and Ringrose (2013), Cooper (1989, 1998, 2016), Cooper & Burrell (1988), Cooper, Chia, and Kallinikos (1998), Cooper and Parker (2015), DeLanda, Protevi, and Thanem (2013), Deroy and Clegg (2011), Drummond and Themessl-Huber (2007), Fotaki, Kenny, and Vachhani (2017), Fuglsang and Sørensen (2006), Hardt (1990), Hussenet and Missonier (2016), Jakonen et al. (2017), Johansson and Kociatkiewicz (2011), Johnsen (2012), Kleinherenbrink (2019), Kornberger, Rhodes, and Ten Bos (2006), A. Kristensen and Pedersen (2016), A. R. Kristensen, Lopdrup-Hjorth, and Sørensen (2014), Lawley (2005), Lilley (2009), Linstead (2000, 2002), Lohmann and Steyaert (2006), Lucas (2014), MacFarlane (2017), Mohammed

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<sup>93</sup> It is surprising not to find references to them in Sørensen's "Immaculate defecation: Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari in organization theory" (2005) when he wrote about Deleuze and Cooper in his paper "Assemblages notes, or , A Comment on the Factory of Things" (Sørensen 2001).

(2020), Munro (2015), Munro and Jordan (2013), Munro and Thanem (2018), Nayak (2008), Nick Butler (2008), Noy and Luski (2012), Painter-Morland (2011), Painter-Morland (2014), Parker and Burrell (2015), Pedersen (2008, 2011), Pedersen and Kristensen (2019), Pick (2017), Raastrup Kristensen (2010), Schultz (2012), Scott (2010), Sheard (2009), Simpson, Siddique, and Jiao (2006), Sørensen (2001,2003, 2005), (Spoelstra 2005, 2007), Steinberg (2008), Styhre (2001, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c, 2006), Styhre and Sundgren (2003), Thanem (2001,2004, 2005, 2006, 2011,2012), Thanem and Linstead (2006, 2007), Tsoukas and Chia (2002), Vergne (2013), Weik (2011), Wood (2002), Wood and Brown (2011), Wood and Ferlie (2003).

Not all of the above papers are about organisational transformation, as such. I nevertheless share the complete list for the benefit of other researchers interested in Deleuze and Organisation Studies. As I will later comment, Cooper's is not the only line of inquiry in Organisation Studies that draws on Deleuze. However, I will first engage with that which he pioneered.

### **8.3. Reading Organisation Studies' literature on Deleuze**

The section is divided into eleven sub-sections. Section 8.3.1. introduces my reading of Cooper's approach to organisational transformation, which I suggest is limited to a new discourse. In contrast, in section 8.3.2., an approach aiming at transforming the empirical world is presented. Similarly, section 8.3.3. presents the order-disorder dualism as Cooper's ordering principle while, in contrast, section 8.3.4. introduces my views in the ordering principles, the abstract machines. Section 8.3.5. addresses the role of the agent, which I think is important in Deleuze's work and insufficiently problematised in the Coopering line of thinking organisation. Similarly, sections 8.3.6. and 8.3.7. highlight the specific organisation and its structure in contrast to Cooper's general and processual approach. Section 8.3.8. reviews my approach to the relationship between the organisation and its environment. In section 8.3.9. I suggest experimenting, in discourses and practices. Section 8.3.10. acknowledges the pioneering work of Michael Hard and Tim Scoot reading Deleuze as organisational philosopher. Finally, section 8.3.11 addresses the criticism of the radical left to the political aspects of Deleuze's philosophy.

#### **8.3.1. A new discourse about organisation and organisational change**

As Cooper says in 'The Open Field': "[this] essay grew out of a set of political concerns [...] the practical use of theoretical ideas both as personal as societal level. [...] I worked as a consultant on a community development programme [...]. But I was personally dissatisfied with both social science theory and change programmes. [...] I began to think on what was excluded from social scientific thinking. [...] I wanted to open up social science to neglected and excluded possibilities". (Cooper, Chia, and Kallinikos 1998, 140).

Cooper's project fundamentally questions the nature of academic social science that he contrasted with his readings of philosophy and literature. It could be said that he wanted to change social science, and that he succeeded in doing so: "his epistemic privileging of organizational process above

organization as entity has produced a discontinuity in organization theory” (Thanem 2001, 361). This distinction between process and entity, and the primacy of the former, could be his principal contribution. However, in my view his main contribution is the suggestion to encounter a different domain (philosophy, art theory, or any other) instead of the specific theory of the dualism process-entity:

*The negative space of the Open Field knows no positive terms -it denies the existence of objects and entities in single locations. Instead, it requires us to think of a field of transformations in continuous movement of solution and dissolution. As yet, the social sciences have not even begun to consider the implications of such an approach for the study of social life. When they do so, they will have to take their cues from literature, art theory and philosophy (Cooper, Chia, and Kallinikos 1998, 145).*

I imagine that Cooper wanted to loosen up some rigid structures and taken-for-granted entities. Drawing on the domain of philosophy, he highlighted the creative process of the production of organisation and its contingent nature. That might have helped him to back up different change programmes or to justify different practices aimed at transforming a family-owned factory into a workers co-operative (Cooper, Chia, and Kallinikos 1998, 140). I appreciate the change of theories about organisations that he provoked. One must ask, however: did the organisations actually change?

In sum, Cooper has contributed to Organisation Studies by seeking insights from the different domain of philosophy, a practice that I highly appreciate and endorse. As a result of his work, a new theory of organisations and organisation emerged in Organisation Studies. Nonetheless, I wonder to what extent this new approach to organisational studies has helped to resolve the practical problems of ‘community development’ (the issue he was initially working on).

In that sense, I perceive a tendency for post-Cooperian Organisation Studies to propose new concepts of organisation: cyborgization, generic, rhizomatic, trembling, monstrous, nomadic organization, organization without organs, etc. (see Chia (1999), Kornberger, Rhodes, and Ten Bos (2006), Thanem and Linstead (2006), Thanem (2011)). All of these studies prioritise change, process or transformation over order, stability or substance.

For example, Thanem and Linstead seek to “create and invent *new* concepts of organisation” (2006, 40) (of organisation in general, “the ontological status of organisation” (2006, 39), not the creation of concepts of specific organisations). Consequently, the concepts they mobilise are somewhat general and focused on the dualism change-order. Instead of being opposed to change (Chia 1999), they suggest that “organisation *is* change” (2006, 40). Organisation is “creatively autosubversive—not fixed, but in motion, never resting and constantly trembling” (Linstead and Thanem 2007, 1483). Their intent, I think, is to question the mainstream concept of organisation. In that sense, I believe their aim was primarily the transformation of Organisation Studies rather than the transformation of specific organisations.

Creating new concepts is undoubtedly the role of philosophy for Deleuze, but it is mixed with

geophilosophy (Deleuze & Guattari, 1996,85) where “thinking is a geographical matter-movement rather than purely cognitive exercise” (Sørensen, 2005,121). Ethology, or the study of behaviour, is also part of Deleuze’s approach. In other words, focusing on what organisations do and how they work rather than on what they are is instrumental to understanding organisations and to creating concrete concepts for specific organisations. Thanem and Linstead, however, seem to be interested only in the first approach of creating a new concept and in ontology: “ Organization studies [...] have been obsessed with what organizations do, but have taken the concept of organization for granted” (2006,39).

I think these ‘Cooperian’ authors use Deleuze to recognise another way of thinking organisation, another ontology. It is entirely legitimate of course, but our projects are different. I want to experiment with how Deleuze could impact a specific organisation, whether Deleuze can contribute to *the* organisation. By contrast, I think they want to impact Organisation Studies with Deleuze’s ontology as an alternative narrative. Ultimately, they might believe that conceptualising organisation differently will transform concrete organisations. I suggest that, in addition to a new discourse about change and organisations, a new practice is also necessary. Moreover, proposing a new representation of organisation based on process philosophy does not necessarily require understanding change or organisational change on its own terms.

### **8.3.2. Theory and Practice. Transforming organisations and Organisation Studies**

In contrast, Lohmann and Steyaert (2006) propose a notably different approach to Organisation Studies and Deleuze. They “want to produce an exploratory politics of change” which supposes (2006, 77-78):

- Radical and active change, out of the “course prescribed by the political chart of capitalism”.
- A connection of the philosophical with the non-philosophical (concepts need non-philosophy to make an actual difference in the world).
- A connection with the empirical world.
- That analysis should involve experimentation through fabulation (collective enunciation).

They want to “catalyze or induce a global self-reorganization: tweak locally to induce globally”. Their approach is wholly political, intent on making a measurable difference in the world. Therefore, they are not limited to theory or to the creation of concepts; they connect theory with practices, with actions, with political goals, with the empirical world.

Drawing on the Deleuzian concept of productive and creative desire (which doesn’t lack, want or need anything) they argue that “Desire is inseparable from a machinic process of production that operates on a micropolitical level to form individual perceptions, attitudes, expectations and ways of speaking [...]. Desire is real and not imaginative; desire produces real connections, investments and intensive stages within and between bodies” (2006, 79). Affects, perceptions, ways of speaking, and intensive stages are the product of desire and what Lohmann and Steyaert do is a “cartography of affects” (2006, 84)—that is, following and describing the active and reactive responses of employees

of an organisation in a change process. Wanting to analyse organisational change, they trace desire and affects because “affects are becomings” (2006, 83).

Through the process of organisational change, employees produce affects—a multiplicity of affects, a cartography of affects that evade the efforts of managers to control and manage the change. It is a becoming-minor of employees, a subjectification, employees becoming subjects. How do they become subjects? Through the process of narrating their own stories (2006, 88): “To catch someone in the act of telling tales is to catch the movement of the constitution of a people” (Deleuze, 1997, 125-126).

“Narrations related to these affective processes can be seen as a form of fabulation” (2006, 88) and fabulation as a collective becoming (2006, 78), i.e. the constitution of a people. Fabulation or collective enunciation is minor literature, another Deleuzian concept they use—it “aspires to a collective and revolutionary enunciation, to the concern of the people, of a people to come” (2006, 81), expressing another possible community.

This minor literature is produced by “a writer placed in the margins of his or her community” and that is the problem; the researcher “remaining on the edge of its community” (2006, 81-82) is problematic. The researcher writes for a people to come, for a possible community, for a self-reorganisation, for removing fixed identities (2006, 81-77-89), in the margins of the existing community. They are an outsider placed inside. The minor literature has a pragmatic focus; the research should move from asking “what does this mean?” to “how does it work for me?”. In doing so, the literature is turned into a study of affects (2006, 90).

Through their narrative cartography Lohmann and Steyaert aim to create a fabulation based on affects that can make a difference in the organisation they are studying, and on the other hand, to make a difference in the change literature of organisational studies. This is in line with what this thesis developed into, in its becoming thesis.

### **8.3.3. Order-disorder dualism as an ordering principle**

The process-entity dualism, as an ordering principle (with differences) is mirrored throughout Cooper’s interview with Chia and Kallinikos (1998): order-disorder, rationality-irrationality, rationalistic-magic (Max Weber), conscious-unconscious (Freud), process-structure (Whitehead), organisation-disorganisation, differentiation-de-differentiation, speaking-seeing (Foucault), stability-change, focused-unfocused knowledge (Ehrenzweig), verb-noun, generic-specific, complexity-simplicity, le travail-l’oeuvre, predictability-unpredictability (information theory), thin-thick (Geertz) etc. Moreover, the process aspect of the dualism is privileged: “Organization in this sense is an ontological process of continuous regeneration of form out of non-form” (Cooper, Chia, and Kallinikos 1998, 124). Order grows out of disorder. In this sense, the relationship between the heterogeneous terms is established: one is the *cause*, the other the *effect* or product.

Paradoxically, the world (multiple, heterogeneous, in continuous transformation, chaotic...) is represented by this simple structure of two elements where one is primary and the other secondary. The

ordering principle does not change and it is ‘applied’ (as a lens) to a multiplicity of concepts from numerous complex philosophers (Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze, Vattimo, Blanchot, Bachelard, William James, Whitehead, Heidegger...). Complexity is reduced to simplicity; the categories order-disorder are used to make sense (order) of a very complex heterogeneous multiplicity (disorder).

I think that Cooper uses isolated philosophical concepts that support his impression of this order-disorder dualism and the primacy of the latter, central to his work. As he explains: “The philosophy and methodology of my essay came from a range of vastly different intellectual fields which I saw as different expressions of the same underlying ideas” (Cooper, Chia, and Kallinikos 1998, 141). The same underlying ideas come before the encounter with a complex, heterogeneous, multiplicity. Instead, in my reading of Deleuze, the concepts emerge out of the sustained (or multiple) encounter(s) with a singular heterogeneous multiplicity. In my case, there is an in-depth engagement with most of Deleuze’s work as a multiplicity and a multiplicity of insights and arguments emerges. I tend to agree with Cavalcanti when she says: “These works [of secondary literature on Deleuze and Organisation Studies] are limited to analysing specific concepts of Deleuze’s work in isolation” (Cavalcanti 2016, 183, my translation).

Moreover, I suggest that most of the authors mainly draw on isolated concepts from “A Thousand Plateaus” (with a predominance of the ‘rhizomatic’). This may explain why a focus on dualisms is commonly observed in the secondary literature. I would suggest that although Deleuze proposes multiple dualisms—molar-molecular or tree-rhizome for example—there is often a third element. In ‘Difference and Repetition’, and ‘Logic of Sense’ we find the three syntheses, the three repetitions, the three tenses of past, present and future, the three domains of primary order, secondary organisation and tertiary arrangement etc. In ‘What is philosophy?’ we find art, philosophy and science with the plane of composition, the plane of immanence and the plane of reference that I transpose to exploration, reflection and crafts in this thesis. For example, between disorganisation and organisation we find the “larval”, the “embryo” (Deleuze, 1995, 215) which are stages of the genesis of form or subject. Between ‘Desire’ and the social formations we find the ‘desiring machines’ or abstract machines. In general, as an ordering principle<sup>94</sup>, I differentiate three domains instead of two (see Section 3.3.3.4).

#### **8.3.4. The abstract machines, the different ordering principles**

What would Cooper consider a specific organisation’s transformation? From family-owned to co-operative, for example? Is there a concept in his theories to differentiate these different organisations? Without neglecting the primary order of the continuous change (in other words, the world as an emission of differences in kind) and without neglecting the tertiary arrangement of the differentiated entities, representations or order, I suggest a ‘secondary surface organization’. Simply put, this represents the ordering principle, *how* differences in kind relate to each other. The organisation as an entity not only depends on continuous change but above all on how these differences are organised.

*The very strategies and priorities involved in the ‘management of change’ must be critically*

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<sup>94</sup> Which includes the type of relations between the heterogeneous elements of the division.

