Deleuze and Guattari’s *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature* still continues throwing threads, or threats, of deterritorialisation—some tangled, some rooted, and some uprooted or flattened. What is most striking in this atypical topology of links is not what upsets a certain notion of topology, but rather some subterranean pathways which, especially in the Kafka book, lead to an enigmatic approach to the question of the aural that disappears at the moment of what it purports to be proposing. Namely, I am thinking of a possible relationship

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between sound, noise, and music, or the audible in general, and the question of schizo-incest which, coming up much later in the Kafka book, is not put into a resonance with the idea of the audible. Perhaps these threads should never be linked, questioned, nor put into resonance, yet the reason why I insist on offering a relationship between the two (schizo-incest and the audible) is simply because, whether or not they can be taken as a model (a model of a non-relational relationship) has implications not only for a different line of flight, but also for an explanation of how Deleuzian-Guattarian concepts can lead entwined lives of their own without any necessity of a link. To obtain such a model when we have been talking about enigmas and missing links is, without doubt, a contradiction in terms; however, since both sound and schizo-incest are related to the question of form, and the link between the two is, I believe, an elusive one, they can also be taken as bearing witness to an enigmatic model which is not a model at all.

For all those concerns above, in this chapter, I will first problematise Deleuze’s formulation of a certain passage from “noise to voice,” and his approach to “distance,” in The Logic of Sense, if only to be able to throw light on what baffles us in Deleuze and Guattari’s reading of Kafka’s “The Investigations of a Dog.” In their reading, sound, when deterritorialized, is a formless element that is still audible, much like the aural experiences in Kafka’s other stories, especially in “Josephine The Singer, or the Mouse Folk” and “The Silence of the Sirens,” where the audience is often said to have heard something, yet the knowledge of what is heard is suspended. Yet such a suspension, I shall argue, leads us to a different knowledge—that is, the realm of the “formless” or the “unformed,” which cannot be obtained without destroying what we know of as “hearing” or the “audible.”

One of the guiding questions here therefore will be whether the formless can be heard or recognised as sound within the framework of the audible. Proposing in the end a limit experience, which I call the “meta-audible,” I will try to show that Kafka’s radicalising approach to sound creates a line of
flight that escapes even from the line of flight itself. Moreover, such a flight, when brought into contact with the notion of self-shattering, provides the missing link, or rather, the resonance between the meta-audible and schizo-incest.

1. THE PASSAGE FROM NOISE TO VOICE

There’s a strange passage in The Logic of Sense, under the guidance of which one passes not only from noise to voice but also from the unformed to the formed. I shall contextualize this passage briefly in order to foreground how “form” is maintained in Deleuzian philosophy in general.

Deleuze’s formulation of the “individual” in The Logic of Sense is saturated with rigorous discussions on the relationship between series and the resonance between them, the constitution of events, the actualisation and counter-actualisation of the events, the disjunctive synthesis and its affirmation, etc., which eventually lead to “The Twenty-Fifth Series of Univocity.” The latter functions as a way of opening up the concept of “individual” to all the compossible worlds, so that the “individual” will be organised within a multiplicity as an “event.” In other words, this is purely a question of form—that is, how to transcend the question of the form, known as the “individual.” Such a transcendence, if it is possible, requires in the first place (as we know it from Difference and Repetition) radicalising the “image of thought” so that there will no more be a form on which the constitution of the individual (or of any concept) as such is based, and what is known as “individual” will be constituted on the basis of simulacrum—not on the basis of mimesis—and thus s/he will be freed from being shaped by any predetermined model. On the other hand, if such a project means to open up the in-

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2 “The problem is therefore one of knowing how the individual would be able to transcend his form and his syntactical link with world”: Gilles Deleuze, The Logic of Sense, ed. Constantin Boundas, trans. Mark Lester and Charles Stivale (London: Continuum, 2003), 178.
individual to multiplicities, it will also have to deal with the question of ontology, because even if Deleuze explains it by positing pre-individual singularities, they will nevertheless require an appearance, a moment of being, or, rather, a passage from absence to presence (or from non-being to being, if you like). Therefore, in “Univocity,” Deleuze proposes:

Philosophy merges with ontology, but ontology merges with the univocity of Being. ... The univocity of Being does not mean that there is one and the same Being; on the contrary, beings are multiple and different, they are always produced by a disjunctive synthesis, and they themselves are disjointed and divergent, *membra disjuncta*. The univocity of Being signifies that Being is Voice that it is said, and that it is said in one and the same “sense” of everything about which it is said. It occurs, therefore, as a unique event for everything that happens to the most diverse things, *Eventum tantum* for all events, the ultimate form of all the forms which remain disjointed in it, but which bring about the resonance and the ramification of their disjunction.³

In this passage, if univocity signifies an event—an event of all events—it also points to a concern for genesis, where “voice” can be rethought as a generic force, which makes genesis itself possible by triggering a passage between “that which comes before voice” and voice.

In the “Twenty-Sixth Series of Language,” all the questions which have been actually gravitating towards the possibility of such a passage find the origin to which they have been pointing.⁴ Therefore, Deleuze opens this series with a conviction

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³ Deleuze 2003: 179.
⁴ In other words, if the discussions on sense and nonsense, paradoxical entity, and the event, up to the discussion on the univocity of being, were concerned with the relationship between the word and the thing, or the duality of eating/speaking and its displacement into the proposition—that is, into the duality of denotation and expression—it was because they have all been pointing to this passage
that “events make language possible,” and he immediately adds,

But making possible does not mean causing to begin. … To render language possible thus signifies assuring that sounds are not confused with the sonorous qualities of things, with the sound effects of bodies, or with their actions and passions. What renders language possible is that which separates sounds from bodies and organizes them into propositions, freeing them for the expressive function. It is always a mouth which speaks, but the sound is no longer the noise of a body which eats—a pure oral-ity—in order to become the manifestation of a subject expressing itself. … And in truth, without the event all of this would be only noise—and an indistinct noise.

And, in the next series, “Twenty-Seventh Series of Orality,” he also adds, “We constantly relive in our dreams the passage from noise to voice.”

So, for Deleuze, there is such a thing as a moment of absolute separation: a passage, between sounds and sonorous elements (noise), made possible by the events. And events not only make possible the language, but also the subject. From now on, a decision which was present and suspended—probably due to the impossibility of saying something and its sense at the same time, but conversely, also due to the possibility of saying it, given the impossibility of escaping from representation—since the beginning of The Logic of Sense is thus given here an “appearance,” and this also makes possible the history of the psyche, which Deleuze reconstructs by reading his own theory of the sense and the event into psychoanalysis (more specifically, into the works of Melanie

that would make possible a rigorous discussion on “language,” which would also constitute an origin for “individual,” and “psyche” in the rest of The Logic of Sense.

5 Deleuze 2003: 181.
7 Deleuze 2003: 194.

Let’s stop here and think about what might probably have led to such a passage from the unformed to the formed in Deleuze’s work, not because it is thinkable or localisable with an exact clarity of thought, but because at least it can be shown without making appear what cannot appear. Looking back at the earlier “Twenty-Fourth Series,” centered on “communication of the events,” we find Deleuze celebrating Leibniz as the “first theoretician of the event,” for it was Liebniz who saw for the first time that “‘compossible’ and ‘incompossible’ cannot be reduced to the identical and contradictory, which govern only the possible and the impossible.” If compossibility is defined, on a pre-individual level, by the convergence of the series, the incompossibility is defined by the divergence of the series. However, Leibniz made use of these definitions only to the extent that the compossible worlds, being incompossible with the best possible of all the worlds (our world), should therefore diverge from it. Hence, “He made a negative use of divergence of disjunction—one of exclusion.” So, Deleuze’s critique of Leibniz is directed to the negative use of divergence by Leibniz, and therefore he is concerned with a Nietzschean affirmation of divergences where God, being dead, does not choose anymore the best possible world. Deleuze asks: “But what does it mean to make divergence and disjunction the objects of affirmation”? Of course, it means the irreducibility of the difference to the same and identical:

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

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8 Deleuze 2003: 171.
9 Deleuze 2003: 172.
10 Deleuze 2003: 172.
they are “different.” The idea of a positive distance (and not as an annulled or overcome distance) appears to us essential, since it permits the measuring of contraries through their finite difference instead of equating difference with a measureless contrariety, and contrariety with an identity which is itself infinite. It is not difference which must “go as far as” contradiction, as Hegel thought in his desire to accommodate the negative; it is the contradiction which must reveal the nature of its difference as it follows the distance corresponding to it. The idea of positive distance belongs to topology and to the surface.11

The positive distance, therefore, is finite, but its finitude, instead of foregrounding a contradiction that can be overcome by means of a dialectical synthesis (which measure gains importance insofar as the distance can be overcome so that the contradiction can be resolved), puts forward distance as a situation where the difference between two things is preserved and made open to topological determination, so that it can appear and be measured. And thus we have Deleuze’s illustration of the matter with Nietzsche’s perspectivism, or his capacity to reverse certain perspectives: health in sickness and sickness in health, where the two states are not seen as contraries in a dialectical scheme, but as levers for preserving distance as distance (as a measurable distance between two states), not only in order to observe their convergence, but also their divergence, thus affirming their difference. So, having a perspective and a capacity to reverse it is a matter of the irreducibility of the two divergent elements as a result of which one gains a point of view, in Leibnizean fashion—not from the point of view of oneself, but from the point of view of things themselves. There is here only one radical difference from Leibniz, where one observes only the affirmation of those perspectives that converge, whereas in Nietzsche

the point of view is opened onto a divergence which it

affirms … . Each term becomes the means of going all the way to the end of another, by following the entire distance. Nietzsche’s perspective—his perspectivism—is a much more profound art than Leibniz’s point of view, for divergence is no longer a principle of exclusion, a disjunction no longer a means of separation. Incompossibility is now a means of communication.  

One should also add that opening the point of view onto divergence erases the discontinuity between the possible and the incompossible, and therefore a maximum continuity is maintained not only between things in the most possible world, but also between all the worlds, whether possible and/or incompossible.

In the same paragraph, after celebrating Nietzsche’s perspectivism on health and illness, Deleuze also comments on what happens to this perspectivism after Nietzsche goes mad:

Conversely, Nietzsche does not lose his health when he is sick, but when he can no longer affirm the distance, when he is no longer able, by means of his health, to establish sickness as a point of view on health (then, as the Stoics say, the role is over, the play has ended).  

There are possible conclusions to be maintained at the end of this detour on the question of “distance” in Deleuze. First and foremost, if “positive distance” is “affirmable,” this means it is also topologically maintainable (though not determinable), and it will eventually have a moment of appearance, a moment of being “specular,” just as in the case of a passage from “noise to voice,” or from the unformed to the formed. However, here let us be reminded of what Nietzsche said in *The Gay Science* with respect to question of distance, throwing much light on the non-topological character of “distance” in his work, and thereby problematising any such passage from

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the unformed to the formed:

Not to be dead and yet no longer alive? … It seems as if the noise here has led me into fantasies. All great noise leads us to move happiness into some quiet distance. When a man stands in the midst of his own noise, in the midst of his own surf of plans and projects, then he is apt also to see quiet, magical beings gliding past him and to long for their happiness and seclusion: women. He almost thinks that his better self dwells there among the women, and that in these quiet regions even the loudest surf turns into deathly quiet, and life itself into a dream about life. Yet! Yet! Noble enthusiast, even on the most beautiful sailboat there is a lot of noise, and unfortunately much small and petty noise. The magic and the most powerful effect of women is, in philosophical language, action at a distance, *actio in distans*; but this requires first of all and above all—distance.\(^{14}\)

2. **Investigations of a Dog**

At this juncture, I wonder about the possible relationships between Nietzsche’s reference to “distance” and that of Kafka’s dog in “The Investigations of a Dog.” But let us first briefly summarise the story. Kafka’s dog, when he was only a small puppy, experiences a strange encounter with some musician dogs, the traumatic nature of which becomes clear as the dog unfolds his story. One thing that is certain is that, in this encounter, he hears something that comes to him as a blast—a blast not only to his ears but also to his whole body, which shakes all of his being down to the ground. Overwhelmed by what he experiences, he shouts questions at the musician dogs; the lack of answers to his questions leads not only to an impossibility to find the words to explain what happened to him, but also to his way of being thereafter,

where he is dedicated to incessant investigations about almost everything. Oscillating between knowing and not knowing whether what he heard is music, the investigations of the dog in time gravitate to one focal question: “Whence does the earth procure its food”?15

