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I





Introduction and Beyond

Things aren't all so tangible and sayable as people would usually have us believe; most experiences are unsayable, they happen in a space that no word has ever entered, and more unsayable than all other things are works of art, those mysterious existences, whose life endures beside our own small, transitory life.

—Rainer Maria Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet*

How do we think of beyond, a dimension that surpasses our immediate perception or our intellectual comprehension? In some situations when a geographical place is beyond what we can see and we don't know how to get there, maps can help. Imagining helps when something is beyond what we have yet to experience. But beyond, not what is beyond, remains unconsidered. Are we talking about some *thing* when we speak of beyond? We will say more about beyond and our way of thinking of it and with it in a moment.

Two years ago we read an essay on love. It is by an abundantly confident philosopher who wanted to conceive love—to bring it to understandable life in *its* reality, mind you—all by himself. But conceive as he would, he never got beyond the gates of his self-absorbed conceptions. We assumed those gates were locked because in that essay love never made it into his presence. If love had knocked down those gates of his thought and come to him in its bare splendor, would it nonetheless have been beyond him and his leaden formulations? Would a border that marked a remarkable difference have separated them? And if love had come to him, filled him, fused with his reality, destroyed his silly conceptions, transformed him,

what then? Would love, that involuntary affective force, still have been beyond him? Him, all by himself? We found the article tedious, but consequent to it we understood better the kind of thinking that will not permit attunement with dimensions of beyond.

Beyond Philosophy began as we worked together on a course for the *Collegium Phaenomenologicum* entitled “Genealogical and Corporeal Temporalities.”¹ When we delivered our three-day course, we began with a practice of polyvocality: “There is something different happening in this space today,” we said. “A singular difference that is not one but two—two lips, hearts, minds. This is the first time a *Collegium* course has been done together: co-conceived, coauthored, copresented. Neither mine nor yours.”²

Two voices, two manners of conceptualization, two different individuals speak in this book. They blend into a fusion that does not fully belong to either author. The attunement that infuses our writing emerged from the exchanges between us. We’ve spent many a pleasant morning or afternoon talking about the themes and authors we here engage. Nancy’s philosophical lineages and interests influenced, informed, and infused Charles’s thoughts, phrasing, and style; while Charles’s lineages and interests influenced, informed, and infused Nancy’s thoughts, phrasing, and style. Each one of us has discussed and modified, contributed to, and enriched every idea, chapter, paragraph, movement, and sentence.³ In the conceiving and writing process, we often found that the ideas and the writing are in-between us, or, perhaps better phrased, the ideas and often the very movements of the written text emerged and at times mutated from our in-between as we thought and talked together.⁴ This means in part that this book you are reading is not the product of each of us having drafts of different chapters or sections of chapters and then assembling them into a more or less unified structure. Nor is it simply the result of our sharing our ideas with each other. The process is rather an infused one that issues in a writing that is different from the sum total of our contributions.

1. The *Collegium Phaenomenologicum*, founded in 1975, meets in Italy and is an international postdoctoral and graduate seminar designed to explore philosophers and topics in the broad area of continental philosophy.

2. The lectures were written, and copies were handed out to the *Collegium* participants. Although the text is likely still circulating, our lectures were not published.

3. There is one exception, chapter 8, “livingdying.” Charles wrote that one.

4. The term *in-between* will play a significant role in the book.

It is a writing that is undergone, not merely undertaken. As we worked in the process of this thinking and writing, attending to the subtle shifts in shade and tone as our ideas, thoughts, and experiences resonated together, something of its own emerged, something that neither of us could write on our own. We find this writing a fusion, an infusion of influences that constitutes an instance of writing that defines itself: something happening in-between in which we, together, find ourselves participant. It's not that the book wrote itself. There were times when we wished that it would! Rather, our interactions and the interplays of our thoughts and feelings formed a process in which something new emerged, a process in which we were intimately involved but did not control.

Beyond Philosophy thus began as we became responsive to polyphony. This responsiveness first happened in our writing as we experienced the multiple simultaneously occurring differences in our meanings, emphases, thoughts, and insights. As we attended to the resonance of these differences, we became attuned to the unsayables and to the silences that emerged with our words. This experience of resonance in the midst of differences happened at times without our intending it and surprised us.

