

The Rhythmanalytical Project

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1. Everyday Life and Rhythms

In a forthcoming publication, we will show the relations between everyday life and rhythms, which is to say the concrete modalities of social time. The rhythm-analytical study that we are going to attempt integrates itself into that of everyday life. It even deepens certain aspects of it. Everyday life is modelled on abstract, quantitative time, the time of watches and clocks. This time was introduced bit by bit in the West after the invention of watches, in the course of their entry into social practice. This homogeneous and desacralised time has emerged victorious since it supplied *the measure of the time of work*. Beginning from this historic moment, it became the time of everydayness, subordinating to the organisation of work in space other aspects of the everyday: the hours of sleep and waking, meal-times and the hours of private life, the relations of adults with their children, entertainment and hobbies, relations to the place of dwelling. However, everyday life remains shot through and traversed by great cosmic and vital rhythms: day and night, the months and the seasons, and still more precisely biological rhythms. In the everyday, this results in the perpetual interaction of these rhythms with repetitive processes linked to homogeneous time.

This interaction has certain aspects that we will leave aside, for example the traditional links of social time to religious beliefs and prescriptions. We shall devote ourselves to only the rhythmic aspect of everyday time. The study of everyday life has already demonstrated this banal and yet little-known difference between the cyclical and the linear, between rhythmised times and the times of brutal repetitions. This repetition is tiring, exhausting and tedious, while the return of a cycle has the appearance of an event and an advent. Its beginning, which after all is only a re-commencement, always has the freshness of a discovery and an invention. Dawn always has a miraculous charm, hunger and thirst renew themselves marvellously . . . The everyday is simultaneously the site of, the theatre for, and what is at stake in a conflict between great indestructible rhythms and the processes imposed by the socio-economic organisation of production, consumption, circulation and habitat. The analysis of everyday life

shows how and why social time is itself a social product. Like all products, like space, time divides and splits itself into use and use-value on the one hand, and exchange and exchange-value on the other. On the one hand it is sold and on the other it is lived.

Whence a series of hypotheses that serve as a starting point for rhythmanalysis.

First, everyday time is measured in two ways, or rather simultaneously measures and is measured. On the one hand, fundamental rhythms and cycles remain steady and on the other, the quantified time of watches and clocks imposes monotonous repetitions. Cycles invigorate repetition by cutting through it. Is it not because of this double measure that everydayness was able to establish itself in modern times, to become stable and, if we might say so, institutionalised?

Second, there is a bitter and dark struggle around time and the use of time. This struggle has the most surprising repercussions. So-called natural rhythms change for multiple, technological, socio-economic reasons, in a way that requires detailed research. For example, nocturnal activities multiply, overturning circadian rhythms. As if daytime were not enough to carry out repetitive tasks, social practice eats bit by bit into the night. At the end of the week, in place of the traditional weekly day of rest and piety, 'Saturday Night Fever' bursts out.

Third, quantified time subjects itself to a very general law of this society: it becomes both uniform and monotonous whilst also breaking apart and becoming fragmented. Like space, it divides itself into lots and parcels: transport networks, themselves fragmented, various forms of work, entertainment and leisure. There is not time to do everything but every 'doing' has its time. These fragments form a hierarchy, but work remains to a large extent essential (despite a devaluation, resisted by practical re-evaluations in times of unemployment), the reference to which we try to refer everything else back. However, disturbances of rhythm proliferate, as do so-called nervous problems. It is not imprecise to say the nerves and the brain have their own rhythms, likewise the senses and the intellect.

From the rhythmanalytical perspective, we can describe daytime and the uses of time in accordance with social categories,

sex and age. It is to be noted that objects are consumers of time, they inscribe themselves in its use with their own demands. A washing machine consumes a fragment of time (functioning and maintenance) likewise it occupies a fragment of space. Meal-times result from convention since they differ according to the country. But, if you eat at midday and at eight o'clock in the evening, you will end up being hungry at these times. Perhaps decades are needed to bend the body to these rhythms and it is not uncommon for children to refuse social rhythms. With regard to intellectual concentration and the activities with which it is bound up (reading, writing, analysis), they also have their own rhythm, created by habit, which is to say by a more or less harmonious compromise between the repetitive, the cyclical and that which supervenes on them. These behaviours that are acquired in accordance with a certain division of time and in accordance with well-defined rhythms nonetheless leave the impression of spontaneity. Automatism or spontaneity? We attribute what results from external constraints to an essential need. He who rises at six in the morning because he is rhythmised in this way by his work is perhaps still sleepy and in need of sleep. Doesn't this interaction of the repetitive and the rhythmic sooner or later give rise to the dispossession of the body? This dispossession has been noted and underlined many a time, though without all the reasons having been grasped.

In everyday life, what is relative to social relations thus appears to every 'subject' as necessary and absolute, as essential and authentic. Were we to introduce a new element into everyday time, this construction might totter and threaten to collapse, so showing that it was neither necessary nor authentic. To become insomniac, love-struck or bulimic is to enter into another everydayness . . .

The rhythmised organisation of everyday time is in one sense what is most personal, most internal. And it is also what is most external (which corresponds to a famous dictum of Hegel). It pertains neither to an ideology, nor to reality. Acquired rhythms are simultaneously internal and social. In one day in the modern world, everybody does more or less the same thing at more or less the same times, but each person is really alone in doing it.

The cyclical and the linear are categories, which is to say notions or concepts. Each one of these two words designates – denotes – an extreme diversity of facts and phenomena. Cyclical processes and movements, undulations, vibrations, returns and rotations are innumerable, from the microscopic to the astronomical, from molecules to galaxies, passing through the beatings of the heart, the blinking of the eyelids and breathing, the alternation of days and nights, months and seasons and so on. As for the linear, it designates any series of identical facts separated by long or short periods of time: the fall of a drop of water, the blows of a hammer, the noise of an engine, etc. The connotation does not disappear into the denotation of these terms. The cyclical is perceived rather favourably: it originates in the cosmos, in the worldly, in nature. We can all picture the waves of the sea – a nice image, full of meaning – or sound waves, or circadian or monthly cycles. The linear, though, is depicted only as monotonous, tiring and even intolerable.

The relations of the cyclical and the linear – interactions, interferences, the domination of one over the other, or the rebellion of one against the other – are not simple: there is between them an antagonistic unity. They penetrate one another, but in an interminable struggle: sometimes compromise, sometimes disruption. However, there is between them an indissoluble unity: the repetitive tick-tock of the clock measures the cycle of hours and days, and vice versa. In industrial practice, where the linear repetitive tends to predominate, the struggle is intense.

If the cyclical and the linear are categories of time and rhythm with general characteristics (including the measure of the one by the other, which makes each one a *measured-measure*), are there no other categories? Other characteristic traits of time and rhythm? Other times?

The time that we shall provisionally name ‘appropriated’ has its own characteristics. Whether normal or exceptional, it is a time that forgets time, during which time no longer counts (and is no longer counted). It arrives or emerges when an activity brings plenitude, whether this activity be banal (an occupation, a piece of work), subtle (meditation, contemplation), spontaneous (a child’s game, or even one for adults) or sophisticated. This activity

is in harmony with itself and with the world. It has several traits of self-creation or of a gift rather than of an obligation or an imposition come from without. It *is* in time: it *is* a time, but does not reflect on it.

To pose the question of rhythms clearly, let us return to everyday life and the description of a day. The use of time fragments it, parcels it out. A certain realism is constituted by the minute description of these parcels; it studies activities related to food, dress, cleaning, transport, etc. It mentions the employed products. Such a description will appear scientific; yet it passes by the object itself, which is not the sequence of lapses of time passed in this way, but their linking together in time, therefore their rhythm. The essential will get lost, to the gain of the accidental, even – especially – if the study of fragments enables us to theorise certain structures of the everyday.