*reassessed. If we follow the logic of this alternative metaphysics of change to its logical conclusion, it would imply that the management of change must, accordingly, entail, not the deliberate change-oriented form of external intervention so much preferred by conventional organizational change theorists and practitioners, but the alternative relaxing of the artificially-imposed (that is, culturally-inspired) structures of relations; the loosening up of organization. Such a relaxing strategy will allow the intrinsic change forces, always kept in check by the restrictive bonds of organization, to express themselves naturally and creatively. According to this understanding, therefore, change occurs naturally and of its own volition once the invisible hand of cultural intervention is removed. (Chia, 1999, 211)*

Can we really remove all cultural, political, psychological or even philosophical-conceptual interventions? For me, it is not just a matter of relaxing or loosening up structures. Differences in kind or chaotic changes do not produce new patterns or organisational change naturally. For example, the predominant metaphysics of substance is not so easily changed to the metaphysics of change. Concepts, descriptions of reality, ordering principles, organisation patterns remain. They surely do change, but it is another type of change. Furthermore, it entails a change in the rules of association, often needing intervention or crafts: politics. Chia (Cooper, etc.) intervenes to affirm a different metaphysics, in opposition to other concepts, descriptions or views. Loosening up, relaxing does not naturally produce a complete change of pattern. Chia proposes an alternative well-ordered discourse. I think that a new concept (or abstract machine) can emerge from the coming together of differences in kind, but this new 'pattern' coexists with former patterns (or even mindsets). The metaphysics of substance coexists with the metaphysics of change; which one will be actualised in concrete practices and discourses is a matter of intervention. This is not simply a matter of only relaxing habits. Instead, one, being worthy of the 'Event', embodies the new pattern. This starts as a thought experiment and is surely less apparent than other abstract machines. Its actualisation is required.

According to Cooper, "one analyses organizing as a general process rather than organizations and their specific features" (1998, 126). Is there one general process or a multiplicity of processes, one per 'entity'? I suggest that Deleuze does not reduce reality to one process, he acknowledges a multiplicity of becomings (like the orchid and the wasp). This is supported by Arjen Kleinherenbrink's (2019) suggestion that the beating heart of Deleuze's philosophy is a systematic ontology of irreducible, singular entities. One must then ask: is Cooper dissolving organisations in a general process of organisation? Are all organisations equal? Are they simply the product of a process?

The ordering principle (what I, drawing on Deleuze, call the abstract machine) is what makes one organisation different from another. In my reading, transformation is not only the process of continual change (or the emission of difference in kind) but also the change of the ordering principle or abstract machine. In other words, transformation invokes the emergence of new abstract machines.

In that sense, I find Tsoukas and Chia (2002) very helpful. They make the familiar distinction between the ongoing flux of change and the organisation as a quasi-stable pattern that is constituted,

shaped, and emerging from change (Tsoukas and Chia 2002, 567). As we know, the former involves the fluid, pervasive, open-ended and indivisible micro-processes of change, which are potentially always there, if we care to look for them (what I have called the emission of differences in kind or the escape of lines of flights). The latter involves synoptic, discontinuous and fixed stages. As I phrase it, they are the abstract machines, concepts as a thought experiment, as a reflection. However—and this is Tsoukas and Chia’s contribution—both entail change, but different change. The former is ‘change in organizations’ and the latter ‘organizational change’. Each refers to different phenomena. Understanding change requires an understanding of both.

‘Change in organizations’ is not the change between the different abstract machines like a stage model of change. To make sense of change in itself, or difference in kind, Tsoukas and Chia propose a Bergsonian approach (close in resemblance to my explorative movement):

*Dive back into the flux itself, he [Bergson] says; turn your face toward sensation; bring yourself in touch with reality through intuition; get to know it from within or, to use Wittgenstein's (1958) famous aphorism, "don't think, but look" (para. 66). Only a direct perception of reality will enable one to get a glimpse of its most salient characteristics-its constantly changing texture, its indivisible continuity, the conflux of the same with the different over time. [...] Only by placing ourselves at the center of an unfolding phenomenon can we hope to know it from within.[...] Intuition, knowledge from within, and direct acquaintance make up Bergson's and James's method for apprehending the flux of reality. (Tsoukas and Chia 2002, 571)*

In this method, perceiving is more important than conceiving. It entails being sensitive to difference; in perception, we are responsive to difference, to change. However, Tsoukas and Chia also recognise that we obtain a much more direct vision of reality when we occasionally turn towards reflection: “Direct knowledge (intuition) and conceptual knowledge are complementary of each other. One provides what the other cannot”. (Tsoukas and Chia 2002, 572)

Conceptual knowledge (the abstract machines, as new descriptions, i.e. new understandings) entails reflection, my second movement of pragmatics. The Bergsonian exploration provides the lines of flights, intensities or change in itself, reflection “make[s] us notice patterns [abstract machines] at different points in time that normally escape our perception” (Tsoukas and Chia 2002, 572). The apparent stability of the organisation does not preclude differences in kind—on the contrary, the abstract machines presuppose the lines of flight as they are the coming together of these.

*From a practical point of view, however, as James (1909/1996) acknowledged, "sensible reality is too concrete to be entirely manageable" (p. 247); we need to abstract it, to harness its fluidity and concreteness in our conceptual systems to act systematically on it. It is not, therefore, only the case of change being immanent in organizations but, also, the case of change being channelled, guided, led-in short, of being organizational change (Tsoukas and Chia 2002, 572).*

I construe from this quote a subtle recognition of the third movement of my pragmatics: crafting (acting systematically, guiding, channelling or managing change). “Change programs "work" insofar as

they are fine-tuned and adjusted by *actors*” (Tsoukas and Chia 2002, 578, my emphasis). I think I make a clearer distinction between reflection and crafting than Tsoukas and Chia (2002) does. For me, conceptual understanding, as the outcome of reflection, is not necessarily naturally channelled towards organisational change. Moreover, I get the impression that, for Tsoukas and Chia, the concept emerges *after* the emergence of the organisation, as the concept of the already actualised organisation. Instead, I differentiate actual patterns and the emerging pattern out of the lines of flights perceived within the organisation.

*The local initiatives, improvisations, and modifications individuals engage in may go unrecognized; opportunities may not be officially taken up, imaginative extensions may not break through existing organizational culture-in short, local adaptations may never become institutionalized (Goodman and Dean 1982). If we focus our attention only on what becomes institutionalized, an approach largely assumed by synoptic accounts of organizational change, we risk missing all the subterranean, microscopic changes that always go on in the bowels of organizations, changes that may never acquire the status of formal organizational systems and routines but are no less important. (Tsoukas and Chia 2002, 580)*

In sum: Tsoukas and Chia help us to understand that “there are ongoing processes of change in organizations. That, however, should not be taken to mean that organizations constantly change” (2002, 580). Changes in organisations (differences in kind) ‘may never become institutionalized’, they might never come together and gain the consistency of a new abstract machine. We should focus our attention on the ongoing character of change in organisations (intensities or lines of flights) but also on the emergence of organisation (2002, 577). I would argue that we should focus more so on the emergence of the organisation as a concept (or abstract machine as a thought experiment) and the emergence of actual practices and discourses as the embodiment of the concepts. Ultimately, Tsoukas and Chia regard that more “empirical research and further theoretical development” will be necessary to understand how microscopic changes become organisational change.

That is exactly what I have tried to address in the primary empirical research. Instead of just highlighting that order comes from disorder, I have tried to link intensities (or pure change) to a change in the ordering principle (or abstract machine) and to the transformation of actual practices and discourses. I suggest that change, like difference or repetition, happens in the three domains. I think it is important to analyse the genesis of order, to go beyond simply affirming that it comes from disorder. I suggest that there are different ways of ordering and that each way has consequences. I believe that some are more adequate for personal and collective development, that some structures facilitate human flourishing and emancipation more so than others. I think it is important to explore how differences in kind come together, how they are actually organised. In other words, I find it vital that the co-existence of different abstract machines and the fight between them is effectuated in actual-visible practices and discourses. In Cooper’s view, are there any politics between differences in kind? Moreover, are there

politics at all if there is only process (or change) and not ordering principles? I think Cooper privileges art and philosophy over politics<sup>95</sup>.

### 8.3.5. Agency

“Generic analysis does not recognize the self-contained human actor with its intentions and objectives” (Cooper, Chia, and Kallinikos 1998, 126). However, we do have intentions and objectives (for example, changing Organisation Studies). I endorse the criticism of authorship as self-expression and the limits of viewing fixed entities with defined insides and outsides. Having said that, I see no value in neglecting the emergence of agents and objects. It is evident that a wave is water, but we can study the forces that create specific forms of waves, which is very important for surfers<sup>96</sup>. As an agent, I exist in a field of forces or chaotic movement. I embody an abstract machine.

In that sense, I do not think; I am thought. The notion of ‘I’, as a representation of myself, is the coming together of a multiplicity of impressions or thoughts. What ‘my’ body perceives, what an organisation does to ‘me’ perpetuates the idea of me as the subject and the organisation as the object. The observer and the observed emerge from pure observation. An ‘image’ or concept of the specific organisation is reached out of the encounter. This is different from “observer and observed continually interact[ing] to produce a world of ever-changing forms in which deformation and transformation dominate” (Cooper, Chia, and Kallinikos 1998, 143). The world is produced by the interaction of what? I wonder what the ontological status of the observer and the observed is for Cooper.

I think that the process of becoming a subject (or its genesis) is important in Deleuze’s work. Of the works I have studied, this topic has been addressed extensively in “Empiricism and Subjectivity”, “Logic of Sense”, “Cinema” books and the courses on Foucault’s subjectification. In addition, there is this element that traverses the heterogeneous singularity, the ‘empty square’ in “Logic of Sense” or ‘realizer’ in “The fold”. It is the third element of the assemblage according to Nail (2017). It is the agent that connects singularities.

The figure of the agent emerged through the research as a practice. More accurately, three different agents emerged: the explorative, the reflective, and the participant. I realise that I did not comprehensively research ‘Deleuze and managerial agency’. However, I believe the figure of the agent in this thesis is consistent with Deleuze’s conceptualisation of it. It could be argued that it is a different reading of Deleuze, drawing more on the ‘structuralism’ of “Logic of Sense” than the ‘process philosophy’ of “Bergsonism”. In any case, the agent emerges both as a concept and as a practice out of the encounter with Deleuze’s work and the field (Sigma). It would be philosophically fascinating to explore the relationship between the subject or agent and the event, or the constitution of the former out

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<sup>95</sup> The introduction of revolutionary ideas in Organisation Studies might have political consequences in university departments and journals perhaps. Politics might be hidden.

<sup>96</sup> Waves are not just water for surfers. They travel the world to find the best ones.

of the latter. I would be delighted to contrast Deleuze's and Alain Badiou's views on the topic. However, this was not my concern during this research.

Nevertheless, I admit that this is an interesting line of research, both theoretically and practically. In that regard, Painter-Morland proposes an "ontological inquiry into what agency means in a business context and considering the implications" (2012,84). In her view, drawing on Deleuze's concept of desire as connective and productive, "The "agent" is something that arises as a side-product of certain practices and habits that we become part of due to these passive syntheses" (2012,91). Even without an extensive dissection here of Painter-Morland's reading of the three syntheses, we can see that there is a process, a genesis of the agent through them.

Therefore, "the kind of responsibility that Deleuzian agency would allow for, would require a unique, individual response to a specific situation that emerges in and through the individual's immersion in events and connections" (2012,91). Agency emerges through everyday practices and engagements with others, requires real participation in the messiness of everyday life, and an intense engagement with people, events and the environment (2012,92).

For an individual to become an agent, "certain practices of questioning, critique and resistance" are needed: "a critical scrutiny of the emergence of certain patterns of behaviors, beliefs and orientations" (2012,92) as well as "courageous experimentation with the possibility that things could be done differently" (2012,92). In my own words, the agent emerges through the embodiment of a different abstract machine, acting and thinking differently being worthy of the event that it (he or she) actualises. The agent emerges not through trying to manage, control or self-express but through experimenting-seeking "life-affirming possibilities" (2012,94).

### **8.3.6. General / Specific**

*Understanding of organizing as an ontological process is more important than the study of organizations. [...] To think of organizations is to think of specific objects external to us. To think of organization is to recognize a more general force which includes us in its perpetual movement between order and disorder, certainty and uncertainty (Cooper, Chia, and Kallinikos 1998, 142, original emphasis).*

*Generic analysis subordinates the intentional object and the specific part in order to reveal organization in its most general sense. (Cooper, Chia, and Kallinikos 1998, 126)*

I think that Cooper privileges philosophy over Organisation Studies, and also general over singular. What is singular in Organisation Studies that makes it different from philosophy? Instead of an encounter between philosophy and Organisation Studies, it seems that the former takes over the latter.

I contrast 'think with' organisations with Cooper's 'think of' organisation. Instead of 'recognizing the general force' and applying a general concept of organisation, I suggest that thought emerges out of the bodily encounter with a specific organisation. 'Thinking with' is not positioned on the outside. It is

rather being one with the organisation and noticing movement from within. Instead of simply having an intellectual meditation on organisation in general, I suggest experimenting with the material-body encounter with the specific organisation (the explorative movement of the pragmatics).

A singular concept is created out of this encounter (*growing organisation* for instance—the reflective movement). This makes us ‘know’ Sigma and it can eventually have an impact on employees (the third movement of intervention and representation). It is a fabulation written for the people to come. What is the use of a general concept such as “cyborganization”, “rhizomic organisation” or “generic organisation” (Cooper, Chia, and Kallinikos 1998) to understand or impact Sigma? The growing organisation is different from the business-oriented organisation, the centralised organisation or the technological center; the cyborganization is ultimately opposed to an organisation as entity.

Additionally, the nature of the relationship with a singularity constitutes an ordering principle, which defines the specific organisation. In other words, my approach experiments with concepts (emerged from the field) and practices (the relation between singularities). In contrast, Cooper uses general concepts as a lens to understand what? Organisations? Or to affirm what all organisations are?

Furthermore, can we really perceive this ‘general process’? Is it a lived experience? Do we sense the chaotic continuously changing flow? It sounds dogmatic or at best mystical to me. Who decides what is a fixed structure and what is a natural creative change in an organisation? Isn’t disorder or process a representation (or abstraction) of reality?

The “Rhizome is beyond formal comprehension, it can only be alluded to, indirectly sensed, improperly grasped” (Cooper, Chia, and Kallinikos 1998, 133). We can create, as Cooper’s does, a general concept or representation for reality *or* a specific one out of the encounter with... a ‘zone of intensity’ of the open field? We can do both, *and* instead of *or*. In any case, it is always improperly grasped or indirectly sensed. In that sense, the concept of reality (whole or zone) is a thought experiment emerging from the exploration of the field and visible only once it is structured, ordered or ‘actualised’. Ultimately, the process is made visible<sup>97</sup> by its products.

*De-differentiated knowing [associated with primary (unconscious) process] occurs as a process of complex scanning, a kind of scattered perception over a field of parts, an open field. (Cooper, Chia, and Kallinikos 1998, 123)*

*The scientist is not merely an observer of the external world but an active participator in it, so that the world is no longer external to us. We are it and it is us. (Cooper, Chia, and Kallinikos 1998, 142)*

*Thinking becomes more like perception-in-action, where what we do guides thought rather than the reverse (Rotman as cited in Cooper, Chia, and Kallinikos 1998, 124)*

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<sup>97</sup> Visible for someone; I am not saying we reach its true nature, it is just an interpretation.

I celebrate this participatory approach and thinking guided by perception in a field. However, why not reduce ‘the world’ to a zone of it? The zone that affects ‘my’ body, gaining ‘local’ or specific knowledge instead of a general theory. I suggest that a specific concept impacts the organisation differently to a general concept. “Cyborgorganization” or “Rhizome organization” is an effective concept (I think) for changing Organisation Studies but not (I am afraid) for impacting a specific organisation. In my opinion, general concepts tend to lead to abstract thinking instead of ‘thinking with’ a specific ‘mode of being’<sup>98</sup>.

