

# Alternative Overcoming of Representation: F. Bacon, G. Deleuze<sup>1</sup>

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**Summary.** This article analyses the logic of sensation, discussed by Deleuze in his earlier books *Kant's Critical Philosophy* and *Difference and Repetition*. In this case the logic of sensation is analysed by invoking the plane of art as experimentation, showing that art, and especially the modern art, being conditioned by certain principles of the logic of sensation at the same time becomes one of the best ways to reveal these conditions. Deleuze determines the art as creation of sensations, making the invisible force visible. The plane of becoming or genesis is inaccessible for everyday experience, impossible to represent, but actually through the way of sensations the artists create, they are capable to render it. Deleuze treats Francis Bacon's painting as one of the best ways of overcoming representation – that actually was the main problem in classical art - and discusses his painting by invoking analyses of other contemporary art trends, such as abstract painting and abstract expressionism. The way of using the diagram that introduces chaos and disrupts clichés and, thus, frees the sensation, outlines the specifics of every art trend and the success of creation of the sensation. Such aspects of painting inherent to Bacon's case as haptic space, analogical language and modulation of color are treated as best conditions for creating the sensation. Bacon's Figures that are not tied to recognisable objects any more sustain the sensation best as the force must be exerted on a body in order to reveal the change of the virtual plane to the actual one.

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**Keywords:** Bacon, Deleuze, figure, sensation, abstract painting, abstract expressionism.

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## Introduction

The tasks of postmodern philosophy, and especially in Deleuze, coincide with the tasks of modern art. Intention is the same both for art and philosophy – to break with representation. “Modern art and modern philosophy can be said to have converged on a similar problem: both renounced the domain of representation and instead took the *conditions* of representation as their object” (Smith, 2002, xiii). In the field of philosophy an attempt to overcome representation could be seen through elaborations of such problems as difference, simulacrum, and conceptions of overturned Platonism or rhizome.

Deleuze was a real apologist of modern art, he never presupposed any hierarchy between philosophy and art, as to his mind, both philosophy and art confront the same plane of chaos, and we can speak only about different results of such creation. Whereas philosophers create concepts, artists on their own side – sensible aggregates or sensations. Even Deleuze himself or together with Félix Guattari really were paying a lot of attention to many modern painters, the summit of his aesthetic viewpoint directed toward the plane of painting can be encountered only in the book *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* (*Francis Bacon: Logique de la sensation*, 1981). Having in mind all the variety of modern art, there can arise a question “Why Bacon” became the crucial case to make such an exhaustive and conceptually made analysis about painting? The answer is that Deleuze found Bacon as his real congenial and this proximity of them both can be very good seen from Bacon’s interviews with famous art critic David Sylvester. The result of this interview – the book *The Brutality of Fact* (1975) – was the main literal source for Deleuze. Many Bacon’s statements about the nature of creation, the purpose and the meaning of the image, his attitude towards reality, critics, directed towards representation and some modern art trends strongly resonated with Deleuze’s attitude or even could made an impact on his aesthetic theory. The problem which Bacon solves in the plane of painting actually is the same problem Deleuze deals in his own immanent philosophy. Nevertheless, Deleuze “uses the interviews not as definitive statements on Bacon’s part but rather as the starting point for his own conceptual inventions” (Smith, 2004, xi).

The principle of representation as well of figuration reigned in classical painting imposed by Aristotelian metaphysics that required subduing the matter to the form. Identity of the form in painting was realised through domination of the line and the contour over the color and paint, invoking such means as perspective that allowed obtaining the effect of depth and three-dimensional space, *chiaroscuro* – the technique of the play of light and shadow that was mostly elaborated by Renaissance masters. Conversely, the peculiarity of modern art can be outlined as an attempt to disassociate from canons of classical representation as the freedom to experiment, to question the familiarity and transparency of our life world. Overcoming of representation in Deleuze is understood as the rejection of figurative givens, illustrative, symbolic and narrative elements, or, what he called clichés. According to Deleuze, modern artist never stands in front of an

empty canvas, his task is not to begin, not to impose a form on a matter anymore. His creative activity starts from cleaning all these clichés that come from our surroundings (images from TV, cinema, radio, novels and newspapers) or our inside life (ready-made perceptions, dreams, memories, phantasms). However, escaping representation can be realized in very different ways, or understanding of the principle itself what it means to escape representation can differ. In Deleuze's study the uniqueness of Bacon's case is fixed by invoking the analysis of other art trends, and in such a way trying to contextualize Bacon's painting.

### **Three Ways of Overcoming Representation. Figure *contra* Figuration**

**Abstract painting: desensualisation of forms.** It seems that maximum degree of escaping representation we can find in abstract art, which does not relate to any reality, does not have any recognizable object. The color, form, line or texture can become the subject matter of abstract painting and it can be treated as the basic effect of the painting. Forms and contents, their combinations and variations do not refer to any objects or events, and thus, testify ingenuity and awareness, intelligence of an artist. The summit of abstract art is considered the algorithmic compositions of Dutch painter Piet Mondrian (1872–1944) that were made up of rectangular shapes, mostly outlined in black, with the white background and primary coloured rectangles in blue, red or yellow (*Composition with Red, Yellow, Blue and Black*, 1920; *Composition No. 11*, 1921). As Mondrian himself insists “Every true artist has been inspired more by the beauty of lines and color and the relationships between them than by the concrete subject of the picture” (Mondrian, r. 3). Mondrian was called the first digital artist and later we will see that Deleuze takes into account namely that aspect to discuss. The works of Russian abstract painter Kasimir Malevich (1879–1935) are very similar to those of Mondrian. Being a pioneer of suprematism, that is, the art of geometrical abstractions, Malevich was giving great attention to pure geometric forms such as the quadrant, the circle or the cross made of two intersected rectangles. His famous work *Black Square* (1915) illustrates the case of suprematism best. According to Malevich, geometric figures, and especially the square, that do not exist in nature or in traditional painting, refer to the ideal world that is more superior than the visual one. To Malevich's mind, “The appearances of natural objects are in themselves meaningless; the essential thing is feeling – in itself and completely independent of the context in which it has been evoked” (Malevich, r. 2). Thus, abstract painting where the main attention is given to geometric forms, lines and colors and their combinations, shows that the essence of that kind of art is purifying of all forms, elimination of all visual objects and contexts. Everything is done on the flat surface and thus creates, as Deleuze insists, the effect of pure optical space. Even the art of Wassily

Kandinsky (1866–1944), that is more spontaneous as it lets more free associations to play on the surface of a canvas, reveals the factor of combinatorics (digitality) inherent to his compositions (*Transverse Line*, 1923; *Composition VIII*, 1923). He works with visual abstractions where the element of recognizable things is eliminated, purified and desensualised, and only the essence or some recognisable form letting to stay. “The more abstract is form, the more clear and direct is appeal” – says Kandinsky (Kandinsky, r. 1). In summary it can be said that most of abstract painters, whatever different they may be, in their conceptions emphasize the supremacy of spiritual world over the visual, sensual one. Abstraction and escaping representation is understood as the purification and desensualisation of all recognizable forms focusing on the ideal forms, colors and lines. The painter is understood as the channel between the higher spiritual world and the visual world as he tries to reach the foundation of things. Also, Kandinsky supposes that “Of all the arts, abstract painting is the most difficult. It demands that you know how to draw well, that you have a heightened sensitivity for composition and for color, and that you be at true poet. This last is essential” (Kandinsky, r. 1). This phrase expresses most the role of aesthetic comprehension in abstract art and the way the painter works. An abstract artist works very carefully, with awareness, composing very considered assemblage or extracting one purified conceptualized form and thus relying on intellectual appeal.