2. What is Rhythm?

Everybody thinks they know what this word means. In fact, everybody senses it in a manner that falls a long way short of knowledge: rhythm enters into the lived; though that does not mean it enters into the known. There is a long way to go from an observation to a definition, and even further from the grasping of some rhythm (of an air in music, or of respiration, or of the beatings of the heart) to the conception that grasps the simultaneity and intertwinement of several rhythms, their unity in diversity. And yet each one of us *is* this unity of diverse relations whose aspects are subordinated to action towards the external world, oriented towards the outside, towards the Other and to the World, to such a degree that they escape us. We are only conscious of most of our rhythms when we begin to suffer from some irregularity. It is in the psychological, social, organic unity of the ‘perceiver’ who is oriented towards the perceived, which is to say towards objects, towards surroundings and towards other people, that the rhythms that compose this unity are given. An analysis is therefore necessary in order to discern and compare them. It is a question of hunger and thirst, sleep and waking, sex and intellectual activity, etc.

For there to be rhythm, there must be repetition in a movement, but not just any repetition. The monotonous return of the same, self-identical, noise no more forms a rhythm than does some moving object on its trajectory, for example a falling stone; though our ears and without doubt our brains tend to introduce a rhythm into every repetition, even completely linear ones. For there to be rhythm, strong times and weak times, which return in accordance with a rule or law – long and short times, recurring in a recognisable way, stops, silences, blanks, resummptions and intervals in accordance with regularity, must appear in a movement. Rhythm therefore brings with it a differentiated time, a qualified duration. The same can be said of repetitions, ruptures and resummptions. Therefore a measure, but an *internal measure*, which distinguishes itself strongly though without separating itself from an *external* measure, with time t (the time of a clock or a metronome) consisting in only a quantitative and homogeneous parameter. In a reciprocal action, the external measure can and must superimpose itself on the internal measure, but they cannot be conflated. They have neither the same beginning, nor the same end or final cause. This double measure enters into the definition and quality of rhythm, irreducible to a simple determination, implying on the contrary complex (dialectical) relations. As such only a non-mechanical movement can have rhythm: this classes everything that emerges [*relève*] from the purely mechanical in the domain of the quantitative, abstractly detached from quality. However, it is necessary to formulate some reservations with regard to this claim. For example, there is a close relationship between rhythms and the wave movements studied in mathematics and physics. Sounds, these elements of musical movement, with their properties and combinations (pitch, frequency, vibration, placed on the scale of sounds, which is to say along the continuum from low to high, intensities and tones) result from complex vibrations, from wave movements that enter into chords and harmonies. We shall come back to this later, when further exploring the relationship of musicality and rhythm. For the moment, it is enough to note that rhythm presupposes:

a) Temporal elements that are thoroughly marked, accentuated, hence contrasting, even opposed like strong and weak times.

b) An overall movement that takes with it all these elements (for example, the movement of a waltz, be it fast or slow). Through this double aspect, rhythm enters into a general construction of time, of movement and becoming. And consequently into its philosophical problematic: repetition and becoming, the relation of the Same to the Other. It is to be noted at this point that by including a measure, rhythm implies a certain memory. While mechanical repetition works by reproducing the instant that precedes it, rhythm preserves both the measure that initiates the process and the re-commencement of this process with modifications, therefore with its multiplicity and plurality. Without repeating identically 'the same', but by subordinating the same to alterity and even alteration, which is to say, to difference.

To grasp rhythm and polyrhythmias in a sensible, preconceptual but vivid way, it is enough to look carefully at the surface of the sea. Waves come in succession: they take shape in the vicinity of the beach, the cliff, the banks. These waves have a rhythm, which depends on the season, the water and the winds, but also on the sea that carries them, that brings them. Each sea has its rhythm: that of the Mediterranean is not that of the oceans. But look closely at each wave. It changes ceaselessly. As it approaches the shore, it takes the shock of the backwash: it carries numerous wavelets, right down to the tiny quivers that it orientates, but which do not always go in its direction. Waves and waveforms are characterised by frequency, amplitude and displaced energy. Watching waves, you can easily observe what physicists call the superposition of small movements. Powerful waves crash upon one another, creating jets of spray; they disrupt one another noisily. Small undulations traverse each another, absorbing, fading, rather than crashing, into one another. Were there a current or a few solid objects animated by a movement of their own, you could have the intuition of what is a polyrhythmic field and even glimpse the relations between complex processes and trajectories, between bodies and waveforms, etc.

Now, there is not yet a general theory of rhythms. Entrenched ways of thinking, it has already been stressed, separate time from space, despite the contemporary theories in physics that posit a relationship between them. Up until the present, these theories

have failed to give a unitary concept that would also enable us to understand diversities (differences).

And now there is the hypothesis of rhythmanalysis. The body? Your body? It consists in a bundle of rhythms. Why not say: a bouquet? Or a garland? Because these terms connote an aesthetic arrangement, as if nature – an artist – had intentionally arranged and designed the beauty and harmony of bodies. That is perhaps not wrong, but it comes prematurely. The living – polyrhythmic – body is composed of diverse rhythms, each ‘part’, each organ or function having its own, in a perpetual interaction, in a doubtlessly ‘metastable’ equilibrium, always compromised, though usually recovered, except in cases of disruption. How? By a simple mechanism? By homeostasis, as in cybernetics? Or more subtly, through a hierarchical arrangement of centres, with one higher centre giving order to relational activity? This is one of our questions. But the surroundings of the body, the social just as much as the cosmic body, are equally bundles of rhythms (‘bundles’ in the sense that we say, not pejoratively, that a complex chord reuniting diverse notes and tones is a ‘bundle of sounds’). Now look around you at this meadow, this garden, these trees and these houses. They give themselves, they offer themselves to your eyes as in a simultaneity. Now, up to a certain point, this simultaneity is mere appearance, surface, a spectacle. Go deeper. Do not be afraid to disturb this surface, to set its limpidity in motion. Be like the wind that shakes these trees. Let your gaze be penetrating, let it not limit itself to reflecting and mirroring. Let it transgress its limits a little. You at once notice that every plant, every tree has its rhythm. And even several rhythms. Leaves, flowers, fruits and seeds. On this cherry tree, flowers are born in springtime along with leaves that will survive the fruits, and which will fall in the autumn, though not all at once. Henceforth you will grasp every being [*chaque être*], every entity [*étant*] and every body, both living and non-living, ‘symphonically’ or ‘polyrhythmically’. You will grasp it in its space-time, in its place and its approximate becoming: including houses and buildings, towns and landscapes.

Is simultaneity deceptive? Is synchronicity abusive? No and yes. No: the quasi-suppression of distances in time and space by

the present means of communication is certainly not without importance. One need only 'see' the interest aroused in television by live news broadcasts. You take part in events as and when they happen. You watch the massacres and the dead bodies and you contemplate the explosions. Missiles and rockets shoot off before your eyes, heading toward their targets. You are there! – But no, you are not there. You have the slight impression of being there. Subjectivity! You are in your armchair in front of the little *screen*, well named insofar as it hides what it shows. Simultaneity does not only dissimulate dramas – and the tragic. It masks time, diachrony. History? Origins? Not only these. Likewise the diversity of places, of rhythms, therefore of countries and peoples. The symmetrical error and correlated deception of artificial simultaneity: the perpetual throw back to history. Because we are dealing with the present!

From these first glimpses, the outcome is that the living body can and must consider itself as an interaction of organs situated inside it, where each organ has its own rhythm but is subject to a spatio-temporal whole [*globalité*]. Furthermore, this human body is the site and place of interaction between the biological, the physiological (nature) and the social (often called the cultural), where each of these levels, each of these dimensions, has its own specificity, therefore its space-time: its rhythm. Whence the inevitable shocks (stresses), disruptions and disturbances in this ensemble whose stability is absolutely never guaranteed.

Whence the importance of scales, proportions and rhythms. To conceive physical reality and its relation to the sensible and physiological reality of human being, modern philosophy proposed two schemas: the Kantian, or neo-Kantian, and the empirical, or positivist. According to the first, phenomena – the flux of sensations – are classified, arranged and organised in accordance with *a priori* categories, which is to say categories interior to the subject and consciousness, including time and space. The in-itself (the noumenal) eludes the grasp of the 'subject'. According to empiricism and positivism, sensible facts are arranged of their own accord in relations of simultaneity, implication and causal entailment. 'If A implies B and B implies C, then A implies C.' No need for categories other than those of logic (the logical), which

are anyhow not so much categories as self-evident experiential data, transcribed in a formal language.