### **8.3.7. Process-structure**

As noted earlier, for Cooper, disorder produces order, form comes from the unformed. However, a new form also comes as the assemblage of previous forms. For me, a molecule is better understood as the coming together of atoms than as a product of a process. Moreover, it is the actual form or order that stimulates a new form. For example, Cooper (1998, 140) wanted to open Organisation Studies to neglected and excluded possibilities taken from philosophy. The actual concepts produce tensions and frustrations (lines of flights or intensities) that come together in a new concept. I do not mean that Organisation Studies lacked a process philosophy view or any other concept. We know that Deleuzian ‘desire’ lacks nothing and new form is not created by the dialectics with its antagonist. I think Deleuze does not endorse a Hegelian dialectic. Instead, I suggest that a new order emerges from the coming together of the lines of flights escaping the actual order.

Drawing on Deleuze’s work on difference and repetition<sup>99</sup>, Aroles and McLean (2016) explore the relationship between change and stability. They highlight “the benefits of engaging with the situated, active, and dynamic nature of the intensive/extensive relationship that underlies the constant process of repetition, rather than relying on the image of the Same or a “dead” or simply stabilized form of routine” (Aroles and McLean 2016, 14). Repetition (or order) is neither a repetition of the Same as a fixed entity, nor the ‘dead’ product of a continuous change or disorder. Instead of assuming pre-given concepts of stability and change, their nature and relationship has to be explored and experimented with in a specific organisation. Aroles and McLean conducted an ethnographic research (2006-2013) in a newspaper printing factory. They suggest that “change is possible through the improvisations associated with routine participants and through the reshaping of the routine” (Aroles and McLean 2016, 2). Change can emerge from stability because routines and repetitions eventually produce “amplifications (opening up spaces for further actions) and certain matters of concern (producing tensions and frustrations within particular settings)” (Aroles and McLean 2016, 14).

In sum, from the actual organisation lines of flights escape. Intensities not caught in the effectuated abstract machines (centralised organisation for instance) emerge out of the actual organisation and their

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<sup>98</sup> I think it is interesting to read Althusser’s differentiation of scientific Marxism and the young humanist Marx. The difference between ‘general’ old concepts like ‘human nature’ or ‘alienation’ and concrete new concepts like ‘modes of production’ built from experience.

<sup>99</sup> “Fairly atypical in the management and organizational literature” (Aroles and McLean 2016, 4), mainly focused in “A Thousand Plateaus”.

coming together in a new abstract machine can eventually reshape the organisation. Ultimately, what is transformed is a structure; the becoming is the becoming of something. Organisational transformation does not happen from scratch, there is always a previous structure.

The key for me is not the antagonism between process and structure but their encounter and the type of relationship between them. Change emerges from structure as much as new structure is the result of change. The actual-virtual circle and transformation is what we see in this circle instead of just one of the two elements (the virtual). In contrast to Cooper, I regard the study of the concrete organisation as instrumental to improperly grasping or indirectly sensing its becoming.

### **8.3.8. Assemblage / Environment**

My approach is focused on the becoming of a specific organisation, a transformation that has different stages as lines of flights escaping the actual organisation that come together and reach consistency in different new abstract machines. The abstract machine is actualised in new practices and discourses. In that sense, I focused on ‘endoconsistency’ or internal consistency: the traverse of a multiplicity of singularities that constitute the assemblage. However, according to Styhre, the most pervasive idea in organisational change literature<sup>100</sup> is the view that “organizations as open systems are dependent on their environment and thus organization change practices are to some extent determined by the outside world” (2002, 344). Drawing on Deleuze and Guattari (2013), Styhre sees “social systems as always fluid, fluxing, disruptive systems that undergo periods of increased variety and heterogeneity as well as periods of homogenization and standardization” (2002, 348). He suggests that “changes are produced on the basis of a multiplicity of interconnected causes and effects whose relationships are complicated to conceive of from within an analytical framework assuming linearity” (2002, 348). He recognises that the organisation change project (in the case of Alpha, the organisation object of the study) was continuously affected by external, unanticipated influences; “even though the organization change activities were planned in a linear manner, the outcome was affected by negative feedback, disruptive changes in the environment, ambiguities and regressive forces” (2002, 348). In sum, I have overlooked the influence of the environment on Sigma’s transformation—what Deleuze calls the ‘exoconsistency’. In addition to the internal consistency of its components (the endoconsistency), “the concept [or organisation] also has an exoconsistency with other concepts, when their respective creation implies the construction of a bridge” (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 20). The constitution of the assemblage or organisation implies the relationships (bridges) with other assemblages. In my case, Sigma’s transformation is affected by Alpha Group’s decisions, markets, customers etc.

Styhre’s paper made me realise that I have not problematised the inside/outside, assemblage/environment relationship. I had the concept of ‘exoconsistency’ at the back of my mind,

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<sup>100</sup> Contingency theory, resource-dependency theory, evolutionary theory and institutional theory for example

but I did not really engage with it. Instead of a Cooperian general flux of continuous change, I investigated the becoming of a specific assemblage, but only focused on its internal dynamics. Drawing on Deleuze's reading of Leibniz, I considered the assemblage a monad. Each monad soul or subject includes a number of singularities without any relation to other subjects. Monads have no windows by which anything could come in or go out, they have neither openings nor doorways. The monad is the autonomy of the inside, an inside without an outside. All activity takes place on the inside. Nothing goes out or comes in from the outside. (Deleuze, 2006b, 30-31). Monads are closed (Deleuze, 2006b, 24-25), without any encounter with neighbors, they do not act on each other, there is no direct relation between them (Deleuze, 2006a, 388). But, they share the same expressed; both express the world, but each from its point of view and without any contact with other monads, without horizontal relations among them. They 'inter-express' without capturing each other. (Deleuze, 2006b, 91-92). However, the assemblage is also open as it can include new singularities within.

In sum, I should have analysed how the organisation integrates, includes or appropriates new events that, 'unnoticed', affect Sigma's body. It is a matter of 'transcendental sensibility', of differentiating events that affect. Once they are traversed, they are included in the assemblage. In sum, I might have to explore the intensities, events that affect the body in the zones closer to Alpha, suppliers, competitors, partners, customers, etc.

### **8.3.9. Metaphysics / Experimentation**

I find the metaphysics of change (or process philosophy) as dogmatic and representationalist as the metaphysics of substance. Papers written by the heralds of the former are similar in structure to the mainstream writers of the latter. I wonder if they really embody a different abstract machine. Their writing about change does not entail any change in writing style (Sørensen (2005) and Thanem and Knights (2019) could be the exceptions).

*A metaphysics of change acknowledges the existence of an external fluxing reality, but denies our ability to accurately represent such a reality using established symbols and categories precisely because reality is ever-changing and hence resistant to description in terms of fixed categories. (Chia, 1999, 210)*

What is the point of finding the right concept for change? It is an impossible task. Instead of a statement about 'the true nature of change', change should be considered a dynamic concept, a concept which means differently, that is becoming, a concept of change that is itself changing.

*A fullblown changeful theory of change which is able to remain faithful to the reality of lived experience. [...] Lived reality, however, is not just changeful, but inextricably complex, heterogeneous, multiple and surprisingly novel at every turn. What is needed, therefore, is a mode of theorizing that is more able to account for this heterogeneity, and the consequent issues of indeterminacy and surprise that forms a common part of our experience of organizational life. (Chia, 1999, 214).*

So, a new configuration of theorising emerges from the lived experience. Instead of “using an established and atemporal repository of conceptual categories and terms for the purposes of classification and description” (including those from ‘process philosophy’) new concepts emerge, but moreover: “What is real is lived time” (Chia, 1999, 217). Instead of assuming a metaphysics of change, instead of representing change, we shall live change. In my case, change emerged as (1) intensities, lines of flights, differences in kind emerging from actual organisation, (2) new thought images or concepts of the organisation, and (3) new actual practices and discourses. There are changes in the three domains, transformation is what is seen in the circle 1-2-3. In summary, this is how I conceptualise the lived experience.

As writers, we should report a vital experience of transformation, and find the ‘technique’ that makes the reader experience change. The reader may feel movement from within whilst associating differences in kind emerged out of the encounter with the text. The crafting of the writing style becomes instrumental in performing an encounter with the reader that fosters a lived experience of change, movement or transformation.

In that sense, as noted earlier, concepts become or should become. Moreover, they cannot be “beyond critical analysis” or be “unproblematically given” “unexamined philosophical assumptions.” (Chia, 1999, 219). Concepts escape detailed descriptions—they should not be fixed because “as a language becomes major [...] it loses its transformative power and becomes ‘order word’” (Sørensen, 2005,122). With this in mind, I do not seek to defend either ‘major’ discourse of metaphysics of substance or new discourse of metaphysics of change. Instead of affirming a given discourse, I propose experimenting with new (practical) concepts emerged out of lived experience and with creative writing or ‘minor’ literature. This is in contrast to ‘major’—it is the molecular, the line of flight discourse, the transformative.

*Organization theory suffers from the same disease as did Kant: an inability to write affectively, to turn the wound against all scars, to write in blood. Maybe we should all leave behind the fetish for organizing theory and ‘go on to write some extraordinary pages. Entirely practical pages’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, 27) (Sørensen, 2005,129).*

### **8.3.10. A philosophical reading of Deleuze on organisation**

As early as 1993, Michael Hardt published “Gilles Deleuze: an apprenticeship in philosophy” (Hardt, 1993) which is based on his dissertation “The art of organization: foundations of a political ontology in Gilles Deleuze and Antonio Negri” (Hardt 1990). In 1995, Tim Scott wrote “Organization Philosophy; Gehlen, Foucault, Deleuze” (Scott 2010). Both authors draw on a different Deleuze, the Deleuze of his early ‘solo’ works on Hume, Bergson, Nietzsche and Spinoza.

I suggest that both “read Deleuze as an organisational philosopher” (Scott 2010, xiv) as opposed to a process philosopher. In that sense, I feel a connection to this minoritarian line that engages with Deleuze’s philosophy on organisation instead of focusing on isolated concepts like nomadic,

rhizomatic, becoming or molecular related to the primacy of process. Scott, drawing on Deleuze, is more interested in Hume's 'principles of association', Nietzsche's 'affirmation' or Spinoza's 'joyful practice'.

I read Hardt's book in 2006, and Scott's in 2015, in the first months of my research. As I decided not to engage with secondary literature, I have not reviewed them for the purpose of my research project. Differentiating my approach and interpretations from theirs would require a dedicated study of their work. Instead, I have selected some quotes from Scott to let the reader make the associations with my work.

*Spinoza is a philosopher of organization as embodiment in the materialist tradition: he explains how we can organize our encounters with others to form more powerful bodies and organizations, by attacking the causes of our sadness and by generating joy (Scott 2010, 8).*

*Hume advocates an approach to social organization as a study of embodied affection or sensation, as this is the physical substrate from which all ideas in the mind, including social concepts, arise. (Scott 2010, 67)*

*The concept of society as a positive constitution of mutually exclusive sympathies, rather than a negative set of constraints on egos, releases organization theory from the depressing burden of a repetitive and negative task. No longer is analysis restricted to polarized oppositions between freedom and restraint, individual and organization, organization and environment, etc. A very different project is opened: to address organization as a project of positive integration. (Scott 2010, 72)*

*Organization is this inventive process; a positive, artificial integration of heterogeneous parts. (Scott 2010, 73)*

*The whole of empirical thought rests on a principle of difference. The ability to feel sensation, to think and to act depends on a basic ability to distinguish between different sensations, ideas and actions. (Scott 2010, 80)*

*The perception of difference and the one who perceives differences emerge together in a mutual becoming. (Scott 2010, 81)*

Organisations "are effects of the principle of association on a multitude of persons" and other singularities (Scott 2010, 65). Consequently, organisational transformation is the change to the principles of association of a multiplicity of differences in kind or singularities. Therefore, it is the principle that is worth studying, how singularities are organised (to generate joy). However, "a principle can be apprehended only in its material effects" (Scott 2010, 65), only when the virtual abstract machine of conditioning relations is actualised or effectuated in concrete practices and discourses.

### **8.3.11. Deleuze out of the actual world**

*The political aspect of Deleuze's philosophy amounts to little more than utopian distraction.*

*[...] Deleuze's politics is essentially indifferent to the politics of this world. [...] any distinctive space for political action can only be subsumed within the more general dynamics of creation or life. [...] Deleuze writes a philosophy of (virtual) difference without (actual) others. [His philosophy] disables action in favour of contemplation.*

*As Deleuze understands it, living contemplation proceeds at an immeasurable distance from what is merely lived, known or decided. Life lives and creation creates on a virtual plane that leads forever out of our actual world.*

*Few philosophers have been as inspiring as Deleuze. But those of us who still seek to change our world and to empower its inhabitants will need to look for our inspiration elsewhere. (Hallward 2006, 162-164)*

The last strand of Deleuze's interpretation in secondary literature I would like to review would be that of radical-left Badiou-Hallward-Zizek. However, as interesting as it may be, it would remain an academic discussion. I will not engage in a dialectical antagonism with their ideas because I am interested in the actual world, not solely in contemplation (exploration) and reflection but above all in impacting the organisation I engage with and its inhabitants. I recognise the risk of remaining contemplative and reflective, but I do not think either Deleuze's philosophy or my thesis are limited to these two domains (see Roffe (2012) and Crockett (2013) criticism to Badiou's reading of Deleuze).

I am not overly concerned by so called mis-readings in philosophy. I think it might be an effective means to affirm one's singularity, to differentiate from and criticise others. However, I do not appreciate Deleuze being dismissed from Organisation Studies. It saddens me to read the words of MacFarlane (2017):

*As I have shown with the example of Deleuze, the same 'critical' theory that has been used to question capitalism can also provide the ontologic for its growth, development, and obfuscation. [...] Deleuze is valuable for business strategists, after all, because of what he can't do. As I argued above, his philosophy is unable to conceive the transcendental change of an event and as a result can act as an apology for the present and for the exploitative practices of corporate managers.*

*I use the work of Alain Badiou (2012, 2009) to demonstrate how a process-based ontology like Deleuze's ultimately relies on a 'democratic-materialist' ideology that shores up the social relations it aims to undermine. In particular, I argue that such ontologies help constitute and secure what Badiou (2009:420) calls 'atonic worlds'—spaces devoid of decision-making, where '[o]ne's life is managed like a business that would rationally distribute the meagre enjoyments that it's capable of.' It is the atony of Deleuze's work that has made it so appealing to management scholars. In Section III, I show how MOS has appropriated Deleuzian philosophy as a means of conceiving the organization, but also surplus value, as emerging from a set of rhizomatic relations in constant flux. Indeed, Deleuze's (and Guattari's) work has been taken up in management studies to map and to justify the contours of life, work, and organization*

*within a global economy, while providing new 'organizational technologies' (Thrift, 2005: 8, 119) for their control.*

Unfortunately, I cannot engage with this reading right now. I hope that MacFarlane might see another Deleuze in my thesis. A Deleuze who is not a process philosopher but a philosopher of organisation. A Deleuze who seeks the coming together of singularities in a nomadic or traversal way instead of the axiomatic or capitalist functional relationships. There is no doubt Deleuze can be appropriated by (subsumed to) the capitalist logic. Ultimately, that is the prerogative and political project of his interpreters (sometimes unconsciously). I suggest that Deleuze provides the means to change our world and empower its inhabitants beyond the intrinsic power relations and the capitalist logic.