**Abstract expressionism: action painting.** One of the branches of abstract painting, but actually the opposite of it – abstract expressionism or else, informal art – is based on applying the principles of expressionism in abstract painting. Though the conception of that kind of painting is the same – there should be no any references to recognisable objects – the principles of such creation are totally different. The factor of abstraction becomes freed emotions of an artist that are expressed by involuntary movement of hands by splattering, trickling and puddling everywhere chosen colors on a huge canvas lying on the ground. According to the coryphaeus of abstract expressionism – American painter Jackson Pollock (1912–1956) – “Today painters do not have to go to a subject matter outside of themselves. Most modern painters work from a different source. They work from within” (Pollock, r. 4). Or else: “When I am in my painting, I’m not aware of what I’m doing” (ibid.). For that reason it is impossible somehow to destroy or to damage such a painting, because it does not have neither beginning nor end nor the supposed result. The action of painting is relied only on the accident. So the vision of such a chaotic abstraction is obtained focusing on two things: 1) the inner reality that should be expressed; 2) the involuntary nature of painting that lets for painting to stand on its own. Thus, on the contrary to the case of abstract painting, where the pure optical space is created, in abstract expressionism no organized vision is supposed (*Eyes in the Heat*, 1946; *Shimmering Substance*, 1946; *Convergence*, 1952).

**Figure contra Figuration. Bacon’s case.** Bacon’s case is unique. Till now many art historians and art critics do not agree to what art trend it is possible to subsume Bacon’s creation. A part of them treats Bacon as a realist or surrealist (Schmied, 2006, 85–86),

other – as an abstract painter or even expressionist (Schmied, 2006, 95). Of course, all this is made referring to various periods of his creation. However, it is clear that Bacon is not an easy case to be classified. According to Deleuze, the very specific way Bacon overcomes representation can be expressed by the concept of the Figure. This means that Bacon's non-representative painting is focused on Figures, which on the contrary to classical figuration are not related to an object any more.

Starting the analysis of Bacon's canvas Deleuze distinguishes three most important pictorial elements in his painting: (1) the Figure itself, which usually reminds the human or animal body, is made of coupled bodies or of parts of body or things (2) the flat surface or colored field that forms an "armature" and (3) the contour or "ring" that delimits both the Figure and the armature. What is crucial here is that the double exchange or two movements are taking place between these three pictorial elements. The first movement goes from the armature to the Figure. In many paintings the colored field curls around the contour and thus it imprisons and envelops the Figure in constituting isolation of the Figure. We can see that all Bacon's Figures are solitary Figures and we cannot see other persons (any spectator is eliminated), the landscapes or other visual traits that could allow to relate the Figure not only to the object but also to constitute the relationship of an image to other images in a composite whole. "Isolation is thus the simplest means, necessary though not sufficient, to break with representation, to disrupt narration, to escape illustration, to liberate the Figure: to stick the Fact" (Deleuze, 2004, 6). In his interview with Sylvester Bacon described his own attempt as recording of pure Facts. According to Deleuze, this is the isolated Figure itself, extracted from all the illustrative, figurative and narrative traits. Even the coupled Figures in Bacon's canvas belong to the same Fact, as much as the Figures in the separate panels of his famous triptychs somehow keep an intensive relationship without telling a story, for example, in *Three Studies of Isabel Rawsthorne* (1967), *Studies from the Human body* (1970), *Three Figures and a Portrait* (1975). If it is possible to speak about some spectacle, it is a spectacle of waiting itself, but which is produced only in such conditions when there is no any spectator. The only visual traits that help to integrate the Figure to the visual whole are some elements (a head, a camera, an open window), which Deleuze calls "attendants" (*Oedipus and the Sphinx after Ingres*, 1983). Even more, what also minimizes the risk of narration is the relation between a painting itself and the title of it. The titles of Baconian canvas look like dispensable, saying nothing essential about a canvas, but defining just pure fact, such like *Figure at a Washbasin*, *Seated Figure*, *Painting*, *Head VI* and the like.

The second movement that coexists with the first one, on the contrary, goes from the Figure to the material structure or the colored field. If in the first movement the Figure stayed immobile, because the source of movement came from the material structure, in this case the Figure itself becomes the source of movement as it as "it exerts an effort upon itself in order to become a Figure" (Deleuze, 2004, 15). In many Bacon's paintings it looks like the body exerts itself or waits to escape from itself through the vanishing

point in a contour in order to dissipate into material structure. It is best seen in such series of Bacon's painting which Deleuze calls 'spasm' series: scenes of love, vomiting or excreting that gives an effect that the body tries to escape from itself through one of his organs as in *Painting* 1978, where we see a Figure trying to reach the button with the right leg (also see *Figure at a Washbasin* of 1976, *Lying Figure with Hypodermic Syringe* of 1963). The very specific feature in this moment is depersonalisation, as to Deleuze's mind, in Bacon's Figures there is no "I, who attempts to escape from my body, is the body that attempts to escape from itself by means of ... <...> spasm" (Deleuze, 2004, 15). Thus, the body becomes a free floating place and the source of all forces and flux. So the second movement constitutes not the isolation of the Figure, but deformation of it instead. Deformation of the Figure displays itself in many ways: in contraction, aspiration, stretch or dilation that helps to constitute the Figure. This 'derisory athleticism' or 'hysteria' in the painting does not have to produce horror, conversely, to Deleuze's mind, it lets us see that all these distortions, elongations, and dilations are the most natural postures of our body. We can see that deformations and elongations of a body of very similar kind appear even in El Greco's paintings, where the body tries to escape through itself towards the sky or appears as sustaining the force of pain and torture (*Laokoonte*, 1610–1614; *The Resurrection*, 1596–1600; *Christ on the Cross*, 1585–1590)<sup>2</sup>.

These two correlating movements – the first one from the field to the Figure that constitutes isolation, and the second one – from the Figure to the field that constitutes deformation enables Bacon to escape representation in highly precise manner. Isolation and deformation are thus the main factors that attend in other very specific aspects of Bacon's painting that Deleuze relates to his own conception. One can discern three the most important aspects: meat-flesh, portraits-heads and scream.