But knowledge, from Newton to Einstein and contemporary physics, has followed another path, equally demarcated by certain philosophies, such as that of Feuerbach. It is correct that we only perceive our relation to objects of nature as we do our relation to objects of production, or in a word, to realities; in such a way that we have to distinguish between appearances – which are themselves a reality – and what is actually inside these things. For example, they seem inert (this wooden table, this pencil, etc.) and nonetheless they move, albeit only within the movements of the earth: they contain movements and energies: they change, etc. The same goes for social relations as for physical reality: this immobile object before me is the product of labour; the whole chain of the commodity conceals itself inside this material and social object. As a consequence, it is necessary to go beyond facts, phenomena and the flux of immediate sensations, but neither the inside nor the beyond of the phenomenon and the sensible fact are determined internally and purely *a priori* as was believed in the Kantian tradition.

Our *scale* determines our location, our place in the space-time of the universe: what we perceive of it and what serves as a point of departure for practice, as for theoretical knowledge. The *micro* as well as the *macro* eludes us, although we can gradually reach them through knowledge and their relationship with the known. Our rhythms insert us into a vast and infinitely complex world, which imposes on us experience and the elements of this experience. Let us consider light, for example. We do not perceive it as a waveform carrying corpuscles but as a wonder that metamorphoses things, as an illumination of objects, as a dance on the surface of all that exists. This subjective aspect nonetheless contains within it an objectivity that has enabled us to arrive, over the long course of centuries of investigations and calculations, at a physical reality beneath the phenomena of light, though without exhaustively defining this reality.

The spectre of wavelike movements (coupled with, or on the contrary unrelated to, trajectories) extends indefinitely, perhaps infinitely, from the micro to the macro, from corpuscular move-

ments to those of metagalaxies. Relativist thought obliges us to reject all definitive and fixed references. A frame of reference can only be provisional or conjunctural; and today we can reproach Einstein for having refuted the absolute of Newtonian space of time, yet nonetheless preserving one absolute, one constant in the universe, the speed of light.

In this immense spectre, we grasp and perceive only what corresponds to our own rhythms, the rhythms of our organs, including, on account of the individual, two variable and uncertain areas: one inside our normal perceptions, and the other beyond them, towards the macro (sound waves and ultrasounds, infrared and ultraviolet, etc.). We can also conceive beings whose field of vision would extend further. Above all, we can make cameras that actually extend this field. It persists nonetheless, with its limits, its bounds, its boundaries.

Man (the species): his physical and physiological being is indeed the measure of the world, as in the ancient dictum of Protagoras.¹ It is not only that our knowledge is relative to our constitution, but rather that the world that offers itself up to us (nature, the earth and what we call the sky, the body and its insertion into social relations) is relative to this constitution. Not to *a priori* categories, but to our senses and the instruments we have at our disposal. More philosophically: another scale would determine another world. The same? Without doubt, but differently grasped.

Without knowing it (which does not mean 'unconsciously'), the human species draws from the heart of the universe movements that correspond to its own movements. The ear, the eyes and the gaze and the hands are in no way passive instruments that merely register and record. What is fashioned, formed and produced is established on this scale, which, it must also be understood, is in no way accidental or arbitrary. This is the scale of the earth, of accidents on the earth's surface and the cycles that unfurl there. This does not mean that production is limited to reproducing things and naturally given objects. What is created does not refer back to this scale, it either exceeds or transfigures it.

*Attempt at the Rhythmanalysis of
Mediterranean Cities*

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This work is a fragment of a more complete study, or an introduction to this study. Mediterranean towns are striking, amazing, surprising, on account of their specific characteristics. We shall try, despite their differences, to tease out from their diversity some of their general traits. This evidently brings us to the largest cities, all of which are historical, often with a very ancient origin, stretching back as far as Ancient Greece. Like most historical towns in the world, they are destined either to decline or to break up by proliferating into suburbs and peripheries. Nonetheless historical traits seem to us to persist more in the Mediterranean than elsewhere, and with remarkable force. To these persistences, to this maintenance, rhythms – historical, but also everyday, ‘at the heart of the lived [*au plus près du vécu*]’ – are not, in our opinion, strangers. The question at least deserves to be posed.

It is impossible to understand urban rhythms without referring back to a general theory that focuses notably on these rhythms, but not solely on them, a general theory that we call ‘Rhythm-analysis’.¹ This analysis of rhythms in all their magnitude ‘from particles to galaxies’ has a transdisciplinary character. It gives itself the objective, amongst others, of separating as little as possible the scientific from the poetic.

It is thus that we can try and draw the portrait of an enigmatic individual who strolls with his thoughts and his emotions, his impressions and his wonder, through the streets of large Mediterranean towns, and whom we shall call the ‘rhythmanalyst’. More sensitive to times than to spaces, to moods than to images, to the atmosphere than to particular events, he is strictly speaking neither psychologist, nor sociologist, nor anthropologist, nor economist; however he borders on each of these fields in turn and is able to draw on the instruments that the specialists use. He therefore adopts a transdisciplinary approach in relation to these different sciences. He is always ‘listening out’, but he does not only hear words, discourses, noises and sounds; he is capable of listening to a house, a street, a town as one listens to a symphony, an opera. Of course, he seeks to know how this music is composed, who plays it and for whom. He will avoid characterising a town by a simple subjective trait, like some writer

characterises New York by the howling of police sirens or London by the murmur of voices and the screaming of children in the squares. Attentive to time (to tempo) and consequently to repetitions and likewise to differences in time, he separates out through a mental act that which gives itself as linked to a whole: namely rhythms and their associations. He does not only observe human activities, he also hears [*entend*] (in the double sense of the word: noticing and understanding) the temporalities in which these activities unfold. On some occasions he rather resembles the physician (analyst) who examines functional disruptions in terms of malfunctions of rhythm, or of arrhythmia – on others, rather the poet who is able to say:

O people that I know
 It is enough for me to hear the noise of their footsteps
 To be forever able to indicate the direction they have taken²

When rhythms are lived, they cannot be analysed. For example, we do not grasp the relations between the rhythms whose association constitutes our body: the heart, respiration, the senses, etc. We do not grasp even a single one of them separately, except when we are suffering. In order to analyse a rhythm, one must get outside it. Externality is necessary; and yet in order to grasp a rhythm one must have been grasped by it, have given or abandoned oneself 'inwardly' to the time that it rhythmmed. Is it not like this in music and in dance? Just as, in order to understand a language and its rhythm, it is necessary to admit a principal that seems paradoxical. We only hear the sounds and frequencies that we produce in speaking – and vice versa, we can only produce those that we hear. This is called a circle . . .

If one observes a crowd attentively at peak times, and especially if one listens to its murmur, one will discern in the apparent disorder currents and an order that reveal themselves through rhythms: accidental or determined encounters, hurried carryings or nonchalant meanderings of people who go home in order to withdraw from the external world, or of those who leave their homes in order to make contact with the outside, business people and people of leisure [*gens d'affaires et gens vacants*]; as many

elements that compose a polyrhythmia. The rhythmanalyst thus knows how to listen to a square, a market, an avenue.

In each of social practice, scientific knowledge and philosophical speculation, an ancient tradition separates time and space as two entities or two clearly distinct substances. This despite the contemporary theories that show a relation between time and space, or more exactly say how they are relative to one another. Despite these theories, in the social sciences we continue to divide up time into lived time, measured time, historical time, work time and free time, everyday time, etc., that are most often studied outside their spatial context. Now, concrete times have rhythms, or rather are rhythms – and all rhythms imply the relation of a time to a space, a localised time, or, if one prefers, a temporalised space. Rhythm is always linked to such and such a place, to its place, be that the heart, the fluttering of the eyelids, the movement of a street or the tempo of a waltz. This does not prevent it from being a time, which is to say an aspect of a movement or of a becoming.

Let us insist on the relativity of rhythms. They are not measured as the speed of a moving object on its trajectory is measured, beginning from a well-defined starting point (point zero) with a unit defined once and for all. A rhythm is only slow or fast in relation to other rhythms with which it finds itself associated in a more or less vast unity. For example, a living organism – our own body – or even a town (though, of course, without reducing the definition of the latter to that of a biological organism). This leads us to underline the plurality of rhythms, alongside that of their associations and their interactions or reciprocal actions.