#### **8.4. Conclusions**

A proper review of Deleuze's reception in Organisation Studies would necessitate another PhD thesis. Moreover, instead of critically engaging with contrasting views, it should be done as a traverse of multiple singular points of view synthesising in a new Deleuze. With this epilogue, I can only hope that the reader intuits a multiplicity of different readings of Deleuze, including among them my own reading in the main text of this thesis. In other words, I leave the task of synthesising a new Deleuze to the reader.

However, I will succinctly and schematically affirm my difference. From my point of view, organisation is not a fixed order or continuous change. Organisations have lines of flights (disorder or chaotic change) that escape actualised or concrete practices and discourses. Said differently, there are 'improvisations' of new actions and new statements, or at least affects, intensities or feelings as potential for acting differently. However, they do not naturally produce organisational change; lines of flight have to come together in a new abstract machine, they have to be organised. There is organisational change if and only if they are organised in a different way. Organisational change is a change in the ordering principle, in the principle of association, in the way differences in kind come together. The key is the relationship between differences in kind, their organisation. Order is the effect of the relationships between singularities. Ultimately, I suggest differentiating three domains so as to understand transformation in organisations: disorder (differences in kind), ordering principles (abstract machines) and order (concrete practices and discourses) which take multiple names through the thesis.

I am not interested in the dualistic relationship between chaos and stability. Drawing on Deleuze, I would argue that change does not come from confrontation or primary contradiction. Organisational transformation is the effect of the coming together of a multiplicity of lines of flight in multiple abstract machines that coexist and fight for their actualisation in concrete practices and discourses. Organisational transformation involves the micro-politics of affects and intensities—they are the source of the macro confrontations between abstract machines.

The study of affects, differentiating sensations, perceiving differences in kind is the primary domain of lines of flights. Conceiving, fabulating, reflecting or creating concepts is the secondary domain of the abstract machine as a thought experiment. However, it is the third domain of intervention or crafts that I think should be emphasised. I must admit, I agree with Hallward's criticism of the lack of politics in Deleuze's work, but that is true only so long as we read Deleuze as a process philosopher, if we only focus on the virtual. In my reading of Deleuze, the actual world is as important as the virtual. Moreover, it is their relationship that is the key to transformation: the virtual-actual circle, differentiation-coming together-actualisation or differentiation. Consequently, in my reading, the role of the agent as the embodiment of events or a new abstract machine is instrumental. The agent (1) differentiates or perceives lines of flights, (2) a new abstract machine or concept is thought out of the encounter with its (his or her) body and (3) gives a body or actualises in this world the virtual abstract machine. In that sense, the agent is the connection between virtual and actual<sup>101</sup>, serving to virtualise and actualise. Ultimately, giving a body to a virtual idea entails politics, intervention and relationships in the actual world, changing practices and discourses.

How the world is impacted depends on the abstract machine that is actualised, on the type of relationships that are embodied. Deleuze's work can be used to break the established order and apply capitalist logic to traditional organisations. It can be used to develop new technologies of organisation, seeking control and the increase of capital. But that reflects the abstract machine that is actualised by the body of some authors and managers. Ultimately, the interpretation of Deleuze's work says more about the interpreter than about Deleuze. I suggest that Deleuze conceptualises and practices a type of relationship (abstract machine) beyond capitalist functional relations and traditional intrinsic relations. For me, this involves experimentation, not using Deleuze to justify a position or to reach a goal, but to experiment with his concepts, to see what they do to a concrete organisation.

In that sense, it could be argued that the methodology of this thesis is performative, that it acts in the world. This thesis aims to accomplish rather than describe an action. It acts, not only in the world of Organisation Studies or theories but in a concrete organisation. In other words, it does what it says. Instead of a general concept of organisation ('organisation is change') contravening another ('organisation is order') it tries to create concepts, a multiplicity of specific or singular concepts that impact a concrete organisation. Instead of describing how reality is (theoretical abstract discussion), it impacts a real organisation.

Perhaps the secondary literature that I had to review was about performativity of research or concepts in concrete organisations. Stated differently, the relationship between concepts and a concrete organisation is a central topic of the research and it could be further researched. However, I do not feel comfortable with 'performativity'. I suggest my approach (drawing on Deleuze) might be different from performative research because in addition to produce effects on others, it entails a personal

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<sup>101</sup> Between affects, thoughts and actions (practices and discourses).

transformation. The research firstly affects the enunciating subject. In contrast, with the performative, there is no transformation of the subject possible<sup>102</sup>. According to Lazzarato (2014, 173), performativity entails and maintains a social obligation or order, a pre-given distribution of power among speakers. I shall refer the interested reader to Lazzarato's (2014) discussion on the performative.

This epilogue made me realise that the performative and its difference with what Deleuze and Guattari call 'illocutionary' speech could be a line of research worth to follow. However, I find Michael Hardt's and Tim Scott's approaches more stimulating. I think they deserve more attention from Organisation Studies. Above all, I think this thesis would benefit from a deep engagement with their work and the study of the Deleuze's 'solo' works on Nietzsche and Spinoza that Hardt and Scott pioneered.

Most of an early draft on Spinoza was left out in the process of editing this thesis. Now, it seems very relevant for further develop the thesis. I believe Deleuze's Spinoza, and Hardt's and Scott's engagement with it, could be instrumental for an "Organization as Joyful Practice" (Scott 2010, 138-173). I think that the understanding and the practice of *nomadic* or *growing organisation* could benefit from Spinoza's attempt to transform sad encounters into joyful ones. Stated differently, I believe, we could find a theory (and practice) of organisation of encounters generating joy and reducing sadness in Spinoza's work.

This epilogue is becoming another thesis. The experiment is endless; for each encounter new thoughts emerge, lines of flights escape the main argument opening the thesis to new paths. Ultimately, this thesis is a multiplicity of arguments and escaping insights. If I have to reduce the multiplicity to one argument, I will say that transformation comes from a specific type of encounter with the unknown and outside power relations.

In this thesis, the literature review is neither the primary source nor the lead to the empirical question. However, I think I have shown that significant research can be performed without first understanding the literature in a field. Actually, I think that Deleuze provided me the framework to understand that literature. In summation, I hope that this epilogue is consistent with the rest of the thesis, and at the same time I hope that the examiners find in this epilogue what was missing in the thesis. In other words, I hope that a double capture occurs, that the thesis is transformed out of the encounter with the

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<sup>102</sup> "Parrhesia constitutes a rupture with the dominant significations, an 'irruptive event' that creates a 'fracture' by creating both new possibilities and a 'field of dangers'. The performative, on the other hand, is always more or less strictly institutionalized such that its 'conditions' as well as its 'effects' are 'known in advance'. In this way, it is impossible to produce any kind of rupture in the assignment of roles. [...] To accomplish a performative utterance, the 'status of the subject' is indispensable. [...] The parrhesiastic enunciation not only produces effects on others but firstly affects the enunciating subject, producing a transformation of his condition (an existential transformation, according to Guattari). [...] With the performative, there is no invention or transformation of the subject possible". (Lazzarato 2014, 173-174)

examiners, and that eventually a different thesis is accepted by academia. It is an asymmetrical and unparallel becoming out of the encounter of two singularities.

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## Appendix 1. Exploring Deleuze's concepts

In this Appendix I present Deleuzian concepts that I find interesting from an organisational point of view. They are part of the multiplicity that has been extracted out of the exploration or encounter with Deleuze's work. This exploration is beyond purpose, some of the concepts might not be useful for the conclusion of the thesis. Nevertheless, they have contributed to my interpretation of Deleuze and I think some readers can find them useful to explore further the Deleuzian universe.

The Appendix is not written to read it as an independent chapter, the sections are linked to the main text. The main text calls the different sections of the Appendix to continue the conceptual exploration.

### 1.1. Difference out of primary order

How are these differences in kind, events or singularities produced? The world in general can be conceived of as the 'emission' of singularities (Deleuze, 2006b, 75)<sup>103</sup> or events, which are separable, distinguishable (in other words, differences in kind). This continual emission of singularities, of difference in itself, is the world. Events or differences are not in the world, they *are* the world. "The world is the infinite series of states of events" (Deleuze, 2006a, 350)<sup>104</sup>.

The differences in kind emerge from what in "Logic of Sense" is called "primary order" (Deleuze, 2015, 93). The primary order is a chaotic *disorganisation* which is an entirely undifferentiated, undetermined abyss, a completely indifferent black nothingness (Deleuze, 1995b, 28). This primary order is the domain of bodies, things, physical qualities. This is the side of materiality, of physical interaction. In this primary order, there is no differentiated individual, person or organisation, only physical or corporeal encounters between bodies in an undifferentiated deep material primary order (Deleuze, 2015, 105). There is only movement, a free flow of matter acting and reacting, corporeal encounters where everything reacts to everything else without delay or mediation: universal variation.

In this domain of chaotic chance corporeal encounters an interval appears, a gap between the action and the reaction (Deleuze, 2013a, 69). This gap is a "center of indetermination" (Deleuze, 2013a, 70). The gap defines a centre in a universe of chaotic or free encounters without a centre. If we take the primary order as a plane where matter acts and reacts or where light freely traverses the infinite plane, at some point or centre this light is reflected—there is an opacity, the act does not find a reaction or light cannot traverse the centre. The centre of indetermination is a black screen where light is reflected or a gap between action and reaction. The centres allow most of the external influences to pass through them. They are indifferent to them, but some influences are isolated, they become perceptions by their

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<sup>103</sup> Rather than a flow or process

<sup>104</sup> The world is a continual emission of difference in itself. Difference is considered primary instead of flux, duration or "elan vital". It could be argued that it is preferable to start from there, take difference, the distinguishable as primary rather than postulate an undistinguishable flow or process, which by definition cannot be distinguished and thus runs the risk of becoming a transcendental invisible reality. The existence of that flow is not needed, and it is not claimed in this research, the starting point are the distinctions, differences, observations.

very isolation. In Deleuze's books on cinema, this reflection of light or this gap is called perception. Yet, I will consider it synonymous to difference in kind.

In other words, some perceptions emerge from the unconscious being one with the material flow. According to Deleuze (2013a, 71) these perceptions or differences in kind emerge as a function of needs or a sensitivity which has the privilege of the origin. Difference or perception is "that which can be perceived only from the point of view of a transcendental sensitivity which apprehends it immediately in the encounter" (Deleuze, 1995b, 144). This movement from undetermined primary order to determinable  $dx$  (differential x), to pure difference, is also called differentiation or "the first material moment of subjectivity" (Deleuze, 2013a, 71). It is important to note however, that those differences, perceptions, effects (or said differently, events or singularities) are products of corporeal encounters but emerge in function of needs or a *transcendental sensitivity*.

Differences in kind or singularities are not simply imagined abstract differences; they are the effects of mixtures of bodies, of corporeal interactions in the primary order, even though they themselves are incorporeal events (Deleuze, 2015, 26).

*The event has a different nature than the actions and passions of the body. But it results from them, since sense is the effect of corporeal causes and their mixtures.* (Deleuze, 2015, 97, original emphasis).

Once perceptions or differences emerge from the indifferent flow of matter, we leave the primary order to enter the "secondary surface organization" (Deleuze, 2015, 251). Those effects of bodily interactions are of an entirely different nature, they are different in kind, they are not bodies but incorporeal entities: effects, results, "logical or dialectical attributes. They are not things or facts but events" (Deleuze, 2015, 5).

The singularities, events or effects are deployed in the secondary surface organisation also called the "problematic field" or "transcendental field" (Deleuze, 2015, 105). This transcendental field is neither the primary order of materiality nor a supremely individuated Being and intensely personalized Form. The transcendental field is the organisation of events or singularities which are incorporeal. This organisation or distribution of the singularities, "is a nomadic distribution, a non-sedentary distribution, wherein each system of singularities communicates and resonates with the others" (Deleuze, 2015, 62).

Differences in kind emerge from material encounters, they happen to bodies. The event 'to cut' emerges out of the bodily encounter between knife and meat. Hence, events cannot be decoupled from the world, they *are* the world. Differences in kind or events have two sides; one side is the mixture of bodies (primary order, the cause) and the other side is the incorporeal events or ideational or virtual attributes (the secondary surface organisation, the effect) (Deleuze, 2015, 26). As a result, any event happening to an organisation is due to bodily encounters.

The distinction between the primary order of disorganised, chaotic bodily encounters and the secondary surface organisation of the effects, events or differences in kind will be proven key for my

account of organisations and their transformation. However, before that, I must first introduce other instrumental concepts linked to the ontology of organisations.

## **1.2. Abstract machines as ‘power’**

The abstract machine or ‘power’ is virtual, it is diffuse, dispersed, not localised. In other words, power is not actual. When power relations, diagrams or abstract machines are actualised, they do it in two forms of stratified or sedimentary layers of knowledge: what is said and what is seen (Deleuze, 2014, 151). It is important to note that the actualisation of power is knowledge—power is not what is seen or said, but rather power relations are what bring us to see and speak (Deleuze, 2014, 57). Power does not see itself; it shows, it forces us to see. Power (or abstract machine) does not speak itself; it forces us to speak (Deleuze, 2014, 179).

Power is a strategy. It is functional, operative, it is a practice, a procedure (Deleuze, 2014, 37) exercised everywhere by everyone. Power has no content, it is not possessed. It is not an attribute that distinguishes dominant from dominated; it is the relationship that links the dominated with the dominant and the dominant with the dominated (Deleuze, 2014, 47). The actual relations, like dominant-dominated or boss-employee are actualisations of these virtual power relations. Power is a relationship between forces, not between actual entities (Deleuze, 2014, 49). Therefore, rather than being a thing or entity, power is an exercised practice, "an action upon an action". What kind of action? Incite, elicit, combine, induce, deter, facilitate or hinder, expand or limit, make an event more or less likely (Deleuze, 2014, 69). Power arranges in space; spread in space, line up, lock, gridding, order, serialise, deploy (Deleuze, 2014, 71) and organises in time; subdivide the time, schedule an event. Power composes in space and time acting upon actions, implementing practices or organising encounters. Stated differently, power intervenes not in what is seen and said (also called knowledge) but in making us see and speak. In other words, abstract machines intervene in conditioning practices and discourses, or content and expression. The actual organisation (what is seen and said, concrete practices and discourses) derive from its virtual side (power, abstract machine), which is a set of conditioning virtual relations.

## **1.3. Desire, the impulse seeking new connections**

Deleuze calls “*Desire*” an impulse to proliferate connections, a vital force seeking multiple connections, new encounters. According to Deleuze, there is no need to make connections intentionally. Desire encounters others, making connections, and it is in a sort of symbiosis with the assemblage, circulating in the heterogeneous assemblage. Desire is one with the assemblage, a co-function (Deleuze, 2007, 125). There is an impulse circulating the assemblage or organisation, multiplying encounters, seeking more connections.

Desire is productive, creative. Connecting heterogeneous elements produces reality, it is “a synthesizing machine, a factory, but the syntheses it performs are neither of the same type, nor all of the same order” (Buchanan, 2008, 50). The relations between singularities that desire produces are

different types; there are different types of syntheses, of coming together, of associations. If desire is the impulse seeking more and more connections, “desiring machines” are specific “set[s] of rules governing associations” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 5).

*The social field [or concrete or actual organisation] is immediately invested by desire, that is the historically determined product of desire. [...] Even the most repressive and deadly forms of social reproduction are produced by desire* (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 29).