Another issue that arises during his investigations is the matter of “soaring dogs,” about which only some speculations are available. According to the rumour or to some observations, these creatures exist by doing nothing but resting in the air.16 What concerns the Investigator dog in this instance is whether one becomes a soaring dog by propogation or by willing. Such ontological questions about various matters do not please the dog nation, so the more he asks, the more they fill his mouth with food.17 Be that as it may, the silencing of his questions does not stop him from asking further questions, and the ensuing silence, as he comments later, is that place beyond which there exists an unbearable noise and the formless.

In the face of this silence, the Investigator dog goes back to his central question: “Whence does the earth procure its food?”18 In order to prove that the food comes from the above, he decides not to receive any food from the ground, and to fast so that if it comes to his mouth and asks for admittance, it would be the proof of his theory. As he fasts, the sudden appearance of a hunter awakens him to another encounter with music. The hunter says, “Please go away,” and when the dog asks why he should do so, the answer is, “Don’t you

16 “Small fluffy creatures they perpetually talk about useless philosophical argumentations and observations” (Kafka 1993: 439).
17 He even asks, “Did they want to lull me to sleep, to divert me, without violence, almost lovingly, from a false path ... ?” And he also goes as far as this following contention: “All knowledge, the totality of all questions and answers, is contained in the dog” (Kafka 1993: 432).
18 Kafka 1993: 430.
understand the most self-evident fact?” Of course, the self-evident fact is its absence, in the face of which the Hunter starts singing. The problem in the first encounter with the musician dogs is also repeated here: once again, a sonic experience leading to a fundamental question with no answer. As the hunter starts singing, the melody is separated from him and, floating in the air, moves towards the dog. Curiously enough, the hunter “sings without knowing it.” In the end, left with no answer to his questions, but at least sensing a proximity between his question about food and music, he decides to conduct some research into the science of music.

Bearing in mind my former discussion on passages and distance, I will propose that the investigations of the dog raise some questions on form, and the audibility of the unformed, leading to an undecidability that I believe prepares some good grounds for us to see the whole story from the viewpoint of what Jean Laplanche called “the enigmatic signifier.” In a nutshell, the enigmatic signifier defines a situation where a “whatever signifier” is sent by an adult to be received by an infant as a “whatever signifier,” foregrounding a more fundamental question: “What does it mean to receive something?” For Laplanche, “[a]n enigma is not just to ask a question of which you have the answer; it is a question for which even you are not to have an answer.” Accordingly, human subjectivity and sexuality are constituted via the infant’s attempt at translating such enigmatic messages that are constantly bombarding it. Since these messages are not only linguistic but also include gestures and bodily actions, they always bring about an excess of communication; therefore, Laplanche describes the process as de-translation rather than translation. In other words, even the sender of the message (the adult in this case), as a result of an act of detranslation, can never be sure of what

19 Kafka 1993: 457.
20 “It grew stronger and stronger; its waxing power seemed to have no limits, and already almost burst my eardrums” (Kafka 1993: 458).
is being sent. Furthermore, the asymmetry of the couple consists of the fact that, in the infant’s case, the reception of the enigmatic signifier is what starts the unconscious as a result of primary seduction and repression, whereas the adult has already started this process based on temporalisation.

Laplanche, following Freud on seduction theory, claims that sexuality (and therefore the subject) is originally constituted as masochism. It is a self-destructive moment for the subject, and it is masochistic because, right at the instant of its installation—that is, in the face of the enigmatic signifier—the condition of the subject is determined by what he calls “self-shattering.” Approaching the matter from a different perspective, Leo Bersani, in his close reading of Freud’s *Three Essays on Sexuality*, stresses the destructive but also the productive power of masochism in the constitution of sexuality and the subject as a failure. This point is also there in Laplanche, as a moment of the self-shattering of the ego in the face of an enigmatic message; however, for Bersani, the encounter with the enigmatic signifier in Laplanche leads to a position of paranoid fascination for both parties and therefore remains at a self-destructive level with a claim to knowledge. In his elaboration of Laplanche’s seduction theory, Bersani writes:

Laplanche speaks of this seductive address as an account of the structural formation of the unconscious: primal repression would be the making unconscious of those elements in the enigmatic signifier that infants can’t “metabolize,” that they are incapable of understanding through some form of symbolization. The implication here is that we are originally seduced into a relation by messages we can’t read, enigmatic messages that are perhaps inevitably interpreted as secrets. The result of this original seduction would be a tendency to structure all relations on the basis of an eroticizing mystification. If we feel not only, as Freud proposed, that others threaten the stability the ego must defend for its very survival, but also, more dangerously, that we can be seduced by such threats—in Laplanchan
terms, “shattered into an ego-shattering sexuality”—then it is reasonable to confront others with paranoid mistrust. The enigmatic signifier becomes a knowledge they are at once willfully withholding from me and using in order to invade my being.23

Bersani’s intention here is to underline the fact that, although Laplanche’s theory of seduction is based on a notion of self-shattering, due to its failure to rewrite the masochistic element it involves in terms of the “failure” it proposes, it still carries the promise of knowledge. As he puts it:

Laplanche has formulated a theory of sexual excitement as an effect of ébranlement—perturbation or self-shattering—on the organism, an effect that momentarily undoes psychic organization. I have pushed this to the point of arguing, especially in *The Freudian Body*, that sexuality—at least in the mode in which it is constituted—could be thought as a tautology for masochism. In other words, I have been proposing that we think of the sexual—more specifically, of jouissance in sexuality—as a defeat of power, a giving up, on the part of an otherwise hyperbolically self-affirming and phallocentrically constituted ego, of its projects of mastery. Thus the subject enters into a Bataille-like “communication with otherness,” one in which the individuating boundaries that separate subjects, and that subjects for the most part fiercely defended, are erased.24

As can be concluded from above, what is inherently destructive and “promising” in Laplanche is also a mode of survival. For Bersani, “the only way for the infant to survive the imbalance between external stimuli and the ego structures prepared to receive them is to find the pain of this imbalance pleasurable.” Further, he writes, “In other words, I am inter-

ested in masochism not as pleasure in pain so much as the pleasure of at once losing the self and discovering it elsewhere, inaccurately replicated … . Why is it still masochistic? Because it still means a certain pleasurable renunciation of one’s own ego boundaries, the pleasure of a kind of self-obliteration. … I am interested in a pleasure in losing or dissolving the self that is in no way equated with loss, but comes rather through re-discovering the self outside the self.”

If we have to summarize the basic distinction between the two, for Laplanche, the unconscious is temporal with a promise of full formation in time, whereas for Bersani the unconscious is spatial: its coming into being cannot be traced, nor can its origin be claimed as the reception of a first signifier—it is conceived as a failure of form.

If the Investigator dog’s first encounter with the musician dogs marks an acknowledgement of the Laplanchian enigmatic signifier, his second encounter is stimulated with a desire to destroy this silence and to reach the source of knowledge which, in the end, brings along a shift from food to music, as far as his future researches are concerned. Yet, I believe, a greater shift between two encounters lies in the following: if, in the first encounter, he is alerted to the question of how one receives a message and continues his researches in a paranoid fascination about the origins via preserving a certain distance (positive distance?) from his object in a question-answer dialectics, in the second encounter, just as in Nietzsche’s case, he learns to give up his former researches, eliminating even the notion of identification together with that of “distance,” and not without a masochistic pleasure in self-shattering or formlessness. Thus, the dog decides to embark upon a new field of research: the science of music. Although he still has some doubts about how to hear it, and fails to identify what he has heard as music, this failure endows him with a freedom from gravity and a movement towards a desire to be a non-localisable, self-floatin
a three-dimensional, rhizomatic space, the truth of which he won’t be producing via a paranoid desire to know. As he describes it at the end, it is “a different science from that of today, an ultimate science,” as there’s nothing to simulate except a sense of a directionless, nomadic floating—not in a mimetic, but rather in a simulacral relationship to “self,” much as in a Bataillian mode of communication.

Can this ultimate science be the science of the meta-audible? And if so, what are its conditions?

