This essay is discontinuous, disjointed, fragmentary, seeming to mark the severing of the relation to the other. It refuses to proceed in a straight line, refuses to follow in the well-marked linear rut. No, it moves in directions that are multiple, multiplied, and stratified. Lines of thought digress only to come back in citation, underlining and inflecting the cresting of new events of language. Words regained, reacting again upon words. Language ebbing and flowing, relaxing into stagnant eddies and contracting again into the wave-crest. But wherever there is editing, cutting, recontextualization,

1 While the discontinuous, uncertain, and indeterminate nature of noise might seem to sever relations to the other, to cut and to fragment rather than to connect, it is the contention here that this is the formation of a different form of relation, a relation not based on continuous control but upon heterogeneity that is better served in relating to the other, even the nonhuman other.

2 One might note that the excess of aquatic and nautical metaphors and images are not accidental or random. While the etymology remains contested, it is argued by some (including Michel Serres) that noise has its linguistic roots in *nausea*, specifically as it ties to the sickness brought on by the tossing of a ship by the waves of an uncontrollable sea. Perhaps this imagery is due to Serres’s own maritime upbringing, but the metaphor of the sea from its power and scope to its fractal shorelines and its chaotic wave patterns is apt nonetheless.
incomplete citation, there is noise. The whole is also a hole or, following Reza Negarestani, a ( )hole: emptied out by the very thing that completes it. Noise, much as we might try to contain it, reduce it, sublimate it, eradicate it, has the potential to affect us, to pierce us. This reaction to noise could explain why it is that we continually try and continually fail to control it. This noise, this pharmakon, this ambivalence. Meaning can only emerge in the gaps and failures of those words that are used to render noise understandable. In light of this, the most effective, accurate, evocative means of addressing noise is by putting the word “noise” under erasure in this text, writing it as noise. For the meaning of noise only occurs when the word is understood in opposition to the concept —noise as the absence of meaning—it is meant to describe.

How is compositional integration achieved, given the heteronomy of the materials available, given the manifold nature of noise itself? Without my complete authorial control over the text, a pleasure for consistency and continuity is denied or put aside for the reader just as the experiment opens new avenues for thought and discourse. The consequences of this heteronomy are odd, and intrinsically and unignorably relational. Noise emanates, propagates, communicates, vibrates, and agitates. It eludes definition, while having profound effect. Noise is not just volume, but the spread, dissemination and dispersal of its non-message, the poverty and ruination of its materials, the end result of which is uninhibited and no longer distinguishes truth from falsehood, simulacrum from

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3 One might here take a moment to digress on the topic of whole, holes, and ( )holes. ( )hole is a term that I am adapting here from Reza Negarestani as a typographic neologism that indicates all the inherent holes in every whole. This is similar to my work on noise. Noise exists in every signal, cannot be separated from any signal. Just as there is always noise, there is always a hole in the whole —thus the ( )hole. It is a similar typographic position to that of putting under erasure (i.e., rendering noise as noise to indicate that every articulation of noise in a text always fails to truly be noise).
reality — simultaneously transcendent and utterly confusing because it confounds all previous experiences.

In writing about noise this way, fragments are juxtaposed in novel formations and often will counteract each other, sometimes creating a dense mass, at other times offering more a sense of strata or depths. At every instant, the question of the border comes up. What is a border? And of what use is it if it cannot be maintained? If the fragments cannot be easily distinguished from each other, are they still fragments? In order to identify itself, to be what it is, to delimit itself and recognize itself in its own name, the border must espouse the very outlines of its adversary. To exist, one must delimit. One must distinguish between things, sensations, phenomenal experiences. However, in doing so one creates, by the very nature of division, a marked and an unmarked space, an inside and an outside. This is the origin of noise. To define is to apophatically create noise. Noise is found in the act of marking a division between a marked and unmarked space, the border that is marked, and in the exclusion of the unmarked space, in the rendering of the unmarked space as background from which to analyze and interpret the marked foreground.

In attempting to think noise-as-such, as a readable text, in recognizing it and ascribing to it a signal, thus rendering it as noise, one misses it. The *pharmakon* is that sense of noise which, always springing up from without, acting like the outside itself, will never have any definable virtue of its own. Noise as what always remains irresoluble, impracticable, abnormal, or non-normalizable is what interests and constrains us here. Its divisibility founds this text, its traces, and remains. Noise works to break rules and conventions to free the mind to control what one cannot control, forcing alterations to your patterns of thinking, the content of your dreams and the way in which everyday decisions are made. As a process, noise marks something underway — the not-yet-finished — and this being-undone allows competing terms and relations to be co-present and active in the same dynamic event. It invites one to think. Noise, or *noise*, here works to push beyond meaning
and sense, to continue to articulate something even once words have failed or reached the limits of their expressive possibilities. One does not know—not out of ignorance, but because this non-object, this non-present present, this being-there of an absent or departed one no longer belongs to knowledge. I cannot dominate the situation, or translate it, or describe it. I cannot report what is going on in it, or narrate it or depict it, or pronounce it or mimic it, or offer it up to be read or formalized without remainder. I can only approximate noise as noise in an effort to approach the possibilities of thorybology.

The future of this understanding of noise as noise becomes therefore stranger than the singular imaginings of its past. It grafts. It is a trace, and a trace of the erasure of the trace. The dynamic interaction between noise and noise—the very condition that engulfs the text—that enables it, allowing it to be created, provides a conceptual foundation for thorybology. Without edge, without border, thorybology seeks to upset the order of things, breaking down any resistance to thought, offering and requiring no closure but instead an inherent mystery, the structure of chaos unlimited in its capacity to destroy and create.

Noise compels the violation of its own law, whatever one does, and it violates itself. It can never just be noise. In striving to be noise in a place of meaning, it is read as meaning and thus (though an apophenic transformation) becomes meaning, becomes noise. In other words, in the face of the recognition that there is no one absolute answer to the question of noise, we must seek constantly, endlessly, for an appropriate answer, for a politically pragmatic answer. Seeking the right answer, or better, the just answer, implies that the experience of undecidability is also supposed to make us live differently. The questions of noise will not be answered, at least not finally in the declarative mode, but it will be used. Noise is a way of being, of living in the world, not a thing to hold, own, control, mitigate, abate, banish, or know in any declarative sense. This could be seen as a limitation of the field, but is, rather, an expression of thorybology’s most generative capacity.
What a word such as noise properly means (to say) cannot be known by referring back to some would-be primitivity or authentic primordiality. Noise theory is itself chaotic and filled with contradictions, and as such provides an unclear path. The path, despite lacking a clear destination, remains traversable, redolent with possibility. This chaos of thorybology is an incessant din out of which a philosopher isolates fragments and snatches up odds and ends; no archive will ever preserve the memory of it. Thorybology is not a destination, it has no telos or topos, but a program for productive wandering. The risk for thorybology is always that its abstraction is too arbitrary, that it lacks the power to properly motivate the amalgamation of found matter within its orbit. Will it be said, then, that what resides in thorybology is the unthought, the suppressed, the repressed of philosophy? Perhaps. In thorybological inquiry, all caution and previous limitations are thrown to the wind. It is in this resistance, this productive tension of the unthought and the repressed, that thorybology excels.