**Meat-flesh: the zone of becoming.** The very specific feature of Bacon's painting is meat or flesh, and the effect of it is obtained using red and blue colors. We can see it in most of his Figures, in portraits and in famous series of crucifixions. One can blame Bacon for his attempt to paint horror and envisage some cruelty in his creation. However, to Deleuze's mind, the meat enables to escape representation most, as it: 1) opens up the body without organs beyond an organism, texture over structure; 2) enables becoming-animal as it creates the *zone of indiscernibility*. If the body is the main subject of Bacon's painting, this body certainly is neither an organic body nor the phenomenological lived body. Bacon's

<sup>2</sup> The influence of El Greco's painting (Doménicos Theotokópoulos, 1541–1614) on the development of modern painting is testified in art exhibition *El Greco and Modern Painting (El Greco y La Pintura Moderna)* that was taking place 24 June – 5 October (2014) in Museum of Prado (Madrid, Spain). The main curator Javier Baron organized eight sections, that reveal El Greco's influence from earlier impressionist to post-war surrealism and new figurative movements. Exhibition displays similarities of El Greco's works with such painters as Edouard Manet, Pablo Picasso, Antonio Saura, Robert Delaunay, Diego Rivera, Paul Cezanne, Amedeo Modigliani and others. Francis Bacon is among them. His figures, such as of the *Reclining Woman*, are related to that from the series of el Greco's *Resurrection*, *Christ Carrying the Cross*.

body not simply lacks many organs, it lacks an organism, organised structure. Instead of that it opens the fleshy texture that indicates „completely living and yet nonorganic body“. “The body without organs is flesh and nerve”, says Deleuze. It “does not have organs, but thresholds or levels”, that opens up “an intensive reality, which no longer determines within itself representative elements, but allotropic variations” (Deleuze, 2004, 39–40). Meat or flesh also dominates over bone structure of the body, enabling us to realize that a body consists not of substantial structure but is made through permanent flux and variations (in *Three Studies of the Male Back* of 1970 we can see the spinal column arising from the flesh and not the *visa versa*)<sup>3</sup>.

The big issue is Bacon's series of *Crucifixions*, in which we see the hanged pieces of beef carcass, though it had already been chosen objects of painting in Rembrandt's and Chaim Soutine's works. Art critics envisage some religiousness in Bacon here. However, looking from the perspective of Deleuze, this moment signifies becoming other, or, more specifically, becoming an animal. The meat constitutes the *zone of indiscernibility* between a man and an animal, in which it is impossible to discern where is a man and where is an animal. The meat becomes an artistic effect through which we start to think of the human not as a soul or spiritual being or as the higher essence exceeding that of animal. Bacon said that when he goes to the butcher's shop and sees all these pieces of meat he can easily imagine the disembowelled human body hanged on the hook. According to Deleuze, it is not an attempt to evoke pity and empathy for the animal, but certainly to stress that “the man, who suffers is a beast, the beast that suffers is a man. This is the reality of becoming” (Deleuze, 2004, 22).

The very delicate zone of becoming also can be revealed in the works of Lithuanian surrealist painter Šarūnas Sauka<sup>4</sup> through the violent body deformations even it is rendered in a different manner. In contrast to Bacon, who usually renders solitary Figures, Sauka is the painter of grouped bodies or the processions of bodies, that are taking part in strange rituals of sacrificing, execution, crucifixion, murdering, sexual orgies, copulation and the like. But these bodies look like they are suffering the processes of dematerialization, dilation, decomposition, dissolution, encrustation with open risings, furuncles and open wounds (*Murder in Restaurant*, 1999–2000; *Stair*, 1989, *Self-Portrait No 6*, 1987). Rendering bodies in such a way Sauka as well as Bacon himself reveal how these bodies with grotesque postures are accidental, unnecessary, meaningless and at the same time vulnerable. The element of flesh or meat as well of carcass (*The Burden*, *At Home Again*, 1992) or becoming-animal (*Obsessive Thoughts*, 1992) also testifies the proximity of Bacon and Sauka. There is no less brutality and violence in Sauka than in Bacon.

<sup>3</sup> At this moment Bacon was most inspired by Edgars Dega's painting *Woman after Bath* (1903)

<sup>4</sup> [http://lt.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C5%A0ar%C5%Bnas\\_Sauka](http://lt.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C5%A0ar%C5%Bnas_Sauka) <http://mmcentras.lt/index.php?id=2&lang=lt&Sid=47>

**Portraits-heads: man as an accident.** Bacon is a unique portraitist. He made many portraits of his friends (he should like the person he is ready to paint) and of himself (*Self-portraits*). However, he was producing portraits in a very particular manner as he painted not the faces of his models, but the heads instead. Bacon's conceptions about his portraits have a very deep relation with meat. The face presupposes the bone structure, an organism, whereas the head is meat, the body without organs. Moreover, the face symbolizes the essence of the man treating him as a spiritual being. However, by painting heads Bacon wants to show that a man is just an accident and not the essence any more. Bacon was so fascinated by Rembrandt who was capable to paint a final self-portrait<sup>5</sup> as one of such block of flesh without eye sockets that he himself painted his own self-portrait as a piece of flesh "haunted by a very beautiful gaze emanating from eyes without sockets" (Deleuze, 2004, 23). Bacon's heads can lack many other lineaments: no mouth, no cheeks, no other side of face like in *Study for Self-Portrait-Tryptich* (1985-6). Bacon himself noticed that people usually do not like the way he makes the portraits of them if they want beautiful appearance and see the monster instead. However, it is not the appearance that Bacon pays most attention to, but the energy within the appearance. As he said: "In painting a portrait the problem is to find a technique by which you can give over all the pulsations of a person. <...> The sitter is someone of flesh and blood and what has to be caught is their emanation" (Bacon, 1987, 174).

Every painter finds his own unique manner to caught different emanation of a person using the same effect of flesh (through the red and blue tones). For example, Lithuanian painter Raimundas Sližys<sup>6</sup> (1952-2008) (who can be called the real painter of the heads as he renders it as very huge in contrast with tiny body) – provides his heads with caricaturist expression, irony and sardonic humour. In his *Self-Portrait* (1997) we can see puckered block of flesh as well as in the *The Portrait of Collector M. Šukliauskas* (1998). Mindaugas Skudutis<sup>7</sup> (1964) renders his Figures and portraits in a more dramatic and violent way (the same can be said about his deformed and isolated Figures in general) and appears more close to Bacon: he multiplies the head until it becomes the skull, providing the same effect of flesh in *Self-Portrait* (1988). Despite the differences in such a way painters question the essence of a man revealing his accidental, contingent being of a man under the mask of prominence.

**Scream: pure affect.** Bacon was obsessed by his intention to paint the scream. As he himself noted, he had always hoped in a sense to be able to paint scream as Claude Monet painted a sunset (Bacon, 1987, 50). Why Bacon emphasizes so much the significance of the scream as the object of painting? Properly speaking, few artists tried to paint the scream, as it is not sufficient to render an open mouth in order to obtain the effect of

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<sup>5</sup> Rembrandt, *Self-Portrait* (1659)

<sup>6</sup> <http://mmcentras.lt/index.php?id=2&lang=lt&Sid=51>

<sup>7</sup> <http://mmcentras.lt/index.php?id=2&lang=lt&Sid=50>

the scream. The masterpiece of Edward Munch's *The Scream* (1895) can be treated as one of successful attempts<sup>8</sup>. However, treating Munch's *Scream* as too emotional, Bacon admires more the fragment with a screaming head of a woman from Nicolas Poussin's painting *The Massacre of the Innocents* (1630–1631). Another inspiration for Bacon was a screaming nurse in the *Odessa Steps* scene in Sergei Eisenstein's 1925 silent movie *The Battleship Potemkin*. Bacon painted more than one screaming Figure. The series of *Crying Pope* is painted after famous Diego Velasquez's painting *The Pope Innocent X* (1650) by deforming and distorting them in an appropriate manner. Under evaluation of Bacon, Velasquez's *The Pope Innocent X* is the best portrait of all time in the painting history. However, Bacon's *Popes* are screaming. The scream should inform us about immense pain, despair, suffering, anger and alike, to refer to human emotions he is experiencing. Or maybe it expresses cruelty and perversion inherent to Bacon's personality and thus to his creation? Not accidentally art critics nominated Bacon "the genius of violence". However, Bacon in his interviews many times repeated that his purpose is not to paint a horror. He was not satisfied if his Figures suggested even little horror. For that reason many Bacon's screaming heads or the pictorial examples he gave look quite artificial. However, to Bacon's mind, the more artificial, not natural screams look like, the more suggestive the painting is. Naturalism thus would refer to some feelings and would introduce the story-telling. Why (for what reason) is this man screaming, at whom is he screaming? The main attempt of Bacon is just to paint the scream, or, more exactly, the force of screaming itself that composes his Figure as much as the screaming Pope's head attempts to escape from itself through the open mouth. So the involuntary cry that Bacon tried to record should be only the freed sensation without any emotional background. It is exactly what Deleuze and Guattari later described as an affect in their book *What is Philosophy?* (1991). Affect is neutralised, artistically constructed feeling or sensation that can stand on its own without no appealing to our personal feelings and ability to evoke our emotional experiences.