Every more or less animate body and *a fortiori* every gathering of bodies is consequently polyrhythmic, which is to say composed of diverse rhythms, with each part, each organ or function having its own in a perpetual interaction that constitutes a set [*ensemble*] or a whole [*un tout*]. This last word does not signify a closed totality, but on the contrary an open totality. Such sets are always in a 'metastable' equilibrium, which is to say always compromised and most often recovered, except of course in cases of serious disruption or catastrophe.

Another important point: rhythms imply repetitions and can be defined as movements and differences within repetition. However, there are two types of repetition: cyclical repetition – linear repetition. Indissociable even if the analyst has the duty of distinguishing and separating them. It is thus that mathematicians distinguish cleanly between two types of movements, rotations and trajectories, and have different measures for these two types. Cyclical repetition is easily understood if one considers days and nights – hours and months – the seasons and years. And tides! The cyclical is generally of cosmic origin; it is not measured in the same way as the linear. The numbering systems best suited to it are duodecimal, which is to say base twelve: the twelve months of the year, the twelve hours of the clock-face, the 360° of the circumference (a multiple of twelve), the twelve signs of the zodiac and even a dozen eggs or oysters, which means to say that the measure by twelve extends itself to living matter in direct provenance from nature. Cyclical rhythms, each having a determined period or frequency, are also the rhythms of beginning again: of the ‘returning’ which does not oppose itself to the ‘becoming’, we could say, modifying a phrase of René Crevel. The dawn is always new. The linear, by contrast, defines itself through the consecution and reproduction of the same phenomenon, almost identical, if not identical, at roughly similar intervals; for example a series of hammer blows, a repetitive series into which are introduced harder and softer blows, and even silences, though at regular intervals. The metronome also provides an example of linear rhythm. It generally originates from human and social activities, and particularly from the movements [*gestes*] of work. It is the point of departure for all that is mechanical. Attaching themselves to the identity of that which returns, the linear and its rhythms have a tendency to oppose that which becomes. According to Crevel, ‘the returning is opposed to the becoming’.³ The linear, including lines, trajectories and repetitions in accordance with this schema are measured on the decimal base (the metric system). Therefore if the cyclical and the linear are clearly distinct, the analysis that separated them must join them back together because they enter into perpetual interaction and are even relative to one another, to the extent that one serves as the measure of the other. An example: so many days of work.

These several points being fixed beforehand, what will the rhythmanalyst say about Mediterranean towns? He has the duty of remaining attentive, let us insist again, to the relativity of rhythms. Every study of rhythms is necessarily comparative. We shall therefore begin by indicating briefly certain contrasts between Mediterranean and oceanic towns. These are governed by the cosmic rhythms of tides – lunar rhythms! With regard to Mediterranean towns, they lie alongside a sea with (almost) no tides; so the cyclical time of the sun takes on a predominant importance there. Lunar towns of the oceans? Solar towns of the Mediterranean? Why not?

But the shores of the Mediterranean are not homogeneous. Everyone knows that they differ in terms of people and population, ethnicities, history, specific features of the economy, in culture and in religion. How can we not distinguish between the oriental Mediterranean and the occidental Mediterranean, the Aegean and Adriatic Seas, the North Mediterranean that is part of Europe and that of the South, part of Africa? However, the Mediterranean itself imposes common characteristics on these towns, insofar as it is a relatively small, enclosed and limited sea. Anyone who has sailed, irrespective of how much, knows that the waves of the Mediterranean do not resemble those of oceans; a simple but significant detail, in that these waves have and are rhythms. The climate also seems to impose a certain homogeneity: olive trees, vines, etc., are found all around the Mediterranean. With regard to Mediterranean ports, they are marked by commercial relations that were the beginning of Greek civilisation. The resources available to most of these towns, which they draw from their hinterlands, are limited. Industrialisation was accomplished unevenly and with difficulty: it seems to have profoundly altered neither the traditions of exchange nor habits. On this basis of limited exchanges, power and political authorities that sought to dominate the town through the domination of space, were constituted very early. These powers drew and continue to draw on space as a means of control, as a political instrument.⁴

The shores of the Mediterranean gave rise, almost 2,500 years ago, to the city-state; it dominated a generally small territory but nonetheless protected trade that extended as far as was possible.

In this trade, material exchange was always mixed with an extreme sociability but also, paradoxically, with piracy, pillage, naval wars and rivalries, with conquests and colonisations. Characteristics that are already found in Homer's *Odyssey*. Mediterranean towns are therefore political towns, but not in the same way as towns that border oceans. The state that dominates a city and its territory is both violent and weak. It always oscillates between democracy and tyranny. One could say that it tends toward arrhythmia; through its interventions in the life of the city, it finds itself at the heart of the city, but this heart beats in a manner at once brutal and discontinuous. In the city, public life organises itself around all kinds of exchange: material and non-material, objects and words, signs and products. If on the one hand, exchange and trade can never be reduced to a strictly economic and monetary dimension, on the other hand it seems that the life of the city seldom has a political objective – except in cases of revolt. In this public life, men are not tied together by the ties that made Nordic towns communities, guaranteed as such by oaths, pacts and charters; in such a way that all action there was perpetually civil and political. One can only note the foundational differences between large, independent Mediterranean towns and the free cities of Flanders, Germany, northern France and Europe. The large Mediterranean towns appear to have always lived and still to live in a regime of compromise between all the political powers. Such a 'metastable' state is the fact of the polyrhythmic. We cannot emphasise too much this form of alliance, of compromise, which differs historically from the 'Sworn Alliance'; this difference has had consequences up as far as our own era and influences, in our opinion, the rhythms of the city.

Without claiming to draw from it a complete theory, as a hypothesis we shall attribute a good deal of importance to these relations between towns, and especially ports, with space and (cosmic) time, with the sea and the world: to that which unites these towns with the world through the mediation of the sea. If it is true that Mediterranean towns are solar towns, one can expect from them a more intense urban life than in lunar towns, but also one richer in contrasts at the very heart of the town. While in

Nordic and oceanic towns one can expect to find more regulated times, linked simultaneously to more restrictive, more disembodied and more abstract forms of (contractual rather than ritual) association. On the Atlantic and in the north, members of the urban community, engaged insofar as people in their relations of exchange, abandon a good deal of their availability, hence of their time, to these relations. While on the Mediterranean, state-political power manages space, dominates territories, controls, as we have already said, external relations without being able to prevent the townsfolk-citizens from making use of their time and consequently of the activities that rhythm it. This analysis enables us to understand that in the Mediterranean, the cradle of the city-state, the state, be it internal or external to the city, has always remained brutal and powerless – violent but weak – unificatory, but always shaky, threatened. Whereas in oceanic towns where the state and the political penetrated with fewer difficulties, therefore with fewer incidences of violence and dramas, they interfered profoundly with individual and social activities. The separation between the public and private, therefore between the external and the intimate, takes place everywhere where there is civil and political society, but it always has its own characteristics. The idea and reality of public-private separation are not everywhere identical. More concretely, what one conceals from, what one shows to and what one will see from the outside are not the same things.

If our hypothesis is exact, in the lived everyday, in practice, social relations in Nordic towns are founded on a contractual, therefore juridical, basis, which is to say on reciprocal good faith. Whereas relations in the Mediterranean would tend to be founded either on those tacit or explicit forms of alliance that go as far as the formation of clans (clientelisms, mafias, etc.) or on the contrary on refusals of alliance that can lead as far as open struggle (vendettas, etc.). Explications in terms of ancient history or in terms of the survival of peasant customs appear to us insufficient to explain the persistence and resurgence of these social relations. Codes function durably, more or less tacitly, more or less ritually; they rhythm time as they do relations. They are not strictly speaking rational laws, acceptable to if not accepted by all,

that govern relations. The word 'code' does not here have the meaning that it takes in the north, and anyway it is we who are introducing it in order to designate a set of gestures, of conventions, of ways of being. Coding is complimented by ritual and vice versa.

