

# Mechanics of Identity and the Fractured 'I': A Deleuzian Reading of Tomas Tranströmer

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## Abstract:

The fluidity of the quintessential Deleuzian subject levitating upon the ebb and flow of subjective encounters renders an erasure of concretized boundaries supposedly circumscribing 'reality' and transcends the experiences of the ordinary. It is fluid to the degree of accretion of multivalent identities, resulting in the embodiment of the self in the fractured 'I' that participates, eternally in the phenomenon of *becoming*, that Wim A. Christiaens visualizes in terms of the esoteric existence of quantum mechanics. The Deleuzian identity, therefore, is no longer static in the arrival at a fixed delineation. It is, more aptly, an adherent of Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle. That Deleuze's musings resonate with the poetry of Nobel Laureate Tomas Tranströmer is no mere conjecture as is evidenced by the sheer vividness of these reverberations in the latter's poetry. This paper thus, engages with the Deleuzian perspective of multiplicity, taking into account the empirical experiences of the transcendent subject and of its construction of a 'virtual reality' as articulated by Tomas Tranströmer in his poetry. Furthermore, an extrapolated study is conducted to unearth the agents of characterization 'of the divided self' in its nuanced inflections. The poems referred to are from Robin Fulton's translation of Tranströmer in the 2006 collection, *The Great Enigma: New Collected Poems*.

**Keywords:** Deleuze, Violence, Identity, Fracture, Defamiliarization, empiricism, multiplicity

## Introduction:

Ascertaining the loci of the self in relation to reality in Tranströmer's poetry necessitates a study of its lexical as well as semantic components such as time, reality, death. The paradox of identity that locates the idea of identity on the simultaneous and opposite sides of sameness and difference finds expression in Tranströmer's poems. Most of the poems appear to dismantle the traditional understanding of the human self depicting its subjective experiences from the vantage point of the subject. Even the non-living may acquire the position of subject. For example, in the poem "Ostinato", the ocean affects the passively-receiving speaker's visual as well as auditory sensations while it assumes the role of the active subject, operating within the metaphors of intoxication:

"Under the buzzard's circling point of stillness ocean rolls

resoundingly on in daylight,

blindly chews its bridle of weed and snorts up

foam over beaches." (17 Dikter, 1954)

For Deleuze, death consists of actual, biological death as well as a series of virtual deaths. The actual death of the self never

coincides with the smaller deaths of an individual because the individual is 'different' from the self. Therefore, he says, "every death remains double." (DR, 259). The corollary to this proposition lies essentially in the deduction that the I is fractured. In comparative terms, the fractured I in Tranströmer's poetry resonates Sylvia Plath's demonstration of the same in her poem "Daddy" wherein a similar conflation of identities is rendered to produce the sense of the dichotomized existence of the "I". For this convergence to occur, the dissolution of the self is indispensable. "The individual in intensity finds its psychic image neither in the organisation of the self nor in the determination of species of the I, but rather in the fractured I and the dissolved self, and in the correlation of the fractured I with the dissolved self." (DR, 259)

As a proclamation of this divided self, and of its undergoing the process of 'becoming' through experiences of reality, Tranströmer admits in a conversation with Matts Rying in 1979:

"I lay there and watched the images of a whole crowd of people I had met in my job unwind like a film, and suddenly I seemed to experience them as a human being, not just as a professional."

Not only is the dichotomy between the personal and the public, the self and the society being highlighted, so is the nature of the professional against the 'human'. The demarcation and contrast drawn between the professional and the human raises the questions: how is the professional different from the human being? Is the professional 'not human' or 'inhuman'? This may be read as a critical observation of as well as a commentary upon social reality as its actualization is taking place through 'space, time and consciousness' (DR, 220)