Figural painting is one of ways of overcoming representation beside other two: abstract painting and abstract expressionism. Despite the fact that Deleuze in his late period of creation affirmed all the modern art trends as much as they were capable to distance itself from reality, to invent something new and to rely only on experiment, in the book *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation* he apparently privileges the way of Figure, as much, to his mind, it is more suggestible and is really capable of overcoming representation. The answer to the question concerning this alternative chosen by Deleuze lies in the logic of sensation.

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<sup>8</sup> There could also be mentioned the fragment of *Mother with Dead Child II* from famous Pablo Picasso's (1881-1973) painting *Guernica* (1937). Picasso also was able to paint scream escaping any natural illustration.

## Sensation in Painting: Cezanne, Bacon

The main intrigue of the book Francis Bacon: *The Logic of Sensation* lies in Bacon's phrase, that Deleuze takes on its own to discuss: "It's a very, very close and difficult thing to know why some paint comes across directly onto the nervous system and other paint tells you the story in a long diatribe through the brain" (Bacon, 1987, 18). Touching the problem of suggestivity Bacon reaches the problem of sensation, which is the part of much wider logic of sensation, that makes the core of Deleuze's immanent philosophy.

In the book *Difference and Repetition* (*Différence et répétition*, 1968) Deleuze developed the program of transcendental empiricism, that was based on modification of Immanuel Kant's transcendentalism<sup>9</sup>. The envisaged duality in Kant's conception of aesthetics (aesthetics as the conditions of possible experience in the first *Critique* and the aesthetics as the reflection of the work of art as real experience in the third *Critique*)<sup>10</sup> gave inspiration for Deleuze to elaborate the opposition between encountered sign and recognized object (1) and in this a way to reunite two different notions of aesthetics (2). Whereas recognized object is always dependent on the *a priori* forms of the subject and never disturbs our everyday experience, encountered sign, on the contrary, forces to overstep the limits of possible experience as it never is given as certain quality that could be represented. It can only be sensed or be felt. „It is not a sensible being but the being of the sensible“ (Deleuze, 1994, 140). Nevertheless, this primordial sensibility exactly is the level of genesis or genetic conditions, "it is not the given but that by which the given is given" (ibid.). Even more, Deleuze describes the experience of encounter as very direct – disrupting the world of object and subject, as very intensive and even violent. Deleuze also insists that if we want to reunify these two notions of aesthetics, the conditions of experience in general should become the genetic conditions of real experience that can be reunited with the structures of works of art. "The two senses of the aesthetic become one, to the point, where the being of the sensible reveals itself in the work of art, while at the same time the work of art appears as experimentation" (Deleuze, 1994, 68). „In this way, Deleuze's logic of sensation reunites the two dissociated halves of aesthetics: the theory of forms of experience (as „the being of the sensible“) and the work of art as experimentation (as „a pure being of sensation“) (Smith, 2012, 105). The question then arises how we encounter the sensation in painting?

According to Deleuze, sensation is inseparable from the Figure, which "is the sensible form related to a sensation" (Deleuze, 2004, 31). Even we could discern two faces of the sensation: subjective and objective, whereas the first one would imply the impact on the

<sup>9</sup> The beginning of this project can be encountered in Deleuze's previous book about Kant *Kant's Critical Philosophy: The Doctrine of Faculties* (*La Philosophie critique de Kant*, 1963).

<sup>10</sup> It is best seen in Kantian elaboration of distinction between the Beautiful and the Sublime. See Kant, I., (2000) *The Critique of Judgment*, New York: Cambridge University Press. P. 89–160.

spectator (nervous system, instinct, temperament), and the second one, the object of the paint (the “fact”, the place, the event), really it is more correct to speak about sensation as the unity of the sensing and the sensed: “As a spectator, I experience the sensation only by entering the painting, by reaching the unity of the sensing and the sensed” (Deleuze, 2004, 31). Thus, sensation does not exist somewhere as an object that could be represented, it is not somewhere in the air, on the contrary, it gets its being only through the body that is capable to sustain it. Hence, the body that is painted in such an art nowise is a represented body, but the body that is “experienced as sustaining *this* sensation” (Deleuze, 2004, 32).

It does not matter how different postimpressionist Paul Cezanne and Bacon would appear, Deleuze sees Cezanne as Bacon’s precursor. In comparison with Bacon, Cezanne looks much more classical, more bright, more innocent. Cezanne’s painting has nothing in common with flesh and meat in Bacon, and with violent body’s deformations, but nevertheless he gave to a sensation unprecedented status, that is, withdrew it from the cliché, from the ready-made image, and from any “sensational” (Deleuze, 2004, 31). As Deleuze insists, his innovation in painting compared with impressionists was the notion of the sensation tied with the body, and not on the contrary, as the sensation in the “free”, disembodied play of light and colors like in impressionist<sup>11</sup> (ibid.). How much the worlds of Cezanne and Bacon would differ – the world of Nature (landscapes and still lifes) in Cezanne and the world of artefact (sitting figures in empty rooms, interior, furniture, etc.) of Bacon, they both understood the importance of the Figure as having to sustain sensation. They both also described sensation through its suggestivity that is dependent on its very directional transmission, very immediate affect on the nervous system and instinct without any story to be told. Both, Bacon and Cezanne were focused most on solid things: what Bacon called “the Fact”, was the “motif” for Cezanne. Whatever it would be – the appleyness of the apple (Lawrence’s words Cezanne) or the screaming head of the Pope – we have the same case of sustained sensation and its direct appeal to the involuntary, pre-rational, pre-conscious order. Even more, Bacon adds one very specific feature of the sensation – that of its dynamics as it always moves from one order to another, from one level to another, never remaining in the same order or level, but at the same time attaining some consistency or synthesis. Especially it can be seen from the seriate(d) moment inherent to Bacon’s painting (crucifixions, Popes, screaming mouths, self-portraits, etc.), but we can also talk about the series of apples (red, green, yellow) or the pots-series in Cezanne. It could appear that there are different orders and levels corresponding with different sensations, but really we should talk about different orders and levels of one and the same sensation. “It is the nature of sensation to envelop a consti-

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<sup>11</sup> Maurice Merleau-Ponty in his study *Cezanne’s Doubt* (1945) also talks about Cezanne’s way: breaking with classical representation and contrary than impressionist used to do, focusing on material solidity of things rather on ephemeral vibration of light and air, patches of color. “The object is no longer covered by reflections and lost in their relationships to the atmosphere and to the other objects. It seems subtly illuminated from within, light emanates from it, and the result is the impression of solidity and material substance” (Merleau-Ponty, 2003, 276).

tutive difference of level, a plurality of constitutive domains. Every sensation, and every Figure, is already an “accumulated” or “coagulated” sensation, as in limestone figure” (Deleuze, 2004, 33). But what is the source of this synthesis that makes up the material unity of the sensing and sensed that lets the sensation emerge and thus guarantees the entire suggestivity of it?