The relations and refusals of alliance interest the rhythm-analyst to the extent that they intervene in the production of social time. They take place and unfold in the inside of this social time that they contribute to producing (or reproducing) by impressing a rhythm upon it. Our hypothesis is therefore that every social, which is to say, collective, rhythm is determined by the forms of alliances that human groups give themselves. These forms of alliances are more varied and contradictory than is generally supposed, this being particularly, but not only, true of large towns where relations of class, relations of political force intervene.

Does the characteristic ambiguity of Mediterranean towns in relation to the state manifest itself in the rhythms of social life? It could be that the rhythm-analyst should seek the secret of rhythms around the Mediterranean, where ancient codes and strong rites are upheld. In fact, rites have a double relation with rhythms, each ritualisation creates its own time and particular rhythm, that of gestures, solemn words, acts prescribed in a certain sequence; but also rites and ritualisations intervening in everyday time, *punctuating* it. This occurs most frequently in the course of cyclical time, at fixed hours, dates or occasions. Let us note that there are several sorts of rites that punctuate everydayness:

a) Religious rites, their irruptions and also their interventions in everyday life; for example, fasting, prayers, ablutions, the muezzin, the angelus and the ringing of bells, etc.

b) Rites in the broadest sense, simultaneously sacred and profane such as festivals and carnivals that inaugurate a period or bring it to a close, rites of intimate convivialities or external sociability.

c) Finally, political rites, namely ceremonies, commemorations, votes, etc.

In short, we bring under this label everything that enters into the everyday in order to impress upon it an extra-everyday rhythm without interrupting it in so doing. The analysis of these

multiple rhythms would, we claim, enable us to verify that the relation of the townsman to his town (to his neighbourhood) – notably in the Mediterranean – does not only consist in the sociological relation of the individual to the group; it is on the one hand a relation of the human being with his own body, with his tongue and his speech, with his gestures within a certain place, with an ensemble of gestures – and on the other hand, a relation with the largest public space, with the entire society and, beyond this, with the universe.

A hypothesis comes into place and takes shape here. The analysis of discourse discerns two sorts of expression: the one formal, rhetorical, frontal – the other more immediate, spontaneous. Just as the analysis of asocial time can discern two sorts of rhythms. We shall name these by borrowing terms from Robert Jaulin: 'rhythm of the self' and 'rhythm of the other'.⁵ Rhythms 'of the other' would be the rhythms of activities turned outward, towards the public. One could also call them 'the rhythms of representation'; more restrained, more formalised, they would correspond to frontal expression in discourse. The rhythms 'of the self', in turn, are linked to more deeply inscribed rites, organising a time turned moreover towards private life, therefore opposing self-presence to representation and, as such, quieter, more intimate, forms of consciousness to the forms of discourse . . .

This polar opposition should not lead us to forget that there are multiple transitions and imbrications between these poles: the bedroom, the apartment, the house, the street, the square and the district, finally the town – even the immediate family, the extended family, the neighbourhood, friendly relations and the city itself. The Self and the Other are not cut off from one another. The study of the space in a Muslim town shows these imbrications, these complex transitions and reciprocities between the public and the private.⁶ In and around the body, the distinction between two sorts of rhythm is found as far as in movements [*gestes*], mannerisms and habits: and this from the most everyday (the way one eats and sleeps) to the most extra-everyday (the way one dances, sings, makes music, etc.). The extra-everyday rhythms the everyday and vice versa. No more than the linear and the cyclical can the rhythms 'of the self' and the rhythms 'of the

other', those of presence and those of representation, be separated. Entangled with one another, they penetrate practice and are penetrated by it. This seems to us true of all times and spaces, urban or not. So what is particular about Mediterranean towns? It seems to us that in them, urban, which is to say public, space becomes the site of a vast staging where all these relations with their rhythms show and unfurl themselves. Rites, codes and relations make themselves visible here: they act themselves out here [*s'y miment*]. It is to be noted that a deserted street at four o'clock in the afternoon has as strong a significance as the swarming of a square at market or meeting times. In music, in poetry too, the silences have a meaning.

Isn't Venice the example *par excellence* of this? Is this city not a theatrical city, not to say a theatre-city, where the audience [*le public*] and the actors are the same, but in the multiplicity of their roles and their relations? Thus we imagine the Venice of Casanova, of Visconti's *Senso*, like the Venice of today.⁷ Isn't that because a privileged form of civility, of liberty, founded on and in a dialectic of rhythms, gives itself free rein in this space? This liberty does not consist in the fact of being a free citizen within the state – but in being free in the city outside the state. Political power dominates or rather seeks to dominate space; whence the importance of monuments and squares, but if palaces and churches have a political meaning and goal, the townsfolk-citizens divert them from it; they appropriate this space in a non-political manner. Through a certain use of time the citizen resists the state. A struggle for appropriation is therefore unleashed, in which rhythms play a major role. Through them, civil, therefore social, time seeks to and succeeds in withdrawing itself from linear, unirhythmic, measuring/measured state time. Thus public space, the space of representation, becomes 'spontaneously' a place for walks and encounters, intrigues, diplomacy, deals and negotiations – it theatricalises itself. Thus the time and the rhythms of the people who occupy this space are linked back to space.

The comparative analysis of urban rhythms only distinguishes between them in order to bring them closer together. In the case that concerns us, this analysis sometimes arrives at contrasts or

strong oppositions, but more often at nuances. The analysis of the Spanish town evidently nuances that of the Islamic town or the Italian town. However, through the nuances and contrasts common aspects come to light. An illustration of this thesis: around the Mediterranean and irrespective of the country, many towns have been constructed on escarpments that dominate the sea. In these towns, a distinction is drawn between the lower town and the upper town: steps play a very important role. Generally, there is right around the Mediterranean a remarkable architecture of the stairway. A link between spaces, the stairway also ensures a link between times: between the time of architecture (the house, the enclosure) and urban time (the street, the open space, the square and the monuments). It links particular houses and dwellings back to their distribution in urban space. Now is the stairway not a localised time *par excellence*? Don't the steps in Venice rhythm the walk through the city, while serving simultaneously as a transition between different rhythms? Let us also evoke the steps of Gare Saint Charles in Marseille. They are for the traveller the obligatory – one could say initiatory – passage for the descent towards the city, towards the sea. More than that of a gate or an avenue, their screaming monumentality imposes on the body and on consciousness the requirement of passing from one rhythm to another, as yet unknown – to be discovered.

We have previously underlined the historical weaknesses of Mediterranean city-states. They were never able to form enduring alliances against common enemies, nor efficiently to oppose the great conquerors and the founders of great empires. The victory of Athens against the Persians remains an exceptional event. Whence the succession of empires that attempted to dominate or encircle the whole Mediterranean from antiquity to the present.⁸ All the conquerors conquered the cities, but all the cities resisted. How and why? In our opinion, through time and rhythms. This underlines the consistent and solid character of urban times in the Mediterranean in relation to politically dominated space.

Some words here on tourism, a modern phenomenon that has become essential, and which in a curious way prolongs the historical problematic of conquests. Here too a paradox reveals itself: tourism is added to the traditional and customary use of space

and time, of monumentality and rhythms 'of the other' without making it disappear. Tourism in Venice, for example, does not suppress the theatricality of the city: one would say that it reinforces it, even if it makes dramatic representation pass for something decidedly silly; it does not succeed in altering its profundity, in denying the principle. Whence this surprising fact: the most traditional towns accept modern tourism; they adapt themselves by resisting the loss of identity that these invasions could entail. Wouldn't this be the case, not only for Venice, but also for Syracuse, Barcelona, Palermo, Naples and Marseille, cities delivered over to tourism that fiercely resist homogenisation, linearity and the rhythms 'of the other'? Tourism can distort space without managing to deform lived time by rendering it a stranger to itself. In order to understand this situation, we have seen that it is necessary to appeal to the whole of history. It is necessary to remind oneself that the long predominance of commercial and cultural exchanges has produced a melting pot of diverse populations, migrations and cohabitations. This confirms that form of alliance found in the compromise that characterises the history of rhythm in these towns – and moreover maintains and consolidates clans. In other words, relations as solid and enduring in conflicts as in alliances. Which accentuates another paradox: how could such enduring historic compromises have been founded on such powerful Manicheanism? Answer: they were founded on the organisation of time and rhythms, an organisation at once public and private, sacred and profane, apparent and secret.