Of the abundant ideas strewn across Deleuzian philosophy, empiricism and constructivism go hand in hand. "Empiricism is by no means a reaction against concepts, nor a simple appeal to lived experience. On the contrary, it undertakes the most insane creation of concepts ever seen or heard." (DR, xx) Perhaps, Tranströmer's statement "The only emperor is the emperor of ice-cream", that stirs our senses, kindles our desire and capacity to make images is one example of what Deleuze means by an 'insane creation of concepts' resulting from sensory experiences of reality. Deleuze's espousal of 'transcendental empiricism' came in opposition to Kant's transcendental idealism. This accounts for his emphasis on 'lived reality' over 'possible reality'. The 'now' and 'here' precedes 'what could be'; as does 'why' or 'how' over 'what is'. For Deleuze, 'immanence' is that reality, upon which individuals are immersed, to experience its 'actual' as well as 'virtual' dimensions amounting to 'events'. Despite charges

of obscurantism and transtextuality, that may lend the impression of a Wasteland-like reading-experience, the centrality of Deleuze's philosophy promises a sense of liberation from the edifices of 'Isms'. The common practice of compartmentalizing perspectives under rigid frames is challenged in Deleuze's writings. Rather, he endorses a concatenation of ideas encountered or constructed through immediate, lived experiences, but develop in the form of a rhizome.

Tranströmer's subject accepts and embraces its 'difference in itself'. For ease of understanding, this is termed as 'pure difference' by Williams in his translation of the Deleuzian difference. For example, in the poem, "About History", he writes:

"But we who are their children must break loose.  
Every problem cries in its own language.  
Go like a bloodhound where the truth has trampled.  
(Bells and Tracks, 1966)

These lines consecrate Deleuze's famous statement: "A single voice raises the clamour of being." (DR, 35) The existence of differences inherent in problems is taken cognizance of. But the speaker is only assuming the identity of somebody who is leading, the leader remains unnamed. Perhaps, nomenclature would entail a fixity which is refrained from. The seriousness of this clarion call is subverted in the picture of the newspaper in the next stanza, which is a history of events, piling up, 'becoming' in itself, a plant, a cabbage. Along the lines of Deleuze's philosophy of Difference operating on the Differential principle, rather than circumscribing itself to representation and self-delineation, Tranströmer shows us how to exist in the grey.

### The Self, Reality and Immanence: Tranströmer's Poetic Articulation

In his poem, "A Man from Benin", we encounter a conflation of identities, geography as well as time, in the superimposition of the images of a Jew from Portugal in the African state of Benin, carved in a bronze relief, a photograph of which Tranströmer lays eyes upon. It reminds one of Keats's encounter with Homer through Chapman. This kaleidoscopic perception is in the nature of the Frame Narrative technique. The story of the poet/speaker tells the story of the Portuguese Jew that is framed in the photograph of the relief. Remarkably, the time period refers to the fifteenth-century which drives home the intertextual reference to history and to colonialism in specificity. The tendency of going back to the past and trying to make it new through a poetic experimentation, through 'difference' is in keeping with Deleuzian philosophy. At the very outset, an atmosphere of gloom is set, but it is more of a chiaroscuro over pitch-black, emanating from the play of darkness accompanied by the 'still(ness)' of the first-person singular narrator of the encounter, against his own, 'pounding' shadow. For a shadow to form, and be seen, the presence of light, even in the faintest, is a prerequisite. While the image of the 'drumskin' juxtaposes Tranströmer's allegiance to music with the possible visual perception of an ethnic African life, the Modernist 'hopelessness' crawls its way up into the mis-scene:

"When darkness fell I was still

but my shadow pounded

against the drumskin of hopelessness." (IV, Secrets on the Way, 1958)

But it is not entirely devoid of hope, for the pounding 'ease(s)' in the following line, so that the speaker is able to see clearly, 'the image of an image'. This telescopic magnification of the image further intensifies the stratified nature of the picture received on the retina, while the poem is 'becoming' and advancing forward to a rendezvous— with "a man coming forward/ in the emptiness" almost like a surreal spirit. The focus on the supernatural is acuminated in the subsequent lines:

"Like going past a house  
long since abandoned  
and someone appears at the window." (ibid.)