Deleuze discusses several hypotheses forestalling the false responses. 1. *Figural*. It can be thought that the material synthetic unity of sensation is made up by a represented object or a figured thing. However, it is impossible, since Figure is opposed to figuration. If there is still some figuration given, it is the second figuration that is based on neutralization of all the primary figuration. For example, screaming Pope in Bacon is made after Velasquez’s portrait of *Pope Innocent X*. First neutralization lies in the scream, and the second one – that this scream is not ‘sensational’. There is no horror in it. “The violence of sensation is opposed to the violence of the represented (the sensational, the cliché)” (Deleuze, 2004, 34). 2. *Psychoanalytical*. It can be also said that synthetic unity of sensation depends on ambivalence of sensation (love and hatred at one and the same time) that makes up tension and thus could explain the different orders of sensation. For example, someone could say that Bacon’s desire to paint popes (Pope means *Grand Papa*) lies in his childish experience, since he hated his father and was afraid of him and simultaneously felt sexual attraction towards him? This interpretation should be also strictly rejected since ambivalence in Figure would refer to feelings that the Figure would experience in relation to represented things, and in such a way it would presuppose the narrated story. “But there are no feelings in Bacon: there are nothing but affects, that is, sensations and “instincts”” (Deleuze, 2004, 35). 3. *Motor hypothesis*. It would treat the levels of sensation as the snapshots of motion that recompose the movement. It is a partly reasonable explanation as Bacon used decompositions of pictures (that of Muybridge) or made very intense movements in his paintings. But “Movement does not explain sensation; on the contrary, it is explained by the elasticity of the sensation” (Deleuze, 2004, 36). Really it is the levels of sensation that explains the movement, and not *vice versa*. It does not represent movement as such. Even there are very intensive and powerful movements taking place on the canvas, these movements are really immobile, movements “in-place”, when we “*the action of invisible forces on the body*” (spasm, vomiting, scream) (ibid.). In summary it can be said that not the movement explains the levels of sensation, but the sensation itself gives a movement instead which should be related with the body experiencing the invisible force acting upon it. 4. *Phenomenological*. Maybe the levels of sensation would be the domains of sensation that refer to different sense organs, but each domain would have a way of referring to other domains or levels, independently of the represented object they have in common. There emerges a communication between a color, a taste, a smell, a touch, a sound, or maybe some synesthetic experience that constitutes, as Deleuze says, “a “pathic” (non-representative) moment of the sensation” (in Bacon’s *Bullfights* we can hear the noise of the beast’s hooves or the smell and soft texture of meat

in Bacon's *Crucifixions*). "The painter would thus *make visible* a kind of original unity of the senses, and would make a multisensible Figure appear visually" (Deleuze, 2004, 37). This hypothesis could be most convincing, as it reveals the unity of the senses and thus the involvement of us into the painting, without any relation with the represented object. However, to Deleuze's mind, for even to make such operation as to let the multisensible Figure appear visually, the sensation of a particular domain should be in "direct contact with a vital power that exceeds every domain and traverses them all" (ibid.). Deleuze calls this vital power the Rhythm. The Rhythm is something non-representable at all, that is more profound than any sensing such as vision, hearing, touching, smelling, etc. The Rhythm is insensible if we use the ordinary notion of sensing, but at the same time it can be only sensed as unknowable power that makes visual sensations appear. The Rhythm cannot be captured by any rational and perceptual way but instead it gives the order and consistence to all sensations. It can appear that the concept of the Rhythm is borrowed from the field of music, as Deleuze characterizes it as that which "runs through a painting just as it runs through a piece of music" (Deleuze, 2004, 37), but really this concept is taken from French phenomenologist of art Henri Maldiney (1912 – 2013) who, similarly to Erwin Strauss, or Maurice Merleau-Ponty paid most attention to Cezanne's painting. According to Maldiney, Cezanne's painting reveals all the "logic of senses", our immediate participation in the world, that of being in the world, the Rhythm. "It is diastole-systole: the world that seizes me by closing in around me, the self that opens to the world itself" – reciting Maldiney says Deleuze (Deleuze, 2004, 37). Very similar to Deleuze, making distinction between the model of recognition and the model of encounter that belongs to the logic of sensation that always appeals to something pre-rational, Maldiney in his turn opposes sensation to perception. Maldiney describes sensation as non-intentional, as not intending any object, whereas perception is intentional and constituting some intellectual, epistemic moment that cuts off the *aesthesis* (Escoubas, 2010, 193). According to Maldiney, the main function of an image is not of imitating the world, but of appearing. Merleau-Ponty in his *Phenomenology of Perception (Phénoménologie de la perception, 1945)* uses the concept of perception, but which is understood as primary, pre-objective and pre-conscious experience (Merleau-Ponty, 2005, 242) that indicates our primordial involvement into the world. According to Merleau-Ponty, especially the art becomes the practice that much better than any intellectual activity can express this moment of appearing, the emergence of the world before our eyes. Cezanne for him is the genius who was capable to render that vision in the most intensive way: "Cezanne wanted to depict matter as it takes on form, the birth of order through spontaneous organization" (Merleau-Ponty, 2003, 277). Even structurally the positions of phenomenology of art and of Deleuze on the analysis of sensation and its relation with the rhythm mostly coincide, we need not to forget Deleuze's negative attitude that rejects the notions of the lived body and the life world. "The lived body is still a paltry thing in comparison with a more profound and almost unlivable Power [*Puissance*]" – says Deleuze (Deleuze, 2004,

39). It does not allow reaching much more profound level of genesis and matter. Deleuze intends to descend beneath the lived and existent, as he accentuates the body without organs (decentralized subject) in Bacon and the encounter with vital, nonlivable and inorganic power without any qualities. So he talks about Cosmic becoming and not about being in the World. In Deleuze it is possible to talk not about openness to the world but about openness to the Cosmic forces. The concept of “force” can appear as having relation with what Merleau-Ponty calls “vibration of appearance”, but for phenomenologists this really has a phenomenal meaning, whereas Deleuze talks about the vibration of matter, that gives rise to the primordial sensibility. “Deleuze links ‘rhythm’ to the body without organs, insofar as it is the ‘vibration’ which animates that body, and makes the sensation pass from one level to another through the Figure. Rhythm unites the different orders” (Crowhter, 2012, 34).