Actual organisations or concrete practices and discourses are the product of desire “under determinate conditions” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 29), under a set of conditioning relations or governing rules: the abstract machines<sup>105</sup>.

“Desire is revolutionary because it is always seeking more connections” (Deleuze, 2007, 81). The primary order, plane of consistency or desire are the molecular part of the organisation, one of its extreme in the vertical axis: a chaotic proliferation of encounters. In that regard, desire “is capable of calling into question the established order of a society [or organisation]” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 116): new connections question established relations (the molar side) and produce a new assemblage. Becoming is therefore natural for the organisation.

However, repressing desire is also natural. The organisation is composed not only of new connections and becoming, it also keeps some intrinsic relations, some established, fixed or specific relations: its molar side.

#### **1.4. Alternatives to capitalism**

In addition to critiquing the capitalist axiomatic I could explore alternatives to it:

(1) One option within axiomatics would be to select another axiom, another specific relation. Not free capital with free labour but something else. Rather than the accumulation of capital and the relation between capital and labour, another axiom more oriented to stakeholders could be invented, for example, full employment or education and health services for everyone. Working relations would be the means to these ends. Organisations and market structures would “be subordinated to political projects for collective human improvement” (Mirowski, 2013, 15) instead of serving the market and capital accumulation<sup>106</sup>.

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<sup>105</sup> In my reading “desire” and “desiring machines” from “Anti-Oedipus” (Deleuze & Guattari 2009) become “plan of consistency” and “abstract machines” in “Thousand Plateaus” (Deleuze & Guattari 2013). They are different concepts, but, for me, they point to the same direction.

<sup>106</sup> Paradoxically, an organisation uses people, taking them as a means to increase capital which is seen as the wealth of society. To contribute to society, a company increases capital using people’s labour. Rather than directly taking care of the employees and their needs as part of society, the axiomatic organisation organises encounters so as to limit the freedom to connect, conditioning the way singularities come together or work together in order to increase capital (or stakeholder value) and therefore contribute to society indirectly. Axiomatic address society and its needs as an abstraction, as universal needs that could be satisfied by capital rather than considering the individual needs of each singularity which may not be just about capital.

The first option is then to organise encounters as political projects for collective human improvement, or at least to increase stakeholder value. It is still an axiomatic—there is a selection or organisation of encounters or relations with a specific political goal—but different from the capitalist axiomatic both on its goal and in its relations.

(2) In order for the capitalist encounter to happen between capital and labour, both must be liberated from former codes. Before capitalist relations were actualised, capital was linked to land, gold, etc. It was an actualised capital rather than free abstract capital. Labour was similarly linked to other social systems where the worker was not free to sell his labour. The second option is to come back to codes, which means to return to defined intrinsic relations or fixed structures. Rather than singularities as capital and labour coming together by an external relation to both terms, the social form would be defined by internal relations, each element having its position in the system, for example the primitive community based system or the imperial state based system. An organisation under this option would be arranged by codes, by pre-given forms, references, symbolic systems, beliefs, ideals, values, cultures, territories etc. There is no seeking new connections, new encounters. It is the joy of stability rather than difference, of feeling part of the tree, rather than of it. The joy of finding one's place in the given world or system versus the joy of singularities coming together constituting an assemblage. This is the molar consistency. However, according to Deleuze this is not an option nowadays, we cannot go back to codes. We cannot return to traditional social forms once the terms have been deterritorialised, once the established formal relations have been broken.

(3) The third option is the organisation as the product of non-organised or chance encounters, the molecular or rhizomatic consistency instead of molar or axiomatic. The consistency of the assemblage comes from the connection, the traverse of the multiplicity of singularities (the three syntheses). This approach seems a-political, it is against some political projects but without a political program. It prioritises self-organised spontaneous order rather than organising or selecting encounters.

*Formal political processes where citizens hash out their differences and try to convince one another are uniformly deemed inferior to these “spontaneous processes”, wherein, it must be noted, insight seems to descend out of the aether to inhabit individual brains like tongues of the Holy Ghost (Mirowski, 2013, 80).*

According to Mirowski, those self-organised movements lack organisation, and in the end they do not reach the necessary consistency to constitute an alternative organisation to the capitalist logic (Occupy Wall Street, for example). They leave to chance the product of the encounters. They see active or intentional political organisation as an old fashion rigid structure.

The key issue for me is whether a spontaneous order out of free interaction is possible, whether a social consistency is possible without codes or organised encounters. Can free interaction without a political program, without rules or codes to meet, give any consistency to the organisation. Is it possible for a social, political (rather than only economical) free interaction to produce a consistent organisation,

or does the market, the society, the organisation have to be organised? Is an organisation a natural self-organising process formed from chance encounters with no need for political intervention? Should the capitalist political project be contested by another political project (either organising encounters or trying to go back to traditional codes) or rely on a self-organisation formed through chance encounters?<sup>107</sup>

## 1.5. Illegitimate relations

### 1.5.1. Debt; a fixed relation. Time, attention and devotion; a commitment.

A debt relation is a way to repress or reduce desire. Rather than seeking connections, a fixed relation creditor-debtor is established. The debt will reduce the production of new encounters as it conditions the activity. Debtor and creditor establish a relationship of exchange, but desire knows nothing of exchange (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 186). Desire is productive, creative, seeking new connections; debt is the inverse of desire, anti-production. “Debt is thus the general name under which relations of social obligation are enforced by anti-production” (Holland, 1999, 64). The specificity of debt is to control (Lazzarato, 2015, 86), establishing a lasting relationship: creditor-debtor. However, rather than lasting relations of debt, desire knows only of thievery and gifting (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 186), instantaneous taking and giving. This lasting relationship of debtor-creditor is created, established with the political goals of repressing revolutionary desire, reducing the free activity of new connections.

Capitalist consistency is not given by capital, by free economic exchange. Cohesion is provided by debt: “money does not provide a source for social cohesion until it brings with it an obligation: the obligation of debt” (Goodchild, 2007, xv), or in other words by a *commitment* to economic activity, a promise to repay. However, the power of capital to condition relations, to repress desire and limit connections is not only due to debt. Capital enters into all domestic domains, into all spheres—the capitalist logic permeates everything.

*This is where the power of money is to be sought: not simply in the worship or accumulation of wealth for its own sake, but in the way time, attention, and devotion are shaped by the demands of the social institution of money (Goodchild, 2007, 6, emphasis added).*

*The object of one’s attention is used as the material for forming the perspective through which the world is to be seen [...]. If one’s perspective is indeed formed by the way one spends one’s time then evaluations, decisions, organization, and production emerge from a practice that itself arises from commitments (Goodchild, 2007, 203).*

Time, attention and devotion are captured by capitalist logic. “Wealth attracts time, attention, and devotion; it constructs a perspective from which the world is to be seen.” (Goodchild, 2007, 201).

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<sup>107</sup> In any case, in order to allow chance encounters or free interactions, capitalist relations should be removed or broken. Singularities may come together if they are free to come together, if they are not only economically free but also politically free, if they are liberated from power relations.

Capitalism, capturing our time, attention and commitments conditions our practices and the way we see the world.

The consistency of capitalism comes from the conjunction of capital and labour, the debtor-creditor relation and the time, attention and devotion dedicated to capital accumulation. In that way it represses desire or the legitimate syntheses.

### **1.5.2. Lack**

As we have seen, desire is the impulse seeking connections between heterogeneous elements, and connecting produces the assemblage or organisation. Therefore,

*desire does not lack anything; it does not lack its object. It is rather the subject that is missing in desire, or desire that lacks a fixed subject; There is not fixed subject unless there is repression (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 26).*

Desire presupposes the actual organisation, which is the product of desire, of the external encounters between multiple singularities. There is nothing missing, there is only desire and the actual organisation as a product of desire, and nothing else (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 29).

“Lack is created, planned and organized” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 28). Any totality claimed missing is a strategy to repress desire, to arrange singularities or differences in kind around a pre-given unity. Rather than singularities connecting to each other and producing the assemblage, they are arranged around a pre-existing totality or unity. “Such a totality-unity is posited only in terms of certain mode[s] of absence” (Deleuze and Guattari, 2009, 72). The singularities lack the pre-given totality rather than producing it. The missing totality is what gives meaning to the singularities, they are arranged according to a pre-given meaning-totality that is actually missing.

Buchanan, (2008,75-76) provides a helpful explanation of this illegitimate synthesis (or illegitimate coming together or association) using the example of *Jaws* (Spielberg, 1975). I will endeavour to transpose this example to organisations as best I can. A group of people interact, they connect with one another, they relate to each other freely, creating a team, an organisation. Each member is different, the connections or relations are contingent and continuous, a group of heterogeneous singularities. There is no need to regulate the relations...until the shark appears. In this analogy, the shark represents, for example, financial results: losses, lack of revenue, a threat to the sustainability of the organisation. Lack of revenue is not meaningful in itself, it is a mechanism whose purpose is to bring about an illegitimate connective synthesis; it determines in advance what its final form should be, for example customer ‘centricity’. The organisation should be oriented to the customer rather than to technology, or focused on the market rather than on people. The lack of revenue stimulates a narrative wherein a proper customer centricity is lacking and therefore articulates the relations in order to reach this missing precocious totality. Orientation to the customer is not a product of the free interaction between people, but is instead a signifier that articulates the relations with that goal. The precocious totality in *Jaws* is

the community spirit; the shark is the threat that makes natural relations impossible, thereby fostering a common goal, unifying the community, who work together against the threat. The common enemy is used to organise, to articulate relations. There are two elements, the shark-threat and the goal (“community spirit”, customer centricity, market orientation, established hierarchy, determinate values or narrative etc.). The vision and mission of the organisation could also be regarded as the totality that is missing but that we should aim for. There is scarcity of something that we should have; rather than desire producing the actual, desire wants something not actual, something missing, something transcendent rather than immanent.

### **1.5.3. Pre-given abstractions**

*The market as portrayed by Foucault [...] is the sole legitimate site for the production of indubitable knowledge of the whole; in other words, an absent deity rendered in a manner no different from Hayek or Stigler or Friedman or Buchanan [...]. Foucault took a wrong turn [...] too readily swallowing the basic neoliberal precept that the market was an information processor more powerful and encompassing than any human being or organization of humans. [...] The “market” provides the boundary condition for governmentality, because it alone knows things we can never know (Mirowski, 2013, 98).*

The market is considered a pre-given entity who knows better. This attribution of unity to the market—even personhood, intentions and speech—has political consequences. If the market (an abstraction) speaks, wants, desires...what does it say, want or desire? Who can listen, know or understand the market? As Jones (2013, 18) suggests: “the market is the perfect alibi. It is not me who wants these things. I am merely giving voice to the desires of an external other”. How does the market speak, and to whom? “To understand this voice requires being a member of the elect few, and this is not an election in which human beings vote” (Jones, 2013, 35). What the market has to say is

*in need of deciphering, and this is why it requires others to comprehend its speech and to speak on its behalf. [...] It is experts alone that can decode the signs and can give their verdict about what the will of gods or markets command (Jones, 2013, 41).*

If we believe in the market, it comes with its decipherers, translators or experts (with no possible verification of the accuracy of the translation) which conditions the choices that today govern the distribution of resources, power, privileges, and the life chances of other human beings (Jones, 2013, 51). Believing in the market and his logic is overtly political. It conditions our lives, our relations, our time, attention and devotion: individuals and nations for instance, are told that they must suffer in order to atone for the markets (Jones, 2013, 54).

For the sake of the market, an abstract pre-given entity (like the potential customer sometimes in organisations), we are asked to act in a specific way. Real desire is repressed for the sake of “the market”. But when the market is taken as a kind of person, we should ask: what kind of person is it taken to be? When the market speaks or wants, we should ask: what does the translator (decipherer or

expert) want? Who is the beneficiary of the will of the market? As we know, the market, any abstraction or even representation, is created, constructed. It is not pre-given or pre-existing. According to Deleuze, the market is the product of the coming together of heterogeneous elements. It is created by the relations between agents and is the product of interactions. In other words, the market is the product of politics, and the form it takes depends on political actions. For Deleuze, the belief in the market (or a pre-given abstract entity) and its translators is a repression of real desire, heavily conditioning how we spend time and attention, our acts, practices, observations, encounters, relations and so forth.

Capitalism (like any other social form), as a way of understanding the present, or whatever it is, is contingent, is a product of external relations, a product of encounters. Maybe the personification of the market, the market as an abstraction, seeking unity in a multiplicity could be inevitable, but “this does not mean that abstraction cannot be contested. It is against these abstractions that others can be invented” (Jones, 2013,5).

#### **1.5.4. Joy and Sadness**

*It is a question of the recognition of an unconscious desire, and not of this desire's satisfaction. Recognizing the desire is tantamount to setting desiring-production back in motion on the body without organs (Deleuze & Guattari, 2009, 130).*

The focus is on the recognition of desire, of connections and not on the desired object or specific outcome of the encounter. The focus is on the production, on the active or creative desire, not on the object satisfying that desire. In other words, we should not fail to recognise desire as productive and the assemblage or organisation as the product of connections. The coming together of heterogeneous elements produces an organisation, the desire is to come together, to seek connections, not a desire for a specific object, person or characteristic of an organisation. Do we express the ‘real desire’ of coming together, of working together, or just the ‘interest’ in a specific outcome of that real desire? The question is: Do we recognise working together, connecting or relating as the end as opposed to the means to reach something else of interest?

It could be claimed, for example, that relations, or how we work together should be evaluated according to their alignment with or contribution to the realisation of the ‘essence’ that defines the organisation. Instead of the creative desire to explore and encounter, duty or the obligation to realise the essence comes first. Moreover, there is always someone who is the most competent in the search for that essence, who therefore becomes an authority, someone superior (Deleuze, 2005a, 79-80). As a result, free and open encounters are reduced to purposeful relations. However, drawing on Hobbes, Deleuze proposes (1) that organisations are not defined by an essence but by a “puissance”<sup>108</sup>, the capacity to affect and be affected (Deleuze, 2005a, 81). In other words, organisations are defined by

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<sup>108</sup> In Spanish, a distinction is made: “potencia” rather than “poder”; in French, “puissance” rather than “pouvoir”. The English translation to both of these terms is “power”. There is no distinction, so “puissance” is used rather than “power”.

what they can *do* and not by what they *are* (Deleuze, 2005a, 75). (2) At each instance that puissance is effectuated, it is a capacity that never exists independent of the affects that effectuate it (Deleuze, 2005a, 93, 94). (3) There is no authority, no superior competence, no essence to reach, only the capacity to affect and be affected (puissance) effectuated at each instance.

This approach opens an exploration, an experimentation, because we do not know a priori what a body or organisation can do—what its capacity is. There are encounters that are good or bad for us, that increase or decrease our puissance. For example, joy increases our puissance, whilst sadness decreases it. We explore to find what is good or bad for us, to select what gives us joy and remove what makes us sad rather than knowing a priori what is right and wrong according to an essence or identity (Deleuze, 2005a, 131). We should “try to experience our capacity and build it at the same time that we experience it” (Deleuze, 2005a, 250, my translation).