From the man to the house, the speaker appears to be the one strolling past, but this is reversed in the oxymoron of the line: "He seemed to take notice./Came nearer without a step." The next few lines borrow vocabulary from sea-faring voyages: 'navigator', 'hemisphere', 'equator'. This reference recurs later in the lines:

"A Jew from Portugal,  
who sailed away with the others, the drifting and the  
waiting ones..." (ibid.)

Like Sylvia Plath's man in *Meinkampf*, Tranströmer's man is also presented through physical descriptions of his hair, beard, mouth, arms etc. This emphasis on physiological features or bodily units sheds light on the significance of the corporeal existence: the 'becoming' of which is as essential as that of the virtual. This explains the counterfactual presented in the next line— of the falcon growing out of the man's features— which may be read as a metaphor for the 'becoming' of the body. It is not just other human beings that the self is identified with but also with elements of nature. This falcon is different from Yeats's falcon in that it appears to be a part of the man, like an offshoot of the Deleuzian rhizome, like in a James Pollock painting. It is no longer (not) hearing the falconer but 'becoming' him.

In "Answers to Letters", Tranströmer puts forth his idea of time which coincides with the Deleuzian understanding of time:

"Time is not a straight line, it's more of a labyrinth,  
and if  
you press close to the wall at the right place you can  
hear  
the hurrying steps and the voices, you can hear  
yourself  
walking past on the other side." (II, The Wild Market  
Square, 1983)

The labyrinthine nature of time is acknowledged in *The Logic of Sense*, wherein Deleuze writes of Aion and Chronos, derived loosely from the Stoics: "Each present is divided into past and future, ad infinitum... Is there not in the Aion, a labyrinth very different from that of Chronos, a labyrinth more terrible still... (LS, 62)" As simplified by Williams, Aion is the time of abstract processes: of eternal passing away

and coming to be: these processes are latent and waiting to be expressed in actual events, whilst Chronos is the time of actual physical punctures and wounds, where time is manifested as an inscription; the time of growth marks, signs of injury and worry lines – in joy and sadness. For Deleuze, the present is limited but past and future are unlimited; the amalgamation of corporeal mixtures embodied in the action of bodies as ‘causes’ in the Chronos and incorporeal events as ‘effects’ encapsulated in the Aion, account for two readings of time. This is in line with his work on Bergson who conceptualized the two faces of time— the objective time of clocks and calendars; and the subjective, lived time: *la duree* or durational time. This relative experience of time is also noted by Tranströmer in the lines: “The letter./ Sometimes an abyss opens between Tuesday and/Wednesday but twenty-six years could pass in a moment.” (“Answers to Letters”)

In ‘pressing close to the wall’, in ‘hearing the hurrying steps and voices’, ‘in hearing himself walking past on the other side’, Tranströmer’s subject in the above stanza participates in the corporeal mixtures demonstrated in physical action in the present, while the steps and the voices, the ‘self’ walking on the other side refer to the incorporeal events of the past or the future which are being actualized or synthesized in Deleuzian terms. In a similar manner, in Balakirev’s *Dream*, the ‘spatio-temporal dynamism’ of Deleuze (DR, 220) of the subject’s movement through time and distance is captured in a ‘watch’— a physical object. So the function of the watch seems as important as the journey, or even as the introspection of the subject:

“He knew the journey had lasted long  
and his watch showed years, not hours.” (IV, *Secrets on the Way*, 1958)

In the subsequent lines: “There was a field where the plow lay/ and the plow was a fallen bird”, the juxtaposition of identities transcends the realm of the human self and finds expression in the non-human world— the subject’s gaze confirms the sight of the field wherein the plow is ‘becoming’ the ‘fallen bird’. Similarly, in the poem “About History”, an ‘abandoned newspaper’ is ‘becoming’ as:

“It grows old through nights and days in rain and sun, on  
the way to becoming a plant, a cabbage head, on  
the way to being united with the earth.  
Just as a memory is slowly transmuted into your own self.” (Bells and Tracks, 1966)