The force has strong relation with rhythm and sensation, as “for a sensation to exist, a force must be exerted on a body, on a point of the wave. But if force is the condition of sensation, it is nonetheless not the force that is sensed, since the sensation “gives” something completely different from the forces that condition it” (Deleuze, 2004, 48). The problem is that the force itself is not sensed in any way: nonvisible and non-sonorous at all. But it does not mean that it is not real. It is not accessible to our natural perception, so the main problem of modern art becomes how to make these nonvisible, non-sonorous forces visible or sonorous. Deleuze liked very much to repeat Paul Klee’s famous formula that became the formula of modern art in general: “Not to render the visible, but to render visible” that means nothing else that “the task of painting is defined as the attempt to render visible forces that are not themselves visible” (ibid.). How the painter can make visible the force of weight, of time, of pressure, of scream? Deleuze gives an example of painter Jean-Francois Millet, who tried to render visible the weight of the sack of potatoes, carried by peasants instead of just painting peasants carrying the sack of potatoes as critics used to think. To Deleuze’s mind, the main task of Cezanne was to render visible the folding force of mountains, the germinative force of a seed, the thermic force of a landscape, ripening or rotting force of an apple (see his painting on the motif of *Still life with Apples* and *Mont Sainte Victoire*). Vincent van Gogh invented the “unheard-of force” of a sunflower seed (famous *Sunflowers* series), made visible the vapping field from the heat (*Midday Rest (after Millet)*, 1890 or *The Sower*, 1888) or the temperature of day heat (*Sun over Olive Grove*, 1889), or the pulsatile force of the stars in the night sky (*Starry Night over the Rhone*, 1888). Of course, Bacon tried to render quite different forces, which were not yet invented by Cezanne or van Gogh. Bacon’s Figures render the forces of spasm, scream, flattening force of sleep. In Bacon there is no I, who acts: screams, vomits, etc., but it is exactly the force which forces me to scream. Deleuze recites other invisible forces that are rendered visible in Bacon: isolation, deformation, dissipation (through smile), coupling, mysterious force in triptychs (uniting and separating at one and the same time), force of changing time, force of eternal time/the eternity

of time. "To render Time sensible in itself is a task common to the painter, the musician, and sometimes the writer" (Deleuze, 2004, 54). The genius in this field, no doubt, was Marcel Proust. What other forces could be rendered visible – it is the question for the future artists. But what is most important here, is that modern painting, on the contrary to classical one that was always oriented towards stable givens and essences, is able to convey the vision of dynamic and always changeable reality – Cosmic becoming, that is invisible, but through the sensation sustained by the Figure, it can become visible. The logic of sensation expresses the main thesis of Deleuze's ontology of becoming and for that reason it should be related with painting not objects but forces instead. Capturing the forces that are invisible themselves results as the very immediate effect of a sensation, because vibrating on the threshold of perception it attacks not our intellect but nervous system, intuition, instinct.

One can better understand why Deleuze, following Bacon's attitude, privileges the way of Figure, and not the abstract forms or abstract scribble of abstract expressionism. An abstract art like that of Mondrian or Kandinsky for Deleuze is not sufficient because it lacks sensation, it is addressed to the head and "acts through the intermediary of the brain, which is closer to the bone" (Deleuze, 2004, 31), and thus is incapable of avoiding representation. First, abstract painters are concerned most about an aesthetic vision that consists of the composition of colors or forms. Abstract painting requires aesthetic comprehension and its nature is more rational than sensible. It is deficient of the Rhythm as it always remains in one and the same level instead of rather moving of the sensation from one level to another. So, conversely than a sensation, that always attacks to our nervous system, to pre-conscious, stable abstract forms attack only to our intellect. And, as we saw before, intellect, rationality for Deleuze always coincide with representation. On the other hand, abstract expressionism like that of Pollock is too chaotic and messy, so the emergence of sensation becomes impossible, because "the sensation should be clear and precise" (Deleuze, 2004, 89). There is no any Figure, the body which could sustain sensation, and there are no levels, through which sensation could pass. According to Deleuze, Bacon moves in the middle path between these two extremes, by his deformed Figures being able to extract and sustain sensations.

## **Diagram-Chance: From Chaos to Rhythm**

How the principles of the logic of sensation constitute the principles of composition of the work of art? It is the question concerning the process of painting itself that determines the emergence of a sensation. Deleuze formulates this question in the following way: how to pass from the prepictorial phase to the pictorial one so that the painting process would succeed? This moment is crucial.

The prepictorial phase in modern art quite differs from that in classical art. The main task for the modern painter is not to begin, not to impose the form on a matter. The task for the classical artist was to start, to represent what he sees around him, to try all variations of figuration, whereas modern artist encounters too many figurative givens, what Deleuze calls clichés. “The painter has many things in his head, or around him, or in his studio. Now everything he has in his head or around him is already in the canvas, more or less virtually, more or less actually, before he begins his work. They are all present in the canvas as so many images, actual or virtual, so that the painter does not have to cover a blank surface, but rather would have to empty it out, clear it, clean it” (Deleuze, 2004, 71). Many attempts, if they do not succeed, can result in returning to the cliché or worst, to making a parody.

Trying to describe the way or method through which modern painters, and especially Bacon and Cezanne, try to escape representation or clichés, Deleuze uses the concept, taken from semiotics of pragmatist Charles Sanders Peirce – the graph or **diagram** that is treated as the genetic agent, enabling to create something new. Deleuze describes the diagram as consisting of three concepts: chaos or catastrophe, chance and rhythm or expressed by formula: *from catastrophe through chance to rhythm*. The diagram is what exactly ends the prepictorial phase and allows moving to the pictorial. Applied to the pictorial plane, the concept of diagram strongly correlates with the principle of difference, attempt to disrupt identity, inherent to Deleuze philosophy, what is really inseparable from Deleuzian concept of chaos. In his book *What is Philosophy?* he wrote that in opposition to those who are content with living in the milieu of clichés only the artists, philosophers and scientists are not afraid to confront the chaos. Being the ripper of every identical system or order, chaos at the same time is the germ of every order or form. Creators know that only through the rupture of former identity or form it is possible to create something really new. Of course, it is very threatening and risky experience, the collapse of all visual coordinates, the invasion of manifold painful sensibilities, where it is impossible to discern them. As Deleuze insists, it is not psychological, but certainly pictorial experience, although it can respond to painter’s psychic life. The fact that many great modern painters were using the diagram is shown by the names they gave to that pictorial experience: Cezanne’s “catastrophe”, or “abys”, Paul Klee’s “chaos”, vanishing “grey point”. But how this catastrophe or chaos is taking on canvas? The painter makes involuntary, irrational, accidental, free, random marks. It can be made even as if in a blind way, without our will or without our sight, as “if the hand assumed an independence and began to be guided by other forces” (Deleuze, 2004, 82). And it is enough for another world to intrude into a visual world of figuration and its optical organization. These marks made by hand and for this reason called manual marks or traits are non-representative, non-illustrative, non-narrative, but sensational. They do not have significance and do not signify anything. For this reason Deleuze calls them *a-signifying traits*. “The diagram is thus the operative set of asignifying and nonrepresentative lines and zones,