3. SCHIZO-INCEST

Given this desire for rhizomatic floating with respect to sound or “music,” let us look at Deleuze and Guattari’s book on Kafka, where they develop the concept of schizo-incest. Initially I shall claim that it is Deleuze’s formulation of distance and passage which marks Deleuze and Guattari’s determination of two vectorial movements with respect to sound and image in *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature,* and yet it is also this same approach that short-circuits a more liberatory approach to the relationship between sound and schizo-incest (in other words, when it appears that there are certain stakes in their formulation of movement in a two-dimensional space).

For Deleuze and Guattari, there are two basic fundamental and vectorial moves in Kafka.27 The bent head/portrait photo is a form of content: “a blocked, oppressed, oppressing, ne-

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27 “The investigating hound oscillates between two sciences, that of food—a science of the Earth and of the bent head (“Whence does the Earth procure this food?”)—and that of music which is a science of the air and of the straightened head, as the seven musical dogs of the beginning and the singing dog of the end well demonstrate. But between the two there is something in common, since food can come from high up and the science of food can only develop through fasting, just as the music is strangely silent” (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 20).
nalised desire, with a minimum connection, childhood memory, territoriality or reterritorialisation.” The straightened head/musical sound, on the other hand, is “a desire that straightens up or moves forward, and opens up to new connections, childhood block or animal block, deterritorialisation.” Consequently, when they write about the nature of “music,” or sound, in Kafka, their interest focuses on the deterritorializing power of sound: “sound doesn’t show up

28 Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 5.
29 Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 5.
30 The difference between the two can also be inferred from related pages in A Thousand Plateaus, where Deleuze and Guattari develop a distinction between sound and image on the basis of their respective power of deterritorialisation. For them, sound is a more effective element with respect to deterritorialisation:

But precisely why is the refrain eminently sonorous? Why this privileging of the ear when even animals and birds present us with so many visual, chromatic, postural, and gestural refrains? Does the painter have fewer refrains than the musician? ... There is surely no question here of declaring a given art supreme on the basis of a formal hierarchy of absolute criteria. Our problem is more modest: comparing the powers or coefficients of deterritorialisations of sonorous and visual components. It seems that when sound deterritorialisates, it becomes more and more refined; it becomes specialised and autonomous. Colour clings more, not necessarily to the object, but to territoriality. When it deterritorialisates, it tends to dissolve, to let itself be steered by other components. This is evident in phenomena of synaesthesia, which are not reducible to a simple colour-sound correspondence; sounds have a piloting role and induce colours that are superposed upon the colours we see, lending them a properly sonorous rhythm and movement. Sound owes this power not to signifying or ‘communicational’ values (which on the contrary presuppose that power), nor to physical properties (which would privilege light over sound), but to a phylogenetic line, a machinic phylum that operates in sound and makes it a cutting edge of deterritorialisation”: Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 347–348.
here as a form of expression, but rather as an *unformed material of expression*, that will act on the other terms.”31 For them, the difference between reterritorialisation and deterritorialisation (as far as sound is concerned) is in fact layered on the distinction or opposition between the formed and the unformed. Hence, when deterritorialisation brings along a total de-structuration of the articulated sound, which in turn is a deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation of noise, this leads to a state of the unformed that is still audible, and of course not as organised music; it is no more a reproduction nor mimesis, nor representational, but a becoming.33

Be that as it may, I believe there is a way of challenging this opposition between the formed and the unformed by means of raising the following question: Does Kafka tell us whether this music, song, or whatever can be heard?

One of the finest examples of this issue can be found in “The Silence of the Sirens.” Here, Kafka, on the basis of a

31 “What interests Kafka is a pure and intense sonorous material that is always connected to its own abolition—a deterritorialized musical sound, a cry that escapes signification, composition, song, words—a sonority that ruptures in order to break away from a chain that is still all too signifying. In sound, intensity alone matters, and such sound is generally monotone and always nonsignifying … As long as there is form, there is still reterritorialisation, even in music. In contrast, all of Josephine’s art consists in the fact that, not knowing more than the other mice how to sing, she perhaps enacts a deterritorialisation of the ‘usual piping’ and liberates it from ‘the cares of daily life’” (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 6).