Well-defined things are, according to Deleuze, mere abstractions; these are what he calls, ‘transcendental illusions’. Nothing fixed is real. Sense, conceptions of identities and representations are illusions. The Deleuzian subject is in a state of dynamic flux, participating in the ebb and flow of life, constantly becoming, never reaching an acquiescence of fixity— of identity or of purport. Tranströmer’s subject embodies this Deleuzian subject in immanence, as a structure of ‘pure becoming’. For example, in “Balakirev’s *Dream*”, we stumble upon the lines:

“He sat alone inside the cab and looked  
and also ran alongside on the road.” (IV, *Secrets on the Way*, 1958)

Balakirev is both the man seated in the ‘czar’s droschky’ and the man running alongside on the road. He is clearly identifying with two people from two different social backgrounds— one with the czar, the other with the people running on the road, perhaps in obeisance to the czar. At the very outset of the poem, it appears that Balakirev is playing as we see him describing the ‘black grand piano’ from up close so that he could see the spider that had spun a web upon it. In the second line however, the phrase ‘its net of music’ attributes the music to the spider. This fluctuation summarizes the fluid ‘becoming’ upheld by Deleuze. Awoken from the dream, Balakirev “saw the man at the grand piano rise.” So it is another musician playing and not Balakirev himself. He is now the audience.

Again, in the figure of the Man from Benin, Tranströmer brings about a coalescing of the identities of the Portuguese Jew, the navigator and the eloquent ambassador:

“Three peoples were silent in him.  
He was the image of three peoples.” (ibid.)

This convergence is further democratized in the dissolution of the self and identification with the different personas embodied in the man on the relief sculpture as he ends his poem with the line:

“I am come to meet him  
who raises his lantern  
to see himself in me.” (ibid.)

The need for a lantern implies darkness in the ambience which complements the act of brooding-in-solitude engaged in by the man upon the relief as well as by the onlooker. The ambient darkness and the lantern lend a common experience to both the personae. Both the aspects of the self as individual entities are immersed in the same immanence, left to experience the rendezvous differently. Albeit with differences, the fulfilment of Deleuzian repetition of creating something new from the past takes place in phenomenological terms in this identification with the other, that, as an idea seems to reverberate with Whitman’s admission of the self comprising of ‘multitudes’ in *Leaves of Grass*:

“I celebrate myself, and sing myself,  
And what I assume you shall assume,  
For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.” (Song of Myself, 1)

In “About History”, Tranströmer writes:

“Radical and Reactionary live together as in an unhappy  
marriage, molded by each other, dependent on  
each other.” (Bells and Tracks, 1966)

The marriage between Radical and Reactionary, albeit unhappy, acknowledges their differences. Yet their inter-dependability leads to a productive symbiosis as they are ‘molded by each other’. There is no erasure of differences because their sustenance survives on their *differences*.

Commenting on the nature of imagery in Tranströmer, Teju Cole writes, “The sense is of the sudden arrival of what was already there, as when a whale comes up for air: massive, exhilarating, and evanescent.” The epiphanic experiences of

the subject in Tranströmer's poems correspond to the world outside, the society and nature acting upon the individual at the center. So, the subject in its state of perpetual 'becoming' also fluctuates to the point of becoming the object, but never reaching stasis. It does not imply that the subject is a passive receptacle in the object-position, rather, connotes its involvement, to varying degrees, with the 'encounters' in Deleuzian terminology. After all, he writes of the dissoluble self in "Answers to Letters" in these terms:

"I who love to stray off and  
vanish in the crowd, a capital T in the endless mass  
of the  
text." (II, The Wild Market Square, 1983)

The third haiku from the "Prison" series based on the prison for juveniles talks of the 'loveliness', the inherent charm in the adolescents that lies distinct as opposed to the crimes that they have been penalized for. They are not reprimanded in the poem. The value of their lives is taken cognizance of in the illustration of tattoo-marks that exude creativity and art, or even stand as a possible statement of some awareness:

"Wrongly spelled, those lives— loveliness remains,  
the way  
tattoo-marks remain." (Prison/Fanglese, 1959)

Along the lines of an empathic understanding, Tranströmer's admittance of the simplicity of the prison-inmates brings to fore, his ability to see and accommodate *differences*. For example,

"When the runaway  
was caught he'd gathered pockets-ful of  
chanterelles." (ibid.)