The state and the political are not alone in seeing themselves refused by the intimate, repressed or even expelled from their space by a strong rhythmicity, which does not prevent them from coming back, equally forcefully, towards that which refused them. All forms of hegemony and homogeneity are refused in the Mediterranean. It is not only the rhythms imposed by the state-political centre that might be resented as rhythms 'of the other'; it is the very idea of centrality that is refused, because each group, each entity, each religion and each culture considers itself as a centre. But what is a centre, if not a producer of rhythms in social time? The polyrhythmia of Mediterranean towns highlights their common character through their differences. Such urban practice

raises a question: how does *each party* (individual–group–family, etc.) manage to insert its own rhythms amongst those of (different) others, including the rhythms imposed by authority? In this insertion of rhythms ‘of the self’ into rhythms ‘of the other’, what is the role of radical separation and compromises, of tolerance and violence? A well-known and banal fact, namely that in all large towns around the Mediterranean, everyone hears several languages from their childhood onwards, cannot not have consequences with regard to the ‘spontaneous’ or ‘native’ acceptance of diverse rhythms – with regard to the perception of the diversity of rhythms ‘of the other’.

The enigma of practical and social life is therefore formulated in the following way: how are rhythms ‘of the self’ and rhythms ‘of the other’ determined, orientated and distributed? According to which principles do (civilian) townfolk rule on the refusals and acceptances of alliances? Polyrhythmia always results from a contradiction, but also from resistance to this contradiction – resistance to a relation of force and an eventual conflict. Such a contradictory relation can be defined as the struggle between two tendencies: the tendency towards homogenisation and that towards diversity, the latter being particularly vigorous in the Mediterranean. This can be phrased in yet another way: there is a tendency towards the globalising domination of centres (capital cities, dominant cultures and countries, empires), which attacks the multidimensionality of the peripheries – which in turn perpetually threatens unity. In rhythmanalytic terms, let us say that there is a struggle between measured, imposed, external time and a more endogenous time. If it is true that in Mediterranean towns, diversity always takes its revenge, it does not succeed in defeating the opposite tendency towards political, organisational, cultural unity. Everything happens as if the Mediterranean could not renounce the unitary principle that founded and still founds its identity; however the ideologies of diversity oppose to the point of violence the structures of identity and unity. How can one not think of Beirut here? . . .

When relations of power overcome relations of alliance, when rhythms ‘of the other’ make rhythms ‘of the self’ impossible, then total crisis breaks out, with the deregulation of all compromises,

arrhythmia, the implosion–explosion of the town and the country. It seems to us that Beirut – this extreme case – cannot but take symbolic meaning and value. Fifteen or twenty years ago, Beirut was a place of compromise and alliance that today appears miraculous: the place of a polyrhythmia realised in an (apparent) harmony.

This brutal arrhythmia poses a question that concerns every Mediterranean project, every prospect of unity and globality in this region of the world. Does such a project founder before this drama? That is not for the rhythm analyst to pronounce upon; at best he can maintain that the analysis of rhythms would contribute non-negligible elements to all questionings of this type.

The rhythm analytical project applied to the urban can seem disparate, because it appeals to, in order to bring together, notions and aspects that analysis too often keeps separate: time and space, the public and the private, the state-political and the intimate; it places itself sometimes in one point of view and in a certain perspective, sometimes in another. Thus it can seem abstract, because it appeals to very general concepts. We could have avoided these reproaches and not left such an impression: either by painstakingly describing a known and privileged place – or by throwing ourselves into the lyricism that arouses the splendour of the cities evoked. But this was not our purpose. We wanted to introduce concepts and a general idea – rhythm analysis – into the debate. This concept has very diverse origins: the theory of measurement, the history of music, chronobiology and even cosmological theories. In proposing here several hypotheses in the hope that they would be taken up and carried further than before by others, we wanted to verify them as far as possible. We have therefore tried to tease out a paradigm: a table of oppositions constituting a whole; following this we have examined the specifically Mediterranean content of this form, the entry into practice of these oppositions. This has made evident virtual or actual conflicts, relations of force and threats of rupture. The paradigmatic table, when put into relation with practice, is dialecticised. The path marked out by these concepts thus opens itself onto finer analyses. To be undertaken.

Notes

Rhythmanalysis: An Introduction

- 1 Vladimir Nabokov, *Ada, or Ardor: A Family Chronicle*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969, p. 572.
- 2 In a sense the posthumous reception of Lefebvre begins here. I have discussed this in more detail in 'Politics, Philosophy, Geography: Henri Lefebvre in Anglo-American Scholarship', *Antipode: A Radical Journal of Geography*, Vol. 33 No. 5, November 2001, pp. 809–25; and 'Certains naissent d'une façon posthume: La survie de Henri Lefebvre', *Actuel Marx*, No. 35, 2004. Lourau was a colleague of Lefebvre's at Université de Nanterre, Paris, and the author of several books, including *L'analyse institutionnelle*, Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1970, which Lefebvre discusses in his *De l'État*, Paris: UGE, 1976–8, four volumes, vol. IV, p. 260, and elsewhere.
- 3 See Henri Lefebvre, *Nietzsche*, Paris: Éditions Sociales Internationales, 1939; *Contribution à l'esthétique*, Paris: Anthropos, 2e édition, 2001 [1953].
- 4 Henri Lefebvre, *Critique de la vie quotidienne III: De la modernité au modernisme (Pour une métaphilosophie du quotidien)*, Paris: L'Arche, 1981, pp. 128–35.
- 5 Henri Lefebvre, *Éléments de rythmanalyse: Introduction à la connaissance des rythmes*, Paris: Éditions Syllepse, 1992, p. 11; below, p. 3.
- 6 Lefebvre, *Éléments de rythmanalyse*, p. 13; below, p. 5.
- 7 Armand Ajzenberg, 'A partir d'Henri Lefebvre: Vers un mode de production écologique', *Traces de futures: Henri Lefebvre: Le possible et le quotidienne*, Paris: La Société Française, 1994, pp. 1–5, cited in Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas, 'Lost in

- Transposition – Time, Space and the City’, in Henri Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities*, translated and edited by Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas, Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 3–60, 7. See also the comments made in Henri Lefebvre and Catherine Régulier, ‘Le projet rythmanalytique’, *Communications*, vol. 41, 1985, pp. 191–9; below, pp. 73–83; and the interview ‘Henri Lefebvre philosophe du quotidien’, with O. Corpet and T. Paquot, *Le Monde*, 19 décembre 1982.
- 8 Henri Lefebvre, *Critique de la vie quotidienne I: Introduction*. Paris: L’Arche, 2e édition, 1958 [1947]; translated by John Moore as *Critique of Everyday Life Volume I: Introduction*, London: Verso, 1991; *Critique de la vie quotidienne II: Fondements d’une sociologie de la quotidienneté*, Paris: L’Arche, 1961; translated by John Moore as *Critique of Everyday Life Volume II: Foundations for a Sociology of the Everyday*, London: Verso, 2002; *Critique de la vie quotidienne*, vol. III. See also *La vie quotidienne dans le monde moderne*, Paris: Gallimard, 1968; translated by Sacha Rabinovitch as *Everyday Life in the Modern World*, Harmondsworth: Allen Lane, 1971.
 - 9 Lefebvre, *Critique de la vie quotidienne*, vol. II, p. 233; *Critique of Everyday Life*, vol. II, p. 232.
 - 10 Henri Lefebvre, *La production de l’espace*, Paris: Anthropos, 1974; translated by Donald Nicolson-Smith as *The Production of Space*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1991.
 - 11 *La production de l’espace*, p. 465; *The Production of Space*, p. 405. See *De l’État*, vol. IV, p. 283.
 - 12 For the best account of this period, see Bud Burkhard, *French Marxism Between the Wars: Henri Lefebvre and the ‘Philosophies’*, Atlantic Highlands: Humanity Books, 2000; and the work of Michel Trebitsch, notably, ‘Les mesaventures du groupe Philosophies, 1924–1933’, *La revue des revues*, no 3, printemps 1987, pp. 6–9; ‘Le groupe ‘philosophies’, de Max Jacob aux surréalistes 1924–1925’, *Le cahiers de l’IHTP*, no. 6, novembre 1987, pp. 29–38.
 - 13 Henri Lefebvre, *La somme et le reste*, Paris: Méridiens Klincksieck, 3e édition, 1989 [1959], pp. 383–4.
 - 14 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, in *The Portable Nietzsche*, edited and translated by Walter Kaufmann, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1954, pp. 269–72.
 - 15 Henri Lefebvre, ‘Le soleil crucifié’, *Les temps modernes*, no. 155, janvier 1959, pp. 1016–29; *La somme et le reste*, pp. 251–64.
 - 16 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo: How One Becomes What One*