32 “Since articulated sound was a deterritorialized noise but one that will be reterritorialized in sense, it is now sound itself that will be deterritorialized irrevocably, absolutely. The sound or the word that traverses this new deterritorialisation no longer belongs to a language of sense, even though it derives from it, nor is it an organized music or song, even though it might appear to be. … Everywhere, organized music is traversed by a line of abolition—just as a language of sense is traversed by a line of escape—in order to liberate a living and expressive material that speaks for itself and has no need of being put into form” (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 21).

similar logic that governs the music of the musician dogs in “The Investigations of a Dog,” speculates about the silence of the Sirens against their song, the lure of which is determined with a stress on its audibility in the original myth. In Kafka’s version of the myth, the Sirens “have a still more fatal weapon than their song, namely their silence.” Therefore, when Odysseus passed by them, the Sirens did not sing but “he did not hear their silence; he thought they were singing and ... he alone did not hear them.” Or, as Kafka argues, Odysseus might also have noticed that the Sirens did not sing, but he insisted on having heard them as a “shield” against their weapon. Isn’t Kafka referring here, against the whole enterprise of interpreting the myth, to the fact that the Sirens’ song, because it is based on the formless, cannot be heard? And even when said to have been heard, is this said only as a shield against the inaudibility of the Sirens’ song?

I do not propose this point as a matter of conflict in Deleuze and Guattari’s theory, but as a way of opening the question of the unformed to the distinction between oedipal- and schizo-incest which, I believe, puts forward a relationship between sound and schizo-incest when some obstacles on the way are cleared. One of these obstacles can be found in Deleuze and Guattari’s consideration of the encounter with the Hunter as a moment of reterritorialisation, or a re-Oedipalisation of the dog. As they put it:

We saw how the animal oscillated between its own becoming-inhuman and an all-too-human familiarization: thus, the dog in “Investigations” is deterritorialized by the musical dogs at the story’s beginning, but he is reterritorialized, re-Oedipalized, by the singer-dog of the ending. He ends up oscillating between two “sciences” and is reduced to invoking the eventual coming of a third science that would manage to escape the situation.

34 Kafka 1993: 431.
36 Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 36.
Although Deleuze and Guattari mention here the liberative power of the ultimate science in future, their claim that the dog is re-Oedipalised with the Hunter scene is without doubt in contrast with what we have said earlier. As we have stated before, the Investigator dog’s relation to sound takes place within a three-dimensional free-floating space rather than in a two-dimensional, vectorial one. It is spatial rather than temporal, rhizomatic rather than identical, simulacral rather than mimetic, productively masochistic rather than paranoid, and moves towards the ultimate science: a science of the meta-audible. I want to show here that the liberative power that Deleuze and Guattari assume but defer to a future is already there within their concept of schizo-incest, and what acts as an obstacle is actually their consideration of the Hunter scene not as a deterritorialisation, but as a reterritorialisation. As long as sound is considered in a two-dimensional space, such as liberation, the line of flight will never occur, and it requires a relationship to the unformed, not in a framework of the audible but as a point of undecidability between the audible and the inaudible.

However, in order to show what they claim as reterritorialisation is actually a deterritorialisation opening the dog to a different kind of line of flight, we have to see the distinction they produce between Oedipal- and schizo-incest with respect to image and sound.

In a chapter called “The Connectors” in the Kafka book, Deleuze and Guattari distinguish a class of women who are “part sister, part maid, part whore,” who are basically “anti-conjugal, anti-familial,” and who constitute a line of flight from Oedipal familial ties on the basis of “freedom of movement, freedom of statement, freedom of desire.” The multiplicity “sister-maid-whore” produces a desire on the basis of

37 Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 64.
39 “This combined formula, which has value only as an ensemble, is that of schizo-incest. Psychoanalysis, because it understands nothing, has always confused two sorts of incest: the sister is presented as a substitute for the mother, the maid as a derivative of the mother, the
masochism, so that it not only undoes limitations or rigid subject positions brought along by Oedipal ties, but it also renders possible the other two aspects of freedom. In the first place, in contrast to the neurotic Oedipal incest that occurs with the mother, schizo-incest takes place with the sister and is an incest of deterritorialisation. Belonging to a universal paranoid machine, Oedipal incest has no liberative moment because it falls prey to what has prohibited it—that is, the paranoid transcendentental law—and therefore continuously reterritorializes whatever it has given freedom. Yet what is most striking in their theorisation is the fact that while Oedipal incest is connected to images, schizo-incest is connected to sound with a maximum of connections, and operates on a continuous deterritorialisation towards the uniformed, liberating each familial or Oedipal tie from predetermined rules based on a fixed image of thought.40