line-strokes and color-patches. And the operation of the diagram, its function, is to be „suggestive” (Deleuze, 2004, 82–83). If we look at how Bacon realized the diagram, we will see that he used various things in order to make these random marks: he painted with various sizes of paintbrushes, or even barehanded, he used a comb, sponges, a rag, cashmere pullover or even the top of a dustbin (Schmied, 2006, 81). He also practiced such a method of painting that first he covered the canvas with watercolour or with acrylic what made neutral, flat background, but the Figures, conversely were painted with oil for the reason that time oil was taking to dry was much longer, so he could make changes and deformations of the Figures. Scrubbing and deformations were the ways Bacon was trying to escape clichés. For example, van Gogh’s diagram “was the set of straight and curved hatch marks that raise and lower the ground, twist the trees, make the sky palpitate” (Deleuze, 2004, 83). So the function of the diagram was, as Bacon himself said, “to unlock the valves of feeling” (Bacon, 1987, 58) and this can happen only through a catastrophe, taking place on canvas. However, being such an important and crucial moment of painting, the diagram nevertheless just ends the preparatory work of an artist, opening up a way for painting itself, so it can work as a means, but in no way it can be a purpose of a painting. It is a first step, but not a result. Being a catastrophe itself, the diagram cannot become a catastrophe or to create a catastrophe. In order for the diagram to be successful, it should be utilized, what means “that from the possibility of Fact the Fact itself should be constituted” (Deleuze, 2004, 128). As much as the chaos is a germ of every order or rhythm, the diagram gives a possibility, a chance to create something new. But there arises a question: how is the artist able to take advantage of this chance for some Figure sustaining the sensation to emerge from the catastrophe, for the rhythm to come? Bacon was a very good gambler, especially in the play of Russian roulette, so he knew well how to jump from nothing to something. The concept of a chance is strongly related with one of the attitudes of modern art, where the role of the painter in the process of creation is understood as being a particular medium (Schmied, 2006, 84). The pretext for this principle to emerge was given by Cezanne. He maintained that “Not a “minute of the world passes”, says Cezanne, that we will preserve if we do not “become that minute”” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, 169) thus indicating the requirement of a very close and immediate relationship between a man and the world, which can be reached during the process of creation. This strongly resonates with Deleuze’s concept of becoming. Cezanne’s phrase indicates that in the process of creation we should distance ourselves from the conscious Self and be totally open for another experience to invade us. This is a condition for experiencing invisible forces and for creating sensations. When the painter is making random, spontaneous, involuntary marks, he is making it with a hand, which becomes independent from his will and sight. Painting based on chance should be a spontaneous process, freed from the control of reason and supported by an accident (as in Bacon’s painting, where the man becomes an umbrella *Man and Umbrella*) only. This spontaneity and openness of a painter for the result, which will

happen, that are inherent to Bacon and other modern artists can be proved by the fact that they have not used any sketches, without which a classical painting, requiring a very good optical organization, would be almost impossible. Painting without the sketches indicates that the painter does not have a preconceived idea or plane, how his canvas exactly should appear. But this moment is very slippery and complicated, threatening with big misunderstandings. Chance in Bacon, first, should not be understood as “the set of probabilistic, prepictorial givens, which are not the part of the act of painting” as it were in the work of Duchamp, “who let three threads fall on the painted canvas, and fixed them exactly where they fell” (Deleuze, 2004, 78). So chance should not be confused with probabilities, chance should be integrated in the act of painting itself. The second misunderstanding that should be removed can be demonstrated through the example, given by Bacon himself with a cleaning woman. Would she be capable of making random marks or not? For many of us it would appear that she can easily make these random marks. But Bacon’s remark is that she would be incapable, “because she would not know how to utilize this chance or how to manipulate it” (Deleuze, 2004, 78). Involuntarily made random marks should be integrated into the visual whole, and this means that there is no chance except for “manipulated” chance, and no accident except a “utilized” accident. Chance does not mean that the painter does not know what he wants to do, that he does not have any preconceived idea. Indeed he has. But this idea does not work as the beginning of painting, it is displayed through the process of painting, always including changes. “I know, what I want to do but I don’t know how to bring it about. And that’s what I’m hoping accidents or chance or whatever you like to call it will bring about for me” (Bacon, 1987, 102). Only in the end the painter can decide whether the result corresponds to this primary idea or not. If the chance was manipulated and utilised well, the result can be even better than the supposed. So the diagram and the chance help the painter to escape figurative and probabilistic givens. “*A probable visual whole (first figuration) has been disorganized and deformed by free manual traits that, by being reinjected into the whole, will produce the improbable visual Figure (second figuration)*. The act of painting is the unity of these free manual traits and their effect upon and reinjection into the visual whole” (Deleuze, 2004, 79).

Methods of the diagram and the chance determine what kind of pictorial space is created which in its turn determines the emergence of the sensation. As we have seen before, the diagram and the chance include intervention of a hand that becomes independent from the will and sight. It presupposes something involuntary and irrational. In classical painting, conversely, a hand is totally subordinate to an eye as a painter works with figurative and probabilistic givens and tries to realize it in optical organization that is primary. So we can see that the eye indicates reason, will, control, calculation, in opposite to a hand, which indicates involuntary, instinct, temperament, spontaneity, etc. An abstract art, such as that of Mondrian, creates an especially pure optical space, as a hand in the process of painting is totally subordinated to an eye. This kind of pictorial

space loses its tactile sensibility and in result lacks suggestivity. It appeals only to our intellect, but does not reach a more profound logic of sensation. That kind of optical space, to Deleuze's mind, can be seen in Byzantine art. Thus, abstract painting is much more optical and less tactile than classical representation. Even more, it reaches this pure effect by replacing the diagram with the code, which is digital as it works with units that group together visually the terms in opposition (vertical-white-activity, horizontal-black-inertia, etc.). This digitality is so abstract, that it "reduces the abyss or chaos (as well as the manual) to a minimum: it offers us an asceticism, a spiritual salvation" (Deleuze, 2004, 84). This approach is very well seen in Kandinsky's idea: "The more frightening the world becomes <...> the more art becomes abstract" (Kandinsky, r. 1). It is an attempt to escape chaos that is always related with violent sensibility.

Abstract expressionism (Pollock's line, Morris Louis's stain) follows a completely different way of engaging the diagram. Deleuze characterises it as "the optical catastrophe and the manual rhythm" (Deleuze, 2004, 86). Through the subordination of an eye to a hand abstract expressionism creates manual space, where it is impossible to see any visual coordinates. The specific feature of this art is the line or the patch of color, which does not form any contour, that delimits nothing, neither inside nor outside nor concave nor convex. For this reason the eye can hardly follow it. Deleuze compares this line with "frenetic dance" or "Gothic line"<sup>12</sup> (the term Gothic art was taken from Wilhelm Worringer – German art historian), which moves not from one point to another but between points instead, continually changing direction, becoming inseparable from the surface. As compared with this line an abstract painting appears as very representative, as its line still delimits an outline. To Deleuze's mind, this is another extremity, as the diagram works not as a means, but becomes a purpose itself. Whereas abstract art left chaos away invoking just the transformation of the form, abstract expressionism stayed in chaos engaging with the decomposition of the matter. This chaotic sloppiness, as Bacon himself insisted, does not allow for the Figure that sustains the sensation, to emerge. "Save the contour – nothing is more important for Bacon than this" (Deleuze, 2004, 89).

Now we can see why Deleuze treats Bacon's painting as the middle path, the case between two extremities. Painting in Bacon is based on a very good balance between the interference of the hand when the clichés should be destroyed and of the eye, when the manual traits should be reinjected into the visual whole. Chaos works there as a germ of the rhythm and manual traits form what Deleuze later called chaosmos. The result of such interaction is what Deleuze determines as haptic space or haptic vision (gr. *Haptein* – to touch, to cuddle). This term (in original – *haptisch*) was taken from Alois

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<sup>12</sup> One famous Pollock's canvas is entitled *Gothic*, 1944.