- Is*, translated by R. J. Hollingdale, Penguin: Harmondsworth, 1979, p. 44. See also his *Beyond Good and Evil*, translated by Walter Kaufmann, New York: Vintage, 1966, §§ 28, 246 and 247.
- 17 Lefebvre, *La somme et le reste*, pp. 381–2.
 - 18 Lefebvre, *La somme et le reste*, pp. 637–55; *La fin de l'histoire*, Paris: Anthropos, 2e édition, 2001 [1970].
 - 19 Henri Lefebvre, *Key Writings*, edited by Stuart Elden, Elizabeth Lebas and Eleonore Kofman, London: Continuum, 2003, pp. 166–87.
 - 20 For Lefebvre's writings on music, see, above all, *Le langage et la société*, Paris: Gallimard, 1966, pp. 275–86; 'Musique et sémiologie', *Musique en jeu*, vol. 4, 1971, pp. 52–62.
 - 21 Lefebvre, *Éléments de rythmanalyse*, p. 98; below, p. 87.
 - 22 Henri Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities*, edited and translated by Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas, Oxford: Blackwell, 1996, pp. 219–27, 228–40.
 - 23 Lefebvre, *Éléments de rythmanalyse*, p. 91; below, p. 67.
 - 24 Lefebvre, *Éléments de rythmanalyse*, p. 32; below, p. 19.
 - 25 Lucio Alberto Pinheiro dos Santos, *La rythmanalyse*, Rio de Janeiro: Société de Psychologie et de Philosophie, 1931.
 - 26 Gaston Bachelard, *The Psychoanalysis of Fire*, translated by Alan C. M. Ross, Boston: Beacon, 1964; *Water and Dreams: An Essay on the Imagination of Matter*, translated by Edith Farrell, Dallas, TX: Dallas Institute Publications, 1994; *Air and Dreams: An Essay on the Imagination of Movement*, translated by Edith and Frederick Farrell, Dallas, TX: Dallas Institute Publications, 1988; and *Earth and Reveries of Will*, translated by Kenneth Haltman, Dallas, TX: Dallas Institute Publications, 2000.
 - 27 See, for example, Lefebvre, *Critique de la vie quotidienne*, vol. II, pp. 334–5 n. 1; *Critique of Everyday Life*, vol. II, pp. 369–70 n. 9.
 - 28 See, for example, Gaston Bachelard, *The New Scientific Spirit*, translated by A. Goldhammer, Boston: Beacon, 1986; *The Formation of the Scientific Mind*, translated by Mary McAllester Jones, Manchester: Clinamen Press, 2003.
 - 29 Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, translated by Maria Jolas, Boston: Beacon, 1969; *Dialectic of Duration*, translated by Mary McAllester Jones, Manchester: Clinamen Press, 2000.
 - 30 For references to *The Poetics of Space*, see, for example, Lefebvre, *La production de l'espace*, pp. 143–4; *The Production of Space*, pp. 121–2.
 - 31 See also Gaston Bachelard, *L'intuition de l'instant*, Paris: Stock, 1992 [1931].

- 32 On the latter, and on many other points noted in this introduction, see Stuart Elden, *An Introduction to Henri Lefebvre: Theory and the Possible*, London: Continuum, 2004.
- 33 Lefebvre, *Éléments de rythmanalyse*, p. 11; below, p. 3.
- 34 For example, Derek Gregory, 'Lacan and Geography: The Production of Space Revisited', in Georges Benko and Ulf Strohmeyer (eds.), *Space and Social Theory: Interpreting Modernity and Postmodernity*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1997, pp. 203–31.
- 35 Rémi Hess, *Henri Lefebvre et l'aventure du siècle*, Paris: A.M. Métailié, 1988.
- 36 Rob Shields, *Lefebvre, Love & Struggle: Spatial Dialectics*, London: Routledge, 1999; Kurt Meyer, *Henri Lefebvre: Ein Romantischer Revolutionär*, Wien: Europaverlag, 1973.
- 37 Henri Meschonnic, *Critique du rythme: Anthropologie historique du langage*, Lagrasse: Verdier, 1982. See also the chapter entitled 'Pace', in Umberto Eco, *Reflections on the Name of the Rose*, translated by William Weaver, London, Minerva, 1994, pp. 41–6.
- 38 Henri Lefebvre, *Logique formelle, logique dialectique*, Paris: Anthropos, 2e édition, 1969 [1947], p. 50.
- 39 Meschonnic, *Critique du rythmes*, p. 16.
- 40 Elizabeth Deeds Ermarth, *Sequel to History: Postmodernism and the Crisis of Representational Time*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992. See Julio Cortázar, *Hopscotch*, translated by Gregory Rabassa, New York: Pantheon, 1966; Nabokov, *Ada, or Ardor*; Alain Robbe-Grillet, *Jealousy: A Novel*, translated by Richard Howard, London: J. Calder, 1959.
- 41 Ermarth, *Sequel to History*, p. 45.
- 42 Nabokov, *Ada, or Ardor*, p. 572. Ermarth, *Sequel to History*, p. 45, cites all but the last sentence.
- 43 Lefebvre, *Éléments de rythmanalyse*, p. 26; below, p. 15.

Elements of Rhythmanalysis

- 1 Translators' Note: A reference to Bachelard's works on the scientific spirit, noted in the introduction above.
- 2 Translators' Note: The French word *geste* carries the fourfold meaning of 'gest', 'gesture', 'movement' and 'act'. It thus plays a crucial role in Lefebvre's attempt to translate the understanding of intentional human 'gestures' into a series of rhythms. Where it means 'gesture', it also serves to augment the impression of the reflexivity of rhythms (man himself as 'a bundle of rhythms'), and hence the impossibility of stepping outside them, which

- Lefebvre also expresses through the use of the intransitive form of verbs (for example, *les rythmes s'analysent*). To preserve this significance, the word 'geste' has often been placed in parentheses following its translation.
- 3 Translators' Note: *La mesure* has several connotations, beyond the straightforward 'measure', among which are the musical concepts of beat and counting time (sometimes also referred to as measure in English). The term has been generally translated as 'measure' throughout in line with the privilege accorded to it by Lefebvre; where the English 'beat' has been thought preferable, the original has been marked in parentheses.
 - 4 Translators' Note: *Les techniques* would normally mean 'techniques' or even the 'applied sciences', but Lefebvre is using it here to translate the German *der Technik*, employed by both Marx and Heidegger. Lefebvre was greatly influenced by Kostas Axelos, *Marx penseur de la technique: De l'aliénation de l'homme à la conquête du monde*, Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1961; translated by Ronald Bruzina as *Alienation, Praxis and Techne in the Thought of Karl Marx*, Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1976, which reads Marx in a Heideggerian way.
 - 5 Translators' Note: *Déploiement*, which has been translated as either 'unfurling' or 'unfolding', rather than 'deployment'.
 - 6 Translators' Note: See Lucio Alberto Pinheiro dos Santos, *La Rythmanalyse*, Société de Psychologie et de Philosophie, Rio de Janeiro, 1931; Gaston Bachelard's *La psychanalyse du feu*, Paris: Gallimard, 1949, p. 58 (*The Psychoanalysis of Fire*, translated by Alan C. M. Ross, Boston: Beacon, 1964, p. 28); and the chapter on 'Rhythmanalysis', in *La dialectique de la durée*, 1961, Paris: PUF, pp. 129–50, where he writes most fully on dos Santos (*Dialectic of Duration*, translated by Mary McAllester Jones, Manchester: Clinamen Press, 2000, pp. 136–55).
 - 7 Translators' Note: The French is 'du (de la) logique et du (de la) dialectique', a formula along the lines of the political (*le politique*) and politics (*la politique*).
 - 8 Translators' Note: The camel, lion and child are key figures in Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Joachim de Flore (c. 1135–1202) was an Italian monk whose mystical prophecies were widely believed in the thirteenth century.
 - 9 Translators' Note: See Lefebvre's book *Qu'est ce que penser?* Paris: Publisud, 1985.
 - 10 Translators' Note: Begging the question – assuming a premise which is being proved.