I shall claim at this point that schizo-incest is the con-

whore as a reaction-formation. The group of ‘sister-maid-whore’ will be interpreted as a kind of masochistic detour but, since psychoanalysis also doesn’t understand anything about masochism, we don’t have to worry much about it either” (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 66).

40 “Schizo-incest corresponds to the immanent schizo-law and forms a line of escape instead of a circular reproduction, a progression instead of a transgression … . Oedipal incest is connected to photos, to portraits, to childhood memories, a false childhoodthat never existed but that catches desire in the trap of representation, cuts it off from allconnections, fixes it onto the mother to render it all the more puerile or spoiled … . Schizo-incest, in contrast is connected to sound, to the manner in which sound takes flight and in which memory-less childhood blocks introduce themselves in full vitality into the present to activate it, to precipitate it, to multiply its connections. Schizo-incest with a maximum of connection, a polyvocal extension, that uses that uses as an intermediary maids and whores and the place that they occupy in the social series—in opposition to neurotic incest, defined by its suppression of connection, its single signifier, its holding of everything within the limits of the family, its neutralization of any sort of social or political field” (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 67).
dition of the Investigator dog right after his encounter with the singer-Hunter, especially when his relationship to sound and the unformed is concerned. For one thing, if the dog’s approach in his former researches could be named as scientific, tied to a craving for a paranoiac universal truth via scientific methods in a cause-effect relationship, it is undone after the encounter with the Hunter and given another dimension, such as a concentration on music, or the “ultimate science,” as the dog puts it. The ultimate science, if it will be a transgressive one, is there in order to deterritorialize what the dog has obtained in his researches until then. Given the dog’s desire to be weightless, to reach a nomadic state of floating in the air, we can claim that in this new phase the dog is and will be liberated—or deterritorialized, if you like—on the basis of “freedom of movement, freedom of statement, freedom of desire.” His movement will no more be based on a vectorial principle but on a rhizomatic one. His freedom of statement, once the rules of the old science are left behind, will no more be tied to a transcendental paranoiac principle of truth but on a Nietzschean sense of non-topological “distance” from this absent-presence. And finally, his freedom of desire, once he shifts from the science of food to the science of music, will be related to sound, which is not representational but meta-audible, the inaudibility of which, based on a certain masochistic pleasure, will be celebrated as a failure to constitute himself as a full-fledged subject who can “hear” things. Moreover, it is no more a question of the audible by an ear, but by the whole body.

One final point to be made in this context is to show how all this leads Deleuze and Guattari to a different dimension in schizo-incest: namely, “homosexual effusion.” After carefully distinguishing “homosexual effusion” from Oedipal homosexuality and also from the multiplicity “sister-maid-whore,” they locate it in the homosexual relationship to the artist who has nothing to do with aesthetics, just like other similar figures in Kafka (such as the singer who doesn’t know how to

41 Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 68.
sing, or a swimmer who doesn’t know how to swim). Yet the artist, “manifestly homosexual,”\textsuperscript{42} in whom we can trace a masochistic productivity as far as the dismantling of forms are concerned, is an anti-aesthete and, being so, he “overflows all the segments and sweeps up all the connections”\textsuperscript{43} (unlike the “sister-maid-whore alliance,” where they observe a move from one segment to another), thereby leading to a “shifting and continuous line of flight.”\textsuperscript{44}

Together with schizo-incest, doesn’t homosexual effusion define a position where even the distinction between the audible and the inaudible disappears, yielding to the meta-audible? And isn’t the “ultimate science” of today not even a matter of distance, but of “not to be dead and yet no longer alive,” as Nietzsche put it?

\textsuperscript{42} Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 69.
\textsuperscript{43} Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 69.
\textsuperscript{44} Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 69.