To experiment is very different from trying to reach the essence. If the goal is to reach a target, relations are conditioned, they have a purpose, an agenda. It makes a big difference to accept that puissance is completely effectuated at each instant, that we just have to experiment and explore rather than pursue a potential or essence. In experimenting, we are liberated from the pressure of wisely investing time and resources to reach a target. We are liberated also from the potential for frustration if a target, essence etc. is not met. Real desire involves exploration and experimentation; encountering, connecting, affecting and being affected, not purposefully relating, aiming to reach a presupposed ideal (essence, true nature, vision, mission, targets...). We should aim to learn from experience, from experimenting, rather than acquiring abstract knowledge transmitted by a knowing authority (priest, professor, CEO...).

But what is learning from experience? What we might read from Deleuze’s assessment of Spinoza is that we should be aware of the affects of encounters, connections or coming together. We should observe whether the encounters increase or decrease our puissance, whether they make us sad or joyful. We should select those relations that compose, those relations that are suited to us because they increase our puissance to do, to act, to compose, to create, to affect. We should avoid relations that make us sad, that decrease our puissance—they are power relations that repress real desire.

I do believe, however, that there is no relationship that is always entirely joyful or entirely sad—every relationship contains a mix of contradicting feelings. The challenge then is not how to select good, joyful relationships and how to avoid bad, sad ones. The challenge is how to increase joyful encounters within a relationship, how to make sad encounters joyful. The key, I think, is to recognise the effect of the encounter, the event happening in the moment of the encounter. What is important is to be aware of the distinction between composing or decomposing encounters right in the middle of the encounter. It is important to differentiate between real desire’s connections that compose the organisation and sad encounters that either do not contribute to the organisation or inevitably decompose it. Being aware, being conscious of the impact of encounters on the organisation and on oneself is a revolutionary act of questioning the relations we hold, of experiencing real desire.

## 1.6.Types of change

Deleuze and Guattari according to Nail (2017, 34) identify four types of deterritorialisation or change:

*The four kinds of deterritorialization or change that define assemblages are: (1) “relative negative” processes that change an assemblage in order to maintain and reproduce an established assemblage; (2) “relative positive” processes that do not reproduce an established assemblage, but do not yet contribute to or create a new assemblage—they are ambiguous; (3) “absolute negative” processes that do not support any assemblage but undermine them all; and (4) “absolute positive” processes that do not reproduce an established assemblage, but instead create a new one (Nail, 2017, 34).*

The first type of deterritorialisation, the ‘relative negative’, is the superficial change, wherein nothing really changes, the assemblage is maintained or reproduced. In this type of change, we are always afraid of losing, we do not really change, there is a (possibly unconscious) fear of leaving our comfort zone. We flee from flight; the molar organisation sustains us, and we tend to seek this security, rigidifying our organisation with well-defined status, values, morals, private certitudes, vanity, self-complacency etc. Everyone defends his seat, position, and comfort zone. Small, superficial changes are allowed, but not lines of flight. This aversion to change is the first of the four dangers regarding change. Many interviewees in Sigma (interview x,y,z) claimed that in Sigma there were “superficial changes” but no real transformations, that even with a lot of changes things have remained the same (see Chapter 2).

The second type of deterritorialisation is the ‘relative positive’. It moves the organisation, there are lines of flight escaping the molar organisation, but they do not connect with each other to build a new abstract machine. There is no new set of relations, only molecular lines of flight. These lines of flight are ambiguous, it is not clear how to build consistency. What is clear is only each line of flight, not how they connect to each other. “Everything has the clarity of the microscope” (Deleuze & Guattari 2013, 266), of molecular perception. Each of us, identifying a different line of flight, thinks we own the truth. “We think we have understood everything and draw conclusions. We are the new knights; we even have a mission” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 266). Each line of flight goes by on its own, possessing a clarity for their own particular situation, role, and mission which is even more disturbing than the certitudes of the first type (relative negative). There are lines escaping the molar but each follows its own mission without reaching a consistency that would transform the assemblage.

The third type of deterritorialisation is the ‘absolute negative’, which rather than changing the assemblage, serves to destroy it. The line of flight, rather than connecting with others and building a consistency, turns to destruction, pure and simple abolition. The molecular goes against the molar with all the passion of abolition. Change becomes destructive and nothing survives—pure, negative deterritorialisation.

However, small rations of organism have to be kept in sufficient quantities to enable the organisation to respond to the dominant reality (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 186). “Staying stratified—organized, signified, subjected—is not the worst that can happen; the worst that can happen is if you throw the strata into demented or suicidal collapse” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 187). The organism’s order is better than total chaos.

The aim is not pure deterritorialisation, but rather to “let in a bit of free windy chaos” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, 203) —not too much, just enough to invent a new assemblage (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 186). The ‘absolute positive’ succeeds in transforming the assemblage or organisation. The lines of flight connect between them and invent a new abstract machine which is effectuated in the concrete assemblage. Absolute positive deterritorialisation is the connection of an abstract machine with the concrete assemblage. The actualisation of a new set of virtual relations. Sigma would positively change because new relations are actualised.

From the point of view of this research transformation in itself for the sake of the transformation is not the absolute positive. Transformation or becoming is not the target. Drawing on Spinoza, it can be stated that the absolute positive would be what increases our puissance or joy. Stated differently, the absolute positive would be what makes Sigma more sustainable. This kind of transformation is what is going to be explored in the following sub-sections.

### **1.7.Time: present, past future and the tree roles of the agent**

The present time is constituted by contracting successive independent instants; the repetition of instants constitutes the lived or living present (Deleuze, 1995b, 70). The multiplicity of instants—which are independent of each other—is synthesised in the present. The instant could be understood also as contemplations or even affects. Therefore, to change the present the multiplicity to be contracted or synthesized should be different. What will be transformative are the new instants, the new contemplations, or the new affects. In other words, new singularities added to the multiplicity would change the synthesis.

Yet, the present is also the contraction of the past, or pure past. “The present designates the most contracted degree of an entire past, which is itself like a coexisting totality” (Deleuze, 1995b, 82). This is the second synthesis of time: time as a contraction of the past. In this case, changes come from the level of the past that is contracted. We may change contemplations or affects, we may change everything without anything changing, because if this second synthesis is predominant, the present is simply the repetition of the past. The repetition of instant (first synthesis) and the repetition of the past (second synthesis)

*do not take place in the same dimension, they coexist: one is a repetition of instants, the other of the past; one is a repetition of elements, the other is totalizing; and the most profound and 'productive' is obviously not the most visible or the one which produces the most 'effect'. In*

*general, the two repetitions enter into so many different relations that it would require an extremely systematic clinical study, of a kind yet to be undertaken, in order to distinguish the cases which correspond to their possible combinations (Deleuze, 1995b, 290).*

Affects or contemplations emerge from the encounters, but they may lack consistency. If so, the present, rather than being their synthesis, is just a repetition of the past. However, there is a difference between different layers of the past, and depending on which layer is repeated it appears as change. Nevertheless, it would not be transformative, only a repetition of different layers of the past.

The third synthesis of time is the empty form of time; “time is out of joint” (Deleuze, 1995b, 88). Time is liberated from its circular repetition, that of the pure past, and from the instant “which made up its content” (Deleuze, 1995b, 88). Time is liberated from the past and from the contemplations, it ceases to be a circle and becomes a straight line, an empty pure form.



Figure 1: Decentred circle of Time

This third synthesis constitutes the future, the absolute new itself, free from the contraction of contemplations and from the repetition of the pure past.

*In the third synthesis, however, the present is no more than an actor, an author, an agent destined to be effaced; while the past is no more than a condition operating by default. The synthesis of time here constitutes a future which affirms at once both the unconditioned character of the product in relation to the conditions of its production, and the independence of the work in relation to its author or actor (Deleuze, 1995b, 94).*

The future is the absolute novelty. On the one hand, it is not conditioned by the past, it is free from the conditions. On the other hand, it is not the actor acting; the agent is effaced, the actor is not the active. The future appears independent of the actor. It is new, it is difference itself. It is the emission of singularities, free from conditions and actors. This third repetition, in contrast to the repetition of instants and the repetition of the past, is the repetition of difference in itself, the eternal return of difference, of pure difference.

*Eternal return affects only the new, what is produced under the condition of default and by the intermediary of metamorphosis. However, it causes neither the condition nor the agent to return: on the contrary, it repudiates these and expels them with all its centrifugal force. It constitutes the autonomy of the product, the independence of the work. It is repetition by excess which leaves intact nothing of the default or the becoming-equal. It is itself the new, complete novelty. It is by itself the third time in the series, the future as such (Deleuze, 1995b, 90).*

The return of pure difference is change itself. Difference repudiates the agent of the present and the pure past; difference in kind is the new, complete novelty.

*What, however, is the content of this third time, this formlessness at the end of the form of time, this decentred circle which displaces itself at the end of the straight line? What is this content which is affected or 'modified' by the eternal return? [...] systems in which different relates to different by means of difference itself (Deleuze, 1995b, 299, emphasis added).*

The content of the future, of the new, of transformation is difference in the second degree: differentiating differences. Differentiating two differences relates them. It is a new relation. What constitutes the unconditioned future, what transforms is the difference between differences, differentiating differences.

However, at the extreme point of the straight line of time the affirmation of difference eventually forms a new circle, a singularly tortuous one (Deleuze, 1995b, 115). The organisation is a single form involving all three syntheses of time, all three repetitions. It is the eternal return as repetition and affirmation of pure difference—future. It is the synthesis of the pure past or repetition of the past in a different degree. And the present as the contraction of instants; the synthesis of contemplations. Present, past and future are revealed as repetition but in different modes, the present is the repeater, the actor or the agent. The past is the repetition itself, the condition, but the future is that which is repeated—difference. Difference “precedes” actor and conditions. Present and past are subordinated to the future, to difference (Deleuze, 1995b, 93-94). Therefore, I suggest that the key point for transformation is the affirmation of difference, differentiating differences.

When the past is predominant, the organisational culture is conditioning the actions and behaviours. The actors or agents are passive, they cannot act, it is “the age of gods”, “the time of tradition”. The present is conditioned by the past. The act of the affirmation of difference “is too big for me” (Deleuze, 1995b, 92). It seems impossible to be liberated from the pure past, from tradition, from the way things are done. Difference is subsumed into an existing organisation, and therefore, change does not happen.

However, at some point a possibility for action is seen. The actor becomes “capable” of acting, he becomes a hero fighting against gods, past and tradition (Deleuze, 1995b, 89, 298). This is the age of heroes, heroic active men capable of acting. The passive man who bears the weight of the past becomes a hero. This hero “wants to perish” (Deleuze, 1995b, 299) but he is not there yet. There is an act and an actor, there is an “ideal self in the image of the act” (Deleuze, 1995b, 89). In the present, one is able to

act, there is action but still with an actor. This active actor meets other actors, actions find other actions, “my” affirmations of difference meet others' affirmations of difference. There is a relation between actors, between selves. This is the *time of politics*.

The age of gods is the moment of the passive actor, the age of tradition and repetition of the past. The age of heroes is the moment of the active actor, the hero who acts and meets other heroes; it is the time of politics. However, the third time, the age of men, is that of the future, of the affirmation of pure difference, without past or actors. The event of pure difference and the act have a secret coherence which excludes the actor, the self. They turn back against the self and smash it to pieces to give birth to a multiplicity (Deleuze, 1995b, 89). There is only affirmation of difference. The production of something new which dissolves the prior identity of the hero or actor. This is the time of creation. Novelty, the new comes from the affirmation of difference, from differentiating differences but without the slightest personal affirmation, without an actor and action, just the affirmation of difference. It would be a purposeless affirmation of differences without any personal interest. Each of us combines the three moments, (1) a passive actor letting the past take over, (2) an active actor trying to make a difference with a personal agenda, and (3) a purposeless differentiation of differences. A synthesis or traverse of tradition, politics and creation.

### **1.8. Deleuze and Guattari's Pragmatics**

**In this section, a long quote from Deleuze and Guattari is presented. Where they summarise their pragmatics. The interested reader can contrast it with my interpretation in section 4.1.**

*Pragmatics. The first was the generative component, which shows how a form of expression located on the language stratum always appeals to several combined regimes, in other words, how every regime of signs or semiotic is concretely mixed. On the level of this component, one can abstract forms of content, most successfully if emphasis is placed on the mixture of regimes in the form of expression: one should not, however, conclude from this the predominance of a regime constituting a general semiology and unifying forms. The second, transformational component, shows how one abstract regime can be translated, transformed into another, and especially how it can be created from other regimes. This second component is obviously more profound, because all mixed regimes presuppose these transformations from one regime to another, past, present, or potential (as a function of the creation of new regimes). Once again, one abstracts, or can abstract, content, since the analysis is limited to metamorphoses internal to the form of expression, even though the form of expression is not adequate to account for them. The third component is diagrammatic: it consists in taking regimes of signs or forms of expression and extracting from them particles-signs that are no longer formalized but instead constitute unformed traits capable of combining with one another. This is the height of abstraction, but also the moment at which abstraction becomes real; everything operates*

*through abstract-real machines (which have names and dates). One can abstract forms of content, but one must simultaneously abstract forms of expression; for what is retained of each are only unformed traits. That is why an abstract machine that would operate purely on the level of language is an absurdity. It is clear that this diagrammatic component is in turn more profound than the transformational component: the creations-transformations of a regime of signs operate by the emergence of ever-new abstract machines. Finally, the last, properly machinic, component is meant to show how abstract machines are effectuated in concrete assemblages; it is these assemblages that give distinct form to traits of expression, but not without doing the same for traits of content—the two forms being in reciprocal presupposition, or having a necessary, unformed relation that once again prevents the form of expression from behaving as though it were self-sufficient (although it is independent or distinct in a strictly formal way).*

*Thus pragmatics (or schizoanalysis) can be represented by four circular components that bud and form rhizomes.*

*(1) The generative component: the study of concrete mixed semiotics; their mixtures and variations. (2) The transformational component: the study of pure semiotics; their transformations-translations and the creation of new semiotics. (3) The diagrammatic component: the study of abstract machines, from the standpoint of semiotically unformed matters in relation to physically unformed matters. (4) The machinic component: the study of the assemblages that effectuate abstract machines, simultaneously semiotizing matters of expression and physicalizing matters of content.*

*Pragmatics as a whole would consist in this: making a tracing of the mixed semiotics, under the generative component; making the transformational map of the regimes, with their possibilities for translation and creation, for budding along the lines of the tracings; making the diagram of the abstract machines that are in play in each case, either as potentialities or as effective emergences; outlining the program of the assemblages that distribute everything and bring a circulation of movement with alternatives, jumps, and mutations (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, 168-170).*

## Appendix 2. Initiatives and Interventions

In this Appendix I present additional information about Sigma and more detail of my interventions trying to change or implement practices. It is not written as independent chapter, rather, it expands different sections of the main text.