The event of finding 'chanterelles' in the runaway's pockets, demonstrates the relatively guiltless nature of the young person. This innocence in the behaviour of the inmates who are *different* in the sense of having their lives 'wrongly spelled' is further underscored in the final haiku, where the 'boy': not 'man' yet, is seen drinking milk, sleeping 'securely' in his cell, because he is the one who needs security from harm, and instead of a loving and warm, caring mother he only has a 'mother of stone', his cell, devoid of affections:

"The boy drinks milk and  
sleeps securely in his cell, a mother of stone." (ibid.)

Insistence on the dichotomy between expectation and experience then forms a crucial aspect of Tranströmer's poetry. In the prolegomenon to his work, Robin Fulton talks of Tranströmer's poetry ending,

"by returning us, perhaps abruptly, to an active world, but they leave us with the feeling that a strangeness has crossed our path...here we can find paradoxes, imagery from and about dreams, speculations about how both past and future can impinge upon the present, investigations into memory, and a fascination with the many ways in which borders, open and closed, may be experienced..." (Fulton, 2006)

Defamiliarization of the familiar pervades Tranströmer's poetry, leaving us with more irresolvable questions. The sense of 'strangeness' that Fulton talks about is tangible in almost

all the poems. "Balakirev's Dream" is one example of the superlative exhibition of Tranströmer's creativity. It experiments with a dream within a dream, moving from a concert hall to a droszky-ride to a battleship and back to the concert, with droszkies in the dark street outside. There is a virtual distance traversed from Sweden to Russia in the creation of the poem, whilst the tribute to Mily Balakirev may be attributed to Tranströmer's interest in music. This recurs in his poem "C-Major" which may evoke Balakirev's composition of Symphony No.1 in C-Major. Tranströmer's imagination clearly crosses geographical area from the Swedish landscape to Russia, time from the present to the past and vice versa, social differences from the czar to the commoners, from the spider's web to the man-made gun and the battleship, from poetry to music, epitomizing Deleuze's words on the fluidity of imagination:

"It is imagination which crosses domains, orders and levels, knocking down the partitions coextensive with the world, guiding our bodies and inspiring our souls, grasping the unity of mind and nature; a larval consciousness which moves endlessly from science to dream and back again." (DR, 220)

### Experiences of the 'Fractured I': The Fundamentality of Violence

"Death is inscribed in the I and the self... death may well be inevitable, but every death is none the less accidental and violent, and always comes from without" (DR, 259).

In *Memories Look at Me*, Tranströmer recounts a childhood-event that may be read as a Deleuzian encounter— perhaps one of Tranströmer's earliest experiences of the 'fractured I'. As a young boy who loses his grip on his mother's hand in public and feels lost, the little Tranströmer finds nothing to hold on to, in the flood of unknown humans, in the dark. He mentions, "There were people around me but they were intent on their own business." Upon arriving at a busy intersection, he tells an adult "There's a lot of traffic here." Taking hold of his hand, the man walks him across, "but then, he let go of [him]." The sense of fragmentation accompanying the loss of grip from the mother's love is a timeless event, common to all sentient beings. The subsequent feeling of isolation presumably rendered a sense of violence to the sense of safety, the coherence of long attachment to the familial space, at once, annihilating that cocooned existence and yet creating/constructing the space for a new understanding of his social reality. The violence leading to one of the many virtual deaths, causes a rupture that pertains to his perception of the world outside home, thereby impacting his association with strangers. Some form of violence then seems quintessential to the event of coming-to-terms with the fractured self.

The following pointers are outlined in the Dialectics section by James Williams for usage in the Deleuzian frame of reference:

"The search for completeness in terms of reasons determined by conditions

The dice throw, or creative and destructive forgetting, that moves beyond what is already discovered or expressed"

In Tranströmer's narration of the event tantamount to a death, the search for completeness, reflected in the apparent longing for home, is inevitably reasoned by his state of

incompleteness following the separation from his mother. What is remarkable is the 'dice throw', the 'destructive forgetting' of the upsetting memory and yet its creative recollection, in the act of moving beyond the discovery of a certain death.