Riegl – a famous Austrian art historian<sup>13</sup>. Hapticity refers to the vision that is captured through sensations, that raises sensible-tactile senses. It strongly differs from the way we experience an optical space, because the illusion of vision or movement is related not with the appearance, but with something we could call vibration of the matter. Thus, a tactile space of a painting, where on the flat surface by means of colors and forms an effect of volume is created the haptic function of an eye awakes, as it captures the image instead of plunged into an optical vision, it enfolds the space of a painting, unifies the vision and touch (this was especially developed in Egyptian art, where Egyptians in their bas-reliefs used the lines of contour in a very haptic way). Thus, haptic vision opens up the ways for the sensation to be “captured”. We can talk about hapticity, “when sight discovers in itself a specific function of touch that is uniquely its own, distinct from its optical function” – Deleuze cites Riegl (Deleuze, 2004, 125). Such is the “modern” eye – painters still “paint with their eyes, but only insofar as they touch with their eyes” (ibid.). The creation of such a haptic vision is inseparable from the specific sense of colors, or colorism, inherent to Bacon’s painting. The line and color are most important elements of painting, but in the case of Bacon there is no subordination of the line and color in the regimes of one and another. In classical painting the line delimits contour, and the color fills the supposed form, in abstract painting, the line is most important as it strictly outlines the contour. It is like bone structure, not the flesh. Colors are pure, cold and homogenous. Abstract expressionism created the line which, conversely, delimited nothing – there is no contour that could be saved. The singularity of Bacon occurs as he is able to create a contour only through the means of colors. The diagram then works as a modulator, consisting not “only of relations of warm and cool, of expansion and contraction, which vary in accordance with the colours considered”. Colorism also indicates “the regimes of colours and of relations of these regimes, and the harmony between pure tones and broken tones” (Bacon combined monochromatic and polychromatic colors). And the three most important pictorial elements in Bacon – armature, Figure and contour – “communicate and converge in color” (Deleuze, 2004, 122). The Figure appears through the different regimes of colors and its relations<sup>14</sup>. Modulating character of the diagram creates the effect of movement from one level of sensation to the other – the rhythm. Tom Conley in his *Afterword* compares modulating with other Deleuze’s concept – Fold, explored in the book *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, where baroque was understood as the world of

<sup>13</sup> Alois Riegl explored the problem of hapticity, opposing haptic-close vision to optical vision in his book *Die spätromische Kunstindustrie nach den Funden in Österreich-Ungarn* (1901). But actually he used the term „taktische“, which, responding to criticisms, was later replaced with „haptisch“.

<sup>14</sup> Merleau-Ponty addressed to the type of modulation in Cezanne’s painting and his choice to use green color for the background rather than a grey as it was in classical painting. The result is “that when the over-all composition of the picture is seen globally, perspectival distortions are no longer visible in their own right but rather contribute, as they do in natural vision, to the impression of an emerging order, of the object in the out of appearing, organizing itself before our eyes” (Merleau-Ponty, 2003, 278).

continuous process of folding, unfolding, refolding (Conley, 2002, 147). Folding also could be understood as the same modulation or rhythm: expansion-contraction-expansion. Thus, modulation of colors expresses the pulsatile force, the vibration of the matter but at the same time it lets for some consistent form to emerge. In thus a way diagram works as “an abstract machine that composes matter and force in a painting” (Zepke, 2005, 187). Deleuze makes a conclusion that colorists, such as Cezanne, van Gogh and Bacon, use an analogical language of painting, which also works as a modulator. Which exactly is the point on which resemblance that was the main task and comprehensible language for classical painters differs from analogy? It is really an important question, as Figures always resemble something. But this resemblance is nowise a baseline. Rather Bacon or Cezanne raised a question: how to produce a resemblance with no resembling means? Trying to destroy the cliché a painter starts from the diagram, lets the chaos in and then through the chance and utilisation of it he gets a Figure that resembles nothing, but nevertheless is analogous to something: human’s body, pig’s head, umbrella, etc. “Roughly speaking, the law of a diagram, according to Bacon, is this: one starts from a figurative form, a diagram intervenes and scrambles it, and a form of a completely different nature emerges from the diagram, which is called a Figure” (Deleuze, 2004, 125). For example, in the painting *Man and umbrella* (1946) Bacon wanted to make a bird alighting on a field, but the result became totally different. To Deleuze’s mind, in such a way representation is overcome most and the sensation extracted most, because a relation with a chaos is not lost, as the genesis of the form always remains beside. The creation of the form or some consistency appears as created not through a pre-given vision, but through the interplay of differences. For this reason an analogical language includes deformation that is completely different from transformation of form, inherent to abstract painting. Transformation that is tied with digital language and code is incapable of overcoming representation, as there is a passage from one form to another only, without plunging into chaos, without reaching a much more profound level of sensation.

## Conclusions

Logic of sensation coherently departs from Deleuze’s own immanent philosophy and programme of transcendental empiricism, which intends to overstep the limits of natural perception or possible experience. In the field of art representation is overcome through the well composed sensations that attacks our nervous system, instinct, temperament.

According to Deleuze, neither abstract art nor abstract expressionism nor *art informel* is capable to overcome representation, because they are not able to extract sensation. Whereas abstract painting does not reach a more profound level of sensation, not confronting chaos at all, abstract expressionism does not leap from chaos at all, does not allow any form to emerge. Sensation can be sustained, its being can be captured only

through the Figure, which becomes a very delicate zone of becoming, the moment, when the forces can become visible. Deleuze treats Bacon as the middle path between these two extremes and thus the best way of overcoming representation.

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## Alternatyvi reprezentacijos įveika: F. Baconas, G. Deleuze'as

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### Santrauka

Šiame straipsnyje nagrinėjama pojūčio logika, Deleuze'o aptarta jau knygoje *Kanto kritikos filosofija* ir *Skirtis ir kartotė*. Šiuo atveju pojūčio logika analizuojama pasitelkiant meno kaip eksperimentavimo plotmę, parodant, kad menas, ypač modernusis, pats būdamas nulemtas tam tikrų pojūčio logikos principų, tuo pačiu tampa vienu geriausių būdų šias sąlygas atskleisti. Deleuze'as meną apibrėžia kaip pojūčių kūrimą, padarant nematomą jėgą matoma. Tapsmo arba genezės plotmė kasdienei patirčiai yra neprieinama, negalima reprezentuoti, tačiau menininkų kuriami pojūčiai tam tikru būdu vaizduoja nereprezentuojamybę. Francio Bacono tapyba Deleuze'o yra traktuojama kaip vienas geriausių reprezentacijos, buvusios svarbiausia klasikinio meno problema, įveikos būdų ir yra aptariama pasitelkiant kitų šiuolaikinio meno krypčių, tokių kaip abstrakti tapyba ir abstraktus ekspresionizmas, analizę. Diagramos, įvedančios chaosą ir turinčios suardyti klišes bei išlaisvinti pojūtį, naudojimo būdas apibrėžia kiekvienos tapybos krypties specifiką ir pojūčio sukūrimo sėkmę. Tokie Baconui būdingi tapybos aspektai kaip haptinės erdvės sukūrimas, analoginės kalbos naudojimas ir spalvos moduliacija nusakomi kaip geriausios pojūčio išgavimą lemiančios sąlygos. Bacono kuriamos Figūros, kurios nebėra siejamos su jokia atpažįstamu objektu, geriausiai išlaiko pojūtį, nes jėga turi būti įtempta ant kūno idant atskleistų virtualios plotmės virsmą aktualia.

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**Esminiai žodžiai:** Baconas, Deleuze'as, figūra, pojūtis, abstrakti tapyba, abstraktus ekspresionizmas.

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