### 2.1. Sigma's Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

On a monthly basis, the Board of Directors reviews a KPI panel that shows what they target, measure and supervise. These were the eleven target-KPIs in February 2016:

Objectives/KPIs		Leading Process	Supervised in Committe	2013 R	2014 R	2015 R	2016 E	2017 E	2018 E	2019 E	2020 E
<b>C1 Development of Competitive Product Platforms</b>											
T1	Reduction Non Quality Cost	P01	P06/P04/P03								
T2	Increase Product Platform Competitiveness	P04	P04								
T3	Improve Time To Market	P04	P04								
T4	Increase Product Adatability	P03	P04/P03								
<b>C2 Diversify and Build Customer Loyalty</b>											
T5	Increase Order Intake Outside CAF	P02	P02								
T6	Increase Market Share in CAF	P02	P02								
T7	Improve Customer Satisfaction	P02	P02								
<b>C3 Achieve Financial Results</b>											
T8	Improve Net Cash position	P05	P05								
T9	Improvel Pre-tax Profits	P01	Board of Directors								
<b>C4 Consolidate as a Company</b>											
T10	Improve Employee Satisfaction	P08	Management Model								
T11	Implement Procees based management	P01	Management Model								

Table 1: KPI panel adapted from “PE Sigma 2020 v04” and “SGC0534 Mapa de Comites”

The eleven objectives are organised in four groups that Sigma calls ‘Challenges’. The order of these challenges is not aleatory; in autumn 2015 the Board of Directors met in a hotel for a two-day reflection on the strategic plan for 2016-2020. There was a heated discussion about what the Board considered to be the most imperative challenge to address. The Deputy Managing Director, and I, the Commercial Director, claimed that product platforms were a means to another end and that people (challenge 4) or financial results (challenge 3) were more important. If Alpha was not expecting financial results from Sigma, and if people were not the primary concern, we determined that customers should be prioritised over products. As noted before, I joined Sigma in June 2013 and became a board member in 2015, and the Deputy Managing Director joined in 2014; we were the new ones on the Board. Met with resistance from the rest of the Board, we yielded our position quite quickly, and product quality was established as Sigma's first objective (T1).

At that time, even if the target to sell outside Alpha Group was already set up, the main concern was the competitiveness of Sigma's products. After all, we did not just need to be competitive to gain potential customers outside Alpha but were also competing against other companies that supplied to

Sigma. The objective T6 shows the percentage of traction equipment that Alpha contracted to Sigma par rapport to all the traction equipment they contracted. Of the traction equipment contracted by Alpha during 2015, Mitsubishi (Sigma's main competitor) supplied 70% of this traction equipment, in contrast to the 30% that Sigma supplied. Sigma had to prove its competitiveness to Sigma, and with this in mind, I think, it was reasonable to focus on product competitiveness rather than on outside customers.

Competitiveness was understood in terms of three main aspects: cost, quality and time. In that regard, the objective T2 is called *product competitiveness*. It considers the margin between price and cost for each project, attempting to measure the degree of cost improvement for a given market price. As the margin depends on the selling price, however, this is not an exact measurement. If the commercial team reduces or increases the price in the sales negotiation, any change will directly impact the project margin, independent of the product cost performance. The objective T3 shows how much equipment is delivered on time. As an example, in 2015 only 28% of equipment was delivered without delays. However, this statistic does not show whether the standard delivery time is good enough for the market. This KPI only shows whether Sigma delivers within an agreed time. T4, adaptability, also refers to cost, but specifically to the non-recurrent cost, which is the cost of the execution of projects. In other words, the higher the adaptability, the fewer activities are required to be performed during the project. T5, the order intake objective, was estimated to increase linearly from €5M in 2015 to €40M in 2020. This sets, in my opinion, a very ambitious challenge.

## 2.2. Sigma's strategic initiatives

As noted earlier, P01 is the strategic reflection process. It entails the approval of the strategic initiatives, i.e. the activities and programs that get investments of capital and labour hours to be executed. These were the main initiatives in 2016:

Investment	Initiatives	C1 Competitive Platforms	C2 Customers	C3 Financial Results	C4 Consolidate as Company
25,5%	Standard and Modular Product Development	x			
16,4%	Energy Storage Platform Developments	x	x		
16,1%	Traction Product Developments	x	x	x	
7,1%	Implementation of Product Platforms	x			
6,2%	Electric Bus Product Development		x		
6,1%	Control Product Developments	x	x	x	
4,8%	Implementation and improvement of Processes			x	x
4,4%	VEGA product development	x	x		
3,0%	Improvement of Validation and Maintenance Tools	x	x	x	
2,7%	Initiatives for Hardware products quality improvements	x			x
1,9%	Initiatives for Engineering quality improvements	x			x
1,6%	Homologation of new suppliers	x	x		x
1,5%	Industrial implementation in strategic countries		x		
1,4%	Initiatives for Planification improvement	x			x
1,0%	Serial Test improvement	x	x		
0,3%	Supply chain development	x		x	
100,0%	TOTAL	13	9	5	5

Table 2: Strategic initiatives, adapted from “2016.02.05 PE Sigma 2020 v04”

The first column shows the percentage of investment made for each initiative, the total amount of investment made up of all individual initiatives combined. The last four columns illustrate which earlier discussed challenges each initiative contributes to. The contribution of each initiative is subjective. A case in point is that, as Commercial Director, I disagreed that serial test improvement or the homologation of new suppliers impacted on Challenge 2 (‘Diversify and Build Customer Loyalty’). The initiatives clearly contribute to the first challenge (Competitive Platforms), but their contribution to other challenges is indirect at best.

What I would like to highlight is the amount of investment that goes into product-related initiatives. Of the first 8 initiatives, 7 involve product development, totalling 81.8% of the investment. Moreover, the majority of the remaining initiatives are also related in some way to product development. Only 2 of the initiatives do not entail product development (industrial implementation in strategic countries, and the implementation of processes) but these initiatives do impact on cost and delivery time, which are targets within Sigma's first challenge: platform competitiveness.

The Standard and Modular Development initiative, with 25% of the investment of 2016, is managed using a multi-annual plan. Started in 2013, it will be present throughout the years of this research. Initially, this initiative was developed exclusively using Sigma’s own resources. In September 2017, however, Sigma started a collaboration with an external consultant, Modular Management:

*Sigma would like to start a modularity journey to reduce the complexity within the entire business operation. Today the business model is very much project-driven involving a lot of engineering during tendering and execution. The desire is to become a more product-oriented company with the ability to configure products and projects upon a modular product assortment. Sigma aim is to improve support for increasing and changing customer needs as well as reduce time to market with new developments, reduce cost in operations, reduced product lead times and to establish a one-touch configurator capability (Modular Management 2017, 1).*

It was here that the off-the-shelf modular product approach was envisioned, aiming to circumnavigate the resource-intensive development stage within contracts. The rationale was that if our products were to be developed months before a contract is signed, delivery times would be easier to meet, the reuse of modules would make projects less engineering intensive (and therefore less costly), and overall quality would be improved due to increased opportunities to do proper testing. As a result, the modularisation program was Sigma’s main commitment to increasing competitiveness. Somehow, Product Platforms were considered instrumental by the Board to reform Sigma, i.e. to overcome its most important challenge: improve competitiveness (C1).

There has been another strategic initiative or program that has been running throughout the years of this research: the cultural transformation program. 'Delta', the external consultant that led it explains:

*The objective of the proposal is to promote a cultural change in the organisation, which allows aligning the values of people and the organisation, towards a coherent culture in which to obtain excellent results both in safety and profitability as well as in internal and external stakeholders' satisfaction. The implementation of this process will place the company in a way that achieves significant improvements in the desired behaviours. The plan of cultural change proposes changes in behaviours and the alignment of processes, structures and systems within the company in a way that a strong constructive culture can be established and sustained organisational results achieved. For a transformation to be lasting and effective, it is key that we talk about cultural change. It is important to identify what are the current and desired values of the organisation, and from that starting point, work for their alignment as well as the alignment with the values of employees. Changing behaviours or ways of working can be done when there is a base and a structure that favours it; when there is a culture where it allows employees to be open and proactive to change and act; that is when the effort for change will be productive. Without this culture, any change effort will be seen from a defensive point of view and will lead to a high expenditure of energy and resources. When we talk about real change, we have to think about changing the whole culture for generating the basis that leads the company to systematically align itself towards the same objective, which is to be focused on an ideal culture. This change should start with the Board of Directors and the people with more responsibility. This proposal is based on the study of values previously carried out, from which to design the mechanisms that allow the deployment of actions that lead us to move forward in this process of change. (Delta, 2016)*

The study of values previously carried out that 'Delta' refers to was performed by me based on Barrett's methodology as part of this research. In later chapters, we will see how this program was introduced in Sigma. For now, we will focus on the activities of this cultural transformation program:

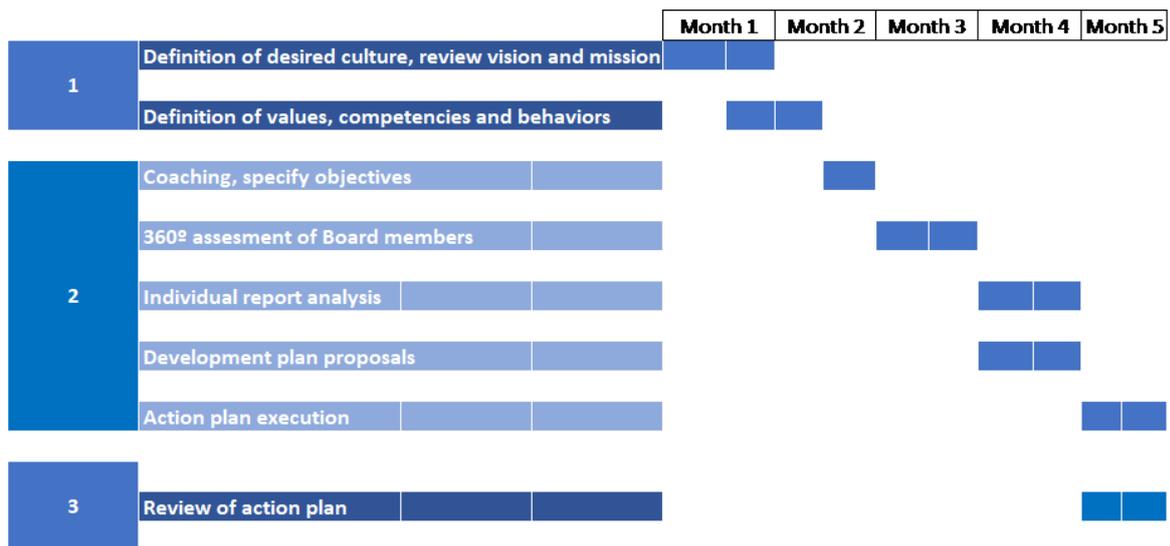


Figure 1: Cultural Transformation Program planning.

The program was planned to have been executed within five months, however, it has been developed into a multi-annual initiative which is still running at the end of this research.

Cultural transformation program (with “mas innovación” as external consultant)	Date	Participants
<b>0.- Barret’s cultural assessment (not included in the program)</b>		<b>Open to all CAF P&amp;A</b>
<b>1.- Appreciative inquiry session</b>	<b>10.04.2017</b>	<b>Board of Directors</b>
<b>2.- Peak experiences session</b>	<b>26.04.2017</b>	<b>Board of Directors</b>
<b>3.- CAF P&amp;A’s Vision for 2027</b>	<b>28.04.2017</b>	<b>Board of Directors</b>
<b>4.- Desired Value definition</b>	<b>08.05.2017</b>	<b>Board of Directors</b>
<b>5.- Desired Value prioritization</b>	<b>18.05.2017</b>	<b>Board of Directors</b>
<b>6.- Value contrast with managers</b>	<b>28.06.2017</b>	<b>50 people</b>
<b>7.- Behavior definition</b>	<b>12.07.2017</b>	<b>Board of Directors</b>
<b>8.- Final Value selection</b>	<b>28.09.2017</b>	<b>Board of Directors</b>
<b>9.- Group Feedback Belbin</b>	<b>13.11.2017</b>	<b>Board of Directors</b>
<b>10.- Personal Feedback Belbin</b>	<b>16.11.2017</b>	<b>Board Members Individually</b>
<b>11.- Selection of behaviors</b>	<b>19.01.2018</b>	<b>Open to all CAF P&amp;A</b>
<b>12.- Individual coaching sessions</b>	<b>10.2018-04.2019</b>	<b>Board Members Individually</b>
<b>13.- Personal Feedback 360<sup>e</sup></b>	<b>26.11.2018</b>	<b>Board Members Individually</b>

Table 3: Cultural transformation program activities

### 2.3. Trying to change practices and discourses: The researcher’s proposals

As outlined in the methodology section (4.4.), crafting involves the “proliferation of axes”—axes that make explicit and actual the implicit virtual intensities or potentialities of the growing organisation. As part of the third movement of my pragmatics, I have invented four axes wherein different practices and discourses can be actualised and the *growing organisation* could be effectuated. These axes are: (1) the management model axis, (2) the cultural axis, (3) looking outside and (4) communication. Although it might be a bit confusing, I divided the four axes into two different sections. I view the first two axes as the researcher’s proposals. The latter two axes, however, are considered in the director’s intervention in section 2.4 of this Appendix., which includes other managerial

interventions that are unrelated to the proliferation of axes. In other words, rather than organising the sections as axes and non-axes, I have organised them as the researcher's proposals and the manager's practice implementation interventions.

### 2.3.1. Management model axis

My proposal for the 'management model' that would effectuate the *growing organisation* would be (and has been):

- An analysis of *processes and committees*. I propose to take each process and task and question whether it is necessary. Moreover, I will analyse how each contributes to the organisation, aiming to reduce bureaucracy to that which is necessary for business and employee satisfaction performing the processes. Explain and negotiate with them the bureaucracy necessary to assure quality. The Board should set tight targets for key performance indicators and think about how to reach them. In addition, they should map the interactions between processes; there are strong feelings among some of them, especially between sales, product development and project management, which I suggest wastes a lot of energy. The processes and departments could be organised differently in order to increase efficiency and improve relationships.
- The analysis of processes and committees should also lead to the creation of a *decision-making matrix* that maps what is decided when and by whom within processes and committees (and also outside them). This would show what decisions are made in a 'centralised' way, or by individual directors. Linked to this, it should be made clear to what extent committees or meetings are informative, participative, or decisive. It should be specified before meetings whether participants are simply required to express their points of view, or if a decision has to be taken.
- Each process and each department should identify its '*internal customer*' that they are serving, i.e. the department or person who is receiving their work and should try to collaborate with them. Process or department leaders should have an evaluation of the service they provide, their respective relationship and vision for how to improve others' experience and service quality. They should design an action plan together and measure the results.
- *Leadership and team dynamics*: Directors should act in alignment with the *growing organisation* abstract machine—expressing its features and being ambassadors of the *growing organisation* for the employees. Directors must be able to motivate and mentor employees on professional matters. Firstly, an assessment of existing leaders should be conducted, using diagnostics such as the 'Leadership Circle Profile' (Anderson and Adams, 2015). Following this, a program to develop current or new leaders would be necessary. These leaders will need to learn to build effective teams, and the Board of Directors should

be the ones setting the example of a team expressing the *growing organisation*. The current dynamics of the Board (discussed in Chapter 2) should be substantially improved. For example, the outcomes of the Lencioni questionnaire must be utilised to build trust, accountability, orientation to results, and commitment.

- The organisation should have a clear *vision and long-term strategy* that should be communicated to all employees. The Board of Directors should step back from daily operations and strategise about future business models/strategies. It is critical that Sigma employees be informed about the future vision. As we have seen in Chapter 2, they do not want to feel “like a headless chicken” due to a lack of a Sigma strategic vision from the Board.
- *Mapping relations* with Sigma. As we saw in section 2.4.2., Alpha is simultaneously the owner, parent company, customer, and supplier of Sigma. As such, it intervenes in several group policies, rules, targets, and procedures. I suggest that Sigma’s management model should include a relational model with Sigma. While it would be helpful to clarify the nature of this relationship, this is not an easy task. The full mapping of these relations would require many interviews and further research.
- By setting the new target for Sigma to seek new external markets for its products (in 2013), it was expressing the *business-oriented* abstract machine, which impacted a regime of bodies—the employees of Sigma. As such, the new *business-oriented* abstract machine started to be effectuated in Sigma (see section 5.5.). According to my reading of Deleuze, these new statements—in the form of new targets—effectuate new machines. Thus, they call for an organisation to come, a ‘people to come’.