Undoing the binary is Deleuze's forte and Tranströmer's poetry abounds in multi-dimensional, surreal images that transcend the binary and echo multiple involvements. The poetic voice in Tranströmer is not an omniscient observer recollecting his emotions in tranquility. His is an individual experiencing centripetal as well as centrifugal exertions from multiple polarities, in the immanence of reality. But the involvement does not necessarily entail mere assumption of different categories, one after another. Rather, as Williams suggests, it means participation in all events to different degrees. For instance, in the poem "Portrait with Commentary", the awareness of the fractured I in regard to the nature of its divided self, to the inherent violence pertaining to its realization, leading to yet another virtual death is expressed in the lines:

"That which is I in him is at rest.  
It exists. He doesn't notice  
and therefore it lives, exists.  
What am I? Now and then long ago  
I came for a few seconds quite close  
to ME, to ME, to ME.  
But the moment I caught sight of ME  
I lost ME — there was only a hole  
through which I fell like Alice." (Bells and Tracks,  
1966)

This idea of the divided self resonates with Whitman stating: "There is that in me—I do not know what it is—but I know it is in me." (50) The 'I in him' becomes the 'it' that 'exists' and further becomes the 'me' in capital letters which is the object experiencing the actions of the subject 'I'— it is the '*moi*' upon which '*je*' acts, as though violating its peace of solitary existence, thereby effectuating the necessary condition of violence. The two are clearly not identical, but inseparable. That phrase 'I lost ME' reads like an affirmation of the Deleuzian 'becoming' of the 'fractured I'. The 'transcendent exercise' of the faculty of sensibility keeps the two faces of the self at a distance from each other, in order to experience immanence differently— one from the vantage point of the portrait in depiction, the other from that of the subject-speaker. The difference in their subjective experiences is demonstrated in the indifference of the man in the portrait and the sensitivity of the speaker identifying with him. The acts of *losing* 'ME' and the *falling* through a hole, which essentializes the claustrophobia inherent to the encounter, are at the same time reminiscent of the violence that is fundamental to the rupture in discussion. It appears that the 'fractured I' reflected in the anti-climactic realization is also experiencing a violence to its physical form, which is indispensable to the actualization of corporeal mixtures in the Chronos.

In "Balakirev's Dream", as described earlier, Tranströmer conjures up a surreal dream with a skillful conglomeration of heterogeneous elements. The poem may remind one of

Coleridge's "Kubla Khan" but instead of an Abyssinian maid with a dulcimer, it depicts

"...a curious instrument,  
Like a tuba, or a phonograph,  
or a part of some unknown machine.  
Stiff with fear and helpless he knew: it is the  
instrument  
that drives the man-of-war." (IV, Secrets on the  
Way, 1958)

Clearly, it is a reference to a gun, a material embodiment of violence that shakes Balakirev out of his zone of comfort. He is 'alone' inside the droshky which "rumbled over the cobblestones/ straight into the crow-cawing blackness." The vulnerability is heightened with his state of solitude in the hauntingly dark blackness, where only the cacophony of crows is heard. Even the path is not smooth. It is beset with 'cobblestones' rendering at least in part some virtual death to the subject. Aboard the battleship, "The crew gathered around/ "You won't die if you can play." The depiction of the apparent, conditional threat is too vivid to be mistaken. Balakirev is driven to the point of begging somewhat in vain, since the sailor he approaches only stares 'sadly like a blind man' — again deepening the sense of helplessness on the face of imminent danger. The violence is complete with an allusion to the Crucifixion, an image of sacrifice perhaps implying the inevitability of the sacrifices of soldiers in battles— which ironically earns much applause. So the 'drums beat' in the next line, wake Balakirev up but the choice of 'drums' over softer musical instruments in continuation with the war-dream presumably, connotes the violence that, even within a dream, is crucial for a pianist, a man of music to come to terms with the bitterness of war.