- 11 Translators' Note: Douglas R. Hofstadter, *Gödel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid*, New York: Basic Books, 1979.
- 12 Translators' Note: Robert Schumann's *Carnaval* concludes with the 'March of the League of David [*Dauidsbüandler*] against the Philistines'. Equally, in his *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* [*New Journal for Music*], Schumann led a cast of characters called the *Dauidsbüandler* against the dominant music of Rossini, Liszt and Wagner.
- 13 Translators' Note: The French text is 'que ça finit par se dire et entraîner des protestations'. The rarity of *ça* in formal written French makes it possible that Lefebvre is playing on *le ça*, the French translation of Freud's 'es', the id. This reading is corroborated by the idea of *ça* 'speaking itself', and also by the several other instances where Lefebvre uses the term – which would otherwise look sloppy and haphazard. To translate as 'id' would doubtless be overtranslation, but it is worth bearing the subtext in mind, especially given Lefebvre's critique of psychoanalysis here and elsewhere.
- 14 Julio Cortázar, *Les Gagnants*, [Gallimard: Paris, 1961], p. 54. [Translators' Note: *Los Premios*, Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1960, p. 43; translated by Elaine Kerrigan as *The Winners*, New York: New York Review of Books, 1999, p. 32. The emphasis on 'something' 'up there' (*algo aqui*) is added by Lefebvre. Our translation follows the French rather than the existing English one, because of Lefebvre's stress].
- 15 Translators' Note: 'Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and reverence, the more often and more steadily one reflects on them: *the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me*'. These are the first lines of the conclusion of Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason*, in *Practical Philosophy*, translated and edited by Mary J. Gregor, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 269.
- 16 Translators' Note: *Simultaner* is invented by Lefebvre to express simultaneous simulation, hence the neologism: *simultanete*.
- 17 Translators' Note: See 'De ma fenêtre', *Oeuvres complètes de Colette*, Paris: Éditions de Centenaire/Flammarion, 1933, vol. 10, pp. 11–135.
- 18 Translators' Note: This is the rue Rambuteau, where Lefebvre had an apartment. The P. Centre is of course the Pompidou Centre.
- 19 Translators' Note: The French is '*ça ne sert de coup d'oeil que pour entrer dans la rumeur*'. See note above on *ça*.

- 20 Translators' Note: *Sens* has the dual meaning of 'sense' and 'meaning'.
- 21 Translators' Note: Literally 'Mob Street' and 'Violinists' (or Fiddlers') Way'.
- 22 Translators' Note: Ricardo Bofill (1939–), Spanish architect, founder of the Taller de Arquitectura group.
- 23 Translators' Note: *Le dressage* has the sense of training, breaking-in or taming. It is used by Foucault in a similar way in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, translated by Alan Sheridan, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977. We have, as far as possible, retained the word 'dressage' for the noun, and used 'break-in' for verbal forms.
- 24 Translators' Note: 'Le savoir-vivre, le savoir-faire, le savoir tout court ne coïncident pas'.
- 25 Translators' Note: 'Ça parle, ça émeut' – see note above on *ça*.
- 26 Translators' Note: *Médiatisation* – meaning the proliferation of mass media coverage.
- 27 Translators' Note: 'ça ressemble, mais ça n'a ni profondeurs, ni épaisseur, ni chair...'. See note above. Although not as immediately suggestive as other uses of *ça*, Lefebvre's language here is slightly reminiscent of the critique of psychonanalysis in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, translated by Robert Hurley, Mark Seem & Helen R. Lane, London: Athlone, 1984.
- 28 Translators' Note: 'Das Sein des Menschen gründet in der Sprache; aber diese geschieht erst eigentlich im Gespräch . . . wir sind ein Gespräch . . . Das Gespräch und seine Einheit trägt unser Dasein'. Martin Heidegger, 'Hölderlin und das Wesen der Dichtung', in *Erläuterungen zu Hölderlins Dichtung, Gesamtausgabe Band 4*, Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1981, pp. 38–9. There is an English translation as 'Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry', in *Existence and Being*, edited by Werner Brock, Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1949, p. 301, but the translation here is our own, keeping close to the terminology Lefebvre uses.
- 29 Translators' Note: Boris de Schloezer (1881–1969) was a Russian philosopher and music critic who lived in France. He wrote books on Stravinsky and Bach and *Problèmes de la musique moderne*, Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1959.
- 30 Translators' Note: Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, translated by Walter Kaufmann, New York: Vintage, 1967.
- 31 Translators' Note: *La parole* means both spoken word and song lyric.

- 32 Translators' Note: Jean-Philippe Rameau, *Traité de l'harmonie*, Paris: Meridiens Klincksieck, 1986. The original publication of this was actually in 1722.

The Rhythmanalytical Project

- 1 Translators' Note: 'Man is the measure of all things', in Plato, *Theaetetus*, translated by Robin A. H. Waterfield, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987, p. 152a.

Attempt at the Rhythmanalysis of Mediterranean Cities

- 1 Henri Lefebvre and Catherine Régulier, 'Le projet rythmanalytique', *Communications*, no. 41, 1985 [above pp. 73–83].
- 2 Guillaume Apollinaire, «Cortège», *Alcools*, 1920. [Translators' Note: reprinted in *Oeuvres complètes de Guillaume Apollinaire*, edited by Michel Décaudin, Paris: André Ballard & Jacques Lecat 1966, vol. 3, pp. 84–5. There is an English critical edition, not a translation, in Guillaume Apollinaire, *Alcools*, edited by Garnet Rees, London: The Athlone Press, University of London, 1975, p. 67. One of the notable things about *Alcools* is the complete absence of commas or periods. As Apollinaire wrote to Henry Martineau in 1913, 'as regards the punctuation, I cut it out simply because it seemed to me unnecessary; which in fact it is, for the rhythm itself and the division of the lines are the real punctuation, and nothing else is needed . . .'. The letter is found in *Apollinaire: Selected Poems*, translated by Oliver Bernard, London: Anvil Press Poetry, 1986, p. 6.]
- 3 Translator's Note: 'Le revenant s'oppose au devenant', also 'the ghost, that which returns, is opposed to that which becomes'. René Crevel (1900–35) was a French surrealist novelist and writer. The quote is from 'Individu et société', in *Le roman cassé et derniers écrits*, Paris: Pauvert, 1989, p. 147, although it actually reads 'Au revenant s'oppose le devenant'.
- 4 Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen au temps de Philippe II* [Translators' Note: Paris: Armand Colin, 2e édition, two volumes, 1967; translated by Siân Reynolds as *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, New York: Harper & Row, two volumes, 1972].
- 5 Robert Jaulin, *Gens du soi, Gens de l'autre*, [Paris:] U.G.E. 10/18, 1973. [Translators' Note: Jaulin (1928–96) was a French ethnographer, the author of *Anthropologie et calcul* and *Géomancie et Islam*.]

- 6 Paul Vielle, 'L'État périphérique et son héritage', *Peuples Méditerranéens*, no. 27-28, avril-septembre 1984.
- 7 Translators' Note: Luchino Visconti (1906-76) was an Italian film and theatre director. *Senso* is set in Venice in the nineteenth century. He also directed the film version of *Death in Venice*.
- 8 Burhan Ghalioun, 'Dialectique de l'un et du multiple', *Peuples Méditerranéens*, no. 19, avril-juin 1982.

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