Similarly, I suggested *new targets, objectives or KPIs* for Sigma from 2015 to 2018. Among them, I proposed to measure how the annual investment is distributed between initiatives oriented to product development, quality improvements, marketing, and the management model. I aimed to elucidate that the *technological centre* machine gets the majority of the investment. Another KPI that I proposed was the ratio between direct hours (the engineering hours of the projects) and indirect hours. Changes to the strategic objectives of the Board of Directors have been proposed several times—some of the KPIs are not useful and most of them are not appropriate for defining future actions based upon them. They are more focused on measuring past performance than mobilising action.

These proposals we have just discussed for the ‘management model’ axis were first made in 2016 based on the first group of interviews and the values survey. The proposals emerged out of the encounter with Sigma, aiming to address bureaucratic, hierarchical and decision-making intensities, amongst others (see section 2.3 and section 2.4.). However, they also emerged out of the encounter with Deleuze’s work. The proposals entail making visible the invisible intensities, introducing reflection, or

focusing on relationships. I would suggest that most of them aimed to make the *centralised organisation* more effective. However, there is always a danger of converting these new proposals into bureaucratic, hierarchical and centralised decision-making practices, depending on who implements them.

At the time, these proposals *were not impactful*. Yet, at the end of 2018, they remained still pertinent and some are being actualised at this moment. For example, the leadership assessment has been performed and coaching sessions have started. I suspect that both have been actualised not as a result of this research but because they were proposed by the external consultant “Delta”. Additionally, although it is not exactly a mapping exercise proposed in point 4 of the management model axis, at the end of 2018 the Managing Director created a group to figure out how to relate with Sigma, this was due to a new relational model proposed by Sigma. Surprisingly, in December 2018, after many years of proposing changes, the Board of Directors seems to be making alterations to the KPIs. As noted in section 6.2., in order for proposals (or new discourses) to lead to practices, we may need either to be insistent and patient, or actively implementing practices as political interventions. I would suggest that the changes that finally happened were not down to my political skills. I feel frustrated that changes came two years later (some of which are still pending), proposed by other people and arguably for other reasons, and at a time when I had given up on trying to implement them.

### **2.3.2. Culture axis**

At the beginning of this research, Sigma’s main challenge was ‘to grow sales outside Sigma’ (see section 2.2.1.). However, drawing on Deleuze’s explorative methods (section 4.2.2.), a multiplicity of intensities related to culture emerged out of the encounter with Sigma. I even claimed that Sigma’s cultural entropy figure of 37% called for considerable organisational changes, indeed, a wholesome transformation (section 2.3.1.). I would suggest that this became Sigma’s main challenge and constitutes the force behind the *growing organisation* (instead of the *business-oriented* one, which would address the former challenge of selling outside Sigma). As Deleuze taught us, it is intensity that creates the axes (see section 4.4.). Therefore, I propose culture as the second axis that actualises the *growing organisation*.

As stated in section 6.2., the explorative intervention of the values survey resulted in the *Cultural Transformation Program* (Appendix 2.2.), which I consider to be a *political* intervention. It involves several methodologies and sessions, both among the Board of Directors and the whole of Sigma. Although I initiated it, somewhat surprisingly (for me) I was not given a leading or contributing role in this program. I asked the Managing Director to lead the program but he refused, and the Deputy Managing Director was nominated as program leader—a decision that was not justified by the Managing Director. Paradoxically, my research on organisational transformation (this thesis) runs in parallel with the cultural transformation program, without any relation or connection to it. In March 2017, I shared my research (part of Chapter 2, and some intervention ideas) with the leaders of the program, but nothing came of this intervention. In retrospect, I do not think they really knew what to do. They needed someone to propose concrete actions—such as what the external consultants “Delta”

proposed. The leaders of the program, (matching their Belbin's role discussed in section 2.3.3.3.) 'coordinated' but did not possess the 'impulse' for creative ideas of what to do. Additionally, I (matching also my Belbin's role of 'driver' we have seen in Chapter 2) was eager to lead—I did not know how to promote these practices without being in charge. I should have proposed more concrete actions and practices, rather than just providing a diagnosis and some general ideas. Drawing on Deleuze, I would suggest that I did the exploration and reflection phases of the pragmatics, but I failed on the crafting phase—the third movement of politics or acting upon the actions of others.

Given the outcome of the annual values surveys discussed in Chapter 2, I think it is reasonable to say that by the end of 2018 the cultural transformation program has yet to produce any change in the company's culture. Some statements from the interviews suggest the following: “We have decided on values, but behaviours must change” (U), “actions contradict defined values” (R), “to change the culture the leaders must be others, other behaviours must be promoted, acknowledged or appreciated” (E), “Sigma is the same organisation with a nicer face of good values” (AB), “The program raised expectations but at the end, it is disappointing, letting people down” (O). There was a new discourse about values—which for many employees was new—but change was limited to this. As a result, I would suggest that due in part to my lack of proficiency in implementing new practices when I am not in charge, as well as program leaders' poor performance, the cultural transformation program remains a series of sessions which have had little impact on core organisational practices.

However, in 2017 (within the cultural transformation program), the external consultant “Delta” used Belbin's team role diagnosis methodology (see section 2.5). This produced illuminating results which, I would suggest, facilitated a change in the Managing Director's mind concerning the composition of the Board of Directors.

## **2.4. Implementing practices as the Commercial Director**

### **2.4.1. 'Looking outside' axis**

I argued in section 2.4.3 that Sigma was an inward-looking organisation in 2016. Nevertheless, in 2018, drawing on Deleuze's concept of the capitalist axiomatic, I extracted the *business-oriented* abstract machine (see section 5.4.). I suggested that although it was not fully actualised, this abstract machine has the potential to look outside, to customers, markets and wider society as opposed to just the internal issues of Sigma. This potential will be discussed in this section. As the Commercial Director, I am well positioned to actualise the orientation towards clients, market, and competitors.

In this regard, I have intervened in implementing practices of market research that aimed at gathering information about Sigma's potential customers and competitors. As part of this, I proposed the role of *Market Intelligence Analyst* within the Sales department. The person I appointed to perform this role estimated the global market size, accessible market size, and the approximate purchasing volume per potential customer. They also mapped our competitors' customers, potential revenue flows, locations,

and agreements. This contributed to the Commercial Strategic Plan but it also forced Sigma, as a whole, to look beyond itself. In June 2018, Sigma started a “merger and acquisitions” process with one of its competitors that was analysed in the market research. Moreover, analysing the market provided important input for the Product Modularisation Program, making customer’s needs explicitly clear. At least in principle, market segmentation and customer benefits highlighted in the market research will be considered in designing future products.

In addition, an actualisation of this ‘looking outside’ axis has been my intervention in the Marketing department, which (as discussed in Chapter 2) has only one member and a very low budget. The intervention has been twofold. Firstly, 2018’s Marketing Plan included a new corporate video focused on people, with employees’ participation instead of being based on products and technology. The Marketing Plan also included a photography contest for Sigma employees with two themes: “Sigma’s Core values” and “Trains”. Furthermore, I signed a 3-year contract with a news agency to design marketing campaigns aiming to promote the Sigma brand. This was designed to be disseminated among the company’s existing and potential customers, to increase connections with actors outside of Sigma.

Secondly, as a member of the Board with responsibility for the Marketing department, I am connecting marketing with Sigma’s Board of Directors—of which most of the members, as I previously argued, can be characterised as having an engineering mindset. I think for many within the Board of Directors, “marketing” was “the absolute outside”. However, I would argue that my interventions increased interest in marketing among the Board of Directors (and Sigma in general), even if there is still more work to be done in this regard.

Company visits, which were established over the years, present another “looking outside” intervention. Above all, my intervention has been to support the work of the Quality Director whose role involves learning from industry experience and from other companies to avoid “reinventing the wheel”. These visits are not limited to potential customers or suppliers; they serve to explore and collect best practices from other companies. However, exploring best practices of other companies is just the first movement—the difficulty again is how to implement these new practices in Sigma. In other words, the challenge to transform Sigma *is in the crafting movement*. Nevertheless, visiting companies is an intervention oriented to looking outside Sigma—it is an encounter with the “outside”.

Another intervention I have endeavoured to carry out over the last few years has been when I have suggested books for particular members of the Board of Directors to read. My recommendations have so far included Barrett’s “A value driven organization” (2013) in 2016, several of Kegan and Lahey’s books in 2017 (2002, 2009), “The marketing plan” (Ancín, 2015) to the After-Sales Director beginning 2018, and Lencioni’s “Five dysfunctions of a team” (2002) beginning 2018. I do not know whether reading management books is a well-established practice within Sigma. I do have reason to suspect that at least some of the directors (such as the Managing Director and Quality Director) are developing a taste for this kind of literature, and see it as a valuable tool. In our March 2019 annual encounter, for example, Kottler’s “The iceberg is melting” (2017) was distributed to every employee. I do not dare to

extract conclusions about the efficacy of reading management books. Nevertheless, the aforementioned books were at least discussed, and undoubtedly shed light on the culture (Barrett) and group dynamics (Lencioni) of the Board of Directors—even without the corresponding survey and questionnaire. I do consider reading to be a ‘looking outside’ practice, and although its contribution is debatable, I have tried all the same to implement it.

I would suggest that these practices of looking outside have the aim of encountering the other (customers, competitors, mindsets, company practices or management theories). On the one hand, ‘looking outside’ balances the excessive internal focus, but on the other hand, it prepares a double capture type of relationship with another heterogeneous world. Therefore, ‘looking outside’ does not only seek out pure commercial interest but also to ‘know’ the other to enter into a double capture type of relationship—to eventually change how we relate. For example, I doubt that we will be able to attribute increased sales to the new corporate video. However, we will present ourselves differently to the market and thus relate differently to it.

#### **2.4.2. Communication axis**

As noted earlier, communication is the fourth axis I have created in this crafting movement. The first two (the management model and culture) were discussed in the section on the researcher’s proposal (Appendix 2.3.), and the prior section (Appendix 2.4.1.) discussed the third axis (looking outside) as part of my implementing practices as Commercial Director (Appendix 2.4.).

This communication axis also emerged from the intensive exploration of Sigma. As stated in Chapter 2, “communication” is among the top 10 values across all the surveys of the “Desired Culture”, with the values “gossip and rumours” also ranking in the top 10 of the “Current Culture” values. Based on interviews and surveys, I suggest that employees have demanded more transparency and open communication. In 2017, there were two communication plans in place in Sigma. These were an Internal Communication Plan (led by Human Resources) and an External Communication Plan (led by the Marketing department). In June 2018, I proposed to the Board that we design an ‘Integrated Communication Plan’, amalgamating both plans into one. The proposal was accepted by the Board of Directors and I am in charge of it. This allows me to change communication practices at an organisational level. A communication group was set up for this purpose, consisting of the person responsible for Marketing, the HR manager, an individual from the Product Development Department, and myself. This group prepared an action plan to remove gossip and rumours from the top ten values of the end of the 2018 values survey. Although this has been a very challenging intervention, it has also been a great opportunity to actualise the *growing organisation*. I find myself positioned between employees and the Board, shaping the discourse from the Board of Directors to the whole company and opening a communication channel for the employees to be heard by the Board of Directors. I would suggest, as Deleuze has helped me see, that *how* we communicate is the key to transforming the organisation, more than the content of the communication as such. That is, what is most important is the effects that the encounter between employees and the Board of Directors can produce. Although

much more work still needs to be done, I hope we have managed to communicate (and started to affect) trust, motivation, support, care, inclusion, and recognition.

### **2.4.3. Three-phase methodology**

Other interventions could be included in the “implementing practices” section which are not axes. An example of this is the *three-phase methodology* which includes first diagnosing the situation at hand using interviews and/or surveys, second, developing a strategy to reach a specified vision, and third, putting together an action plan and measurement of results. The reader may notice that this resembles the exploration, reflection, and crafts of the pragmatics of this research (see Chapter 4). I suggest that this three-phase methodology is an actualisation of employees' desire for transformation, learning, and/or continuous improvement.

Surveys are used every year to assess customer and employee satisfaction. There is a tendency among the Sigma Board of Directors, which is in charge of customer and employee satisfaction, to conduct the survey, prepare an action plan and then wait until the following year to identify possible improvements. From my perspective, there is no shared vision among the Board of Directors about what customers' and employees' experience of the company should be. Therefore, there is no strategy. The difference with my methodology is that reflection and crafting phases are not usually done. I suggest that the diagnosis does not always translate into vision, strategy, and action.

Following my suggestion, the Presales department conducted this three-phase methodology in September 2017. It was subsequently carried out by the Sales department (November 2017), followed by the IT department (January 2018), the Quality department (February 2018) and the Electro-Mechanical area within the Engineering department (March 2018). It has also since been repeated by the Presales department (September 2018).

One contribution that this research has offered to Sigma is the introduction of the three-phase methodology (exploration, reflection and crafts) as a continuous improvement circle. To best serve the improvement of the Sales and Presales department, I adopted a more managerial approach to the research methodology: diagnosis, vision, strategy, action plan and results instead of exploration, reflection, and crafts.

### **2.4.4. Meeting with direct reports**

The Board of Directors formally and officially organises one-on-one Performance Review meetings to evaluate individual employees' performance, to set targets, assess competencies, and identify training needs. This is done on an annual basis. In the past, the software tool ‘Talentia’ has been used to assess employees. I have intervened, changing how the Performance Review *meetings with direct reporters* are conducted. In June 2018, with help from the Quality Director, the Human Resources Director designed another tool for these meetings based on excel. As the head of Sales, Presales and the Marketing department, it is my role to fill the excel sheets with what is requested, but I can conduct the

interview in my way. Essentially, I try to actualise the event of “employee development” rather than “perform the task of filling the tool” according to the *centralised organisation*. My interviews with direct reporters begin by talking about the targets of Sigma’s as a whole, then the specific targets of the departments where the employee works. We discuss their personal quantitative objectives, then their qualitative objectives, moving on to assess general and technical competencies, and from this, we derive a personalised training plan. Finally, we discuss the two questions I have asked them to reflect on before the meeting: “What do you think could improve your professional development?” and “What could I do to facilitate your development?”. Using these questions, I try to encourage reflection and a different, more personal relationship. The Quality Director included these questions in the formal interview template prepared in June 2018. My way of conducting performance review interviews thereby had an influence, and new practices were implemented. Nevertheless, I argue that this impact remains limited to the inclusion of these questions, and does not expand to the way interviews are conducted and whether listening, trust, respect, or development actually surfaces depends on the persons involved. I believe that these kinds of interviews could be an opportunity to actualise the *growing organisation* abstract machine. As previously suggested, I think it is relatively easy to act differently on an individual level. To change one individual’s practices or the practices of a department that one leads is a relatively straightforward task when compared with the challenge of expanding this change to an entire company. Nevertheless, in November 2018, members of the Board of Directors were trained by “Delta” to conduct these interviews in order to act as facilitators for employees' development.