"The very principle of communication, even if this should be violence, seems to maintain the form of a common sense. However, it is nothing of the sort. There is indeed a serial connection between the faculties and an order in that series. But neither the order nor the series implies any collaboration with regard to the form of a supposed same object or to a subjective unity in the nature of an 'I think'. It is a forced and broken connection which traverses the fragments of a 'dissolved self as it does the borders of a fractured I.'" (DR, 259)

This idea holds as a reaffirmation of Johnson's definition of the metaphysical conceit, wherein violence plays an intrinsic role in its genesis, and heterogeneous ideas even though non-associable to each other, and semantically incoherent, yet a 'forced', 'broken connection' facilitates the 'demolition of certainties through thoughtful bewilderment'. As a resistance to the inclinations of permanence, a rearrangement of possible new paths is aimed at.

In the "Prison" series, the violence poised to the innocuous dreams of the juvenile inmates is sheathed in 'an enormous truck' that 'rumbles past at night' so that the dreams 'tremble.' The violence comes from without. The prison-inmates are subjected to this roughness. They may have committed some crime but their dreams are harmless. At the caesura of both these aspects lies the fault line of the fractured self. The inmates are neither permanently criminal, nor

permanently innocent. The binary of all-black or all-white is undone. They are in prison, but they play balls, collect mushrooms, feel fear, see dreams, drink milk.

An antithetical idea presented in the following lines in the poem "Portrait with Commentary" tells of the violence inflicted by 'misfortune' or possible betrayal which runs parallel to 'trust' placed upon somebody. Perhaps, he is a trustworthy man but the mistrust of trust leads to a fractured perception—

"Yet he always inspired trust. Which is why people would

hesitate to come near him

for fear of meeting some misfortune." (Bells and Tracks, 1966)

The next lines reveal the paradox of insecurity that is complementary or consequential to 'earning money like dew'. Reference to his father's money connotes hereditary riches adding to the sense of vulnerability. But a supposed robbery is apprehended from 'alien thoughts'. So, a clear distinction is being demarcated between an actual robbery and a virtual robbery. It is the mind itself creating its own sense of violence, actualizing it. But these thoughts are further distanced from the thinker through 'feeling'.

"His father earned money like dew.

But no one felt secure at home—

always a feeling that alien thoughts

broke into the house at night." (ibid.)

Throwing light on the idea of death as a harbinger of peace and liberation from the disturbing din of the world, in "Answers to Letters", he writes in anticipatory terms:

"One day when I am dead

and can at last concentrate. Or at least so far away from

here that I can find myself again." (II, The Wild Market Square, 1983)

For him to be able to answer the letters, he needs to 'concentrate', perhaps, because he feels lost like Alice. But he wants to find 'himself' again, which is an explicit assertion of the divided self. Additionally, it implies that 'death' is a necessary condition for reconciliation with himself, again, resounding the fundamentality of violence. The reconciliation itself would entail another fracture in the self which has been in flux for so long, thereby beginning the process of another *becoming*. He confirms this in the following lines from "The Four Temperaments":

"The road never comes to an end. The horizon rushes ahead.

The birds shake in the tree. The dust whirls around the

wheels.

All the rolling wheels that contradict death!" (I, Secrets on the Way, 1958)

## Conclusion:

Evidently, Tranströmer's poetry underscores the Deleuzian understanding of the 'self' as an "open collection of intensities" (DR, 258) It is seen how Tranströmer constructs the platform for the Deleuzian subject to explore its multiplicities in terms of what Christiaens describes as "state spaces for dynamical systems exhibiting non-linear behaviour", thereby postulating that Deleuze's philosophy adheres to the principles of quantum mechanics. The sensory experiences of the self in its encounters with the reality outside, and its subsequent translation into 'virtual reality' in the mind of the subject, account for Deleuze's idea of transcendental empiricism and constructivism. This is summarized in the rhizomatic structure of the self as pictured by Tranströmer in his poems, wherein the self is posited as a multidimensional construct, traversing infinitely in multiple directions to fulfill the perpetual state of Deleuzian *becoming*.

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