Long before we began to write together, when we were in the early stages of becoming loving partners, we gave papers at a philosophy conference where we and two other philosophers were assigned to the same session. We each authored our respective paper well before our daily philosophical exchanges infused our work. Given our philosophical differences, people, including us, could have reasonably expected papers with vastly different orientations and agendas.⁵ We found, however, that although neither of us had the slightest inkling what the other would do in his or her paper, our works were so similar in agenda and guiding thoughts that after the session we shared an anxiety that people would think that one of us had cribbed from the other. That was our first experience when, in spite of our philosophical differences, each of our thinking extended into the other's with a remarkable and constructive overlap. It is an overlap that makes possible what we call an *extended* authorship. Hearing the resonances of

5. Charles works with an interdisciplinary emphasis primarily in the broad field of nineteenth- and twentieth-century continental philosophy. Nancy has done major work in feminist philosophy that crosses the academic divides of analytic/continental/pragmatist as well as being richly interdisciplinary.

the one in the other helped us attend together to the unsayables that each of us gestured to in our individual work—what Rilke referred to as “space that no word has ever entered.”

Beyond Philosophy thus began as we worked to give philosophical voice to what we experienced between us that happened beyond philosophy. As we became attuned to each other, we experienced each other in-between. Not between. Not between with Nancy’s feelings and thoughts there and Charles’s thoughts and feelings here and a space of difference between them, but in a happening of feelingthinking *in* the flow of influencing: interfusing thinking and feeling. The experience of in-between occurred initially in the passion of desire. We experienced each other not only as subjects and objects of desire but as fused, interlaced, at once subjects and objects, yet together beyond our subjectivities and objectivities—in-between, an imporing eventuation. These are happenings excessive to being a subject or object, happenings in which there is no distance of one and then the other. Giving voice to these happenings led us to our first experience of extended authorship, “An Infused Dialogue,” which in a revised version appears as chapter 7. When we engage in extended authorship, we write out of an encounter that happens in-between. The differences between us in their porosity interweave, and the infusions exceed the differences. The ideas we express in our writing are neither the one’s nor the other’s; they arise from the exchange. They interplay, and as they play we undergo them. We came to understand that we were experiencing fusions and influences *in* the borders of our identities.

The point of the processes we underwent and that we invite you to experience was not only the production of a written product. It was also to effect a shifting conceptualization and formation of ourselves as we brought ourselves and the book’s work together. The aim of giving voice to experiences “that happen in a space that no word has ever entered” is to catalyze a process of affecting, in which affect is neither ours nor yours but a toing and froing in-between. These are movements that attune us to beyond.

BEYOND

Beyond philosophy was not the focal theme of our first experience of extended authorship, “An Infused Dialogue,” or of our *Collegium*

course. But we became attuned to beyond as we found ourselves in the midst not only of the polyphony of our extended authorship but also of the polyphony of the thinkers we engaged in our course.⁶ In the course, we offered a reading attuned to the productive synchronicity and dissonance of the striking differences between—the borders among—all of our voices, differences that often strangely intensified and complemented one another. This attunement to beyond was heightened by each of our years-long concern with borders. These were borders defined by gender, race, class, cultures, differences with and without commonality. We were at times preoccupied with the fusions of borders and with, in Nancy's terms, the viscous porosity of borders that allows both stability for periods of time and the inflow and outflow of influences. Porosity seemed to characterize the borders of differences in the midst of the polyphony of our attunements. Questions of beyond began to emerge from this alertness to dynamic and living borders. These questions concerned intangible, unmeasurable beyond—beyond sense, for example, and beyond identity. In our engagements we became increasingly attuned to the reverberations of dimensions of happening beyond conceptualization.⁷ Our attunement was a happening that happened as we found ourselves called to become attentive to the movements, the new prospects, in the thought of Nietzsche, Foucault, and Anzaldúa. Dimensions of happening that we call beyond.

As we became more attuned to these movements, we focused more sharply on such questions as these: How might we speak of the unspeakable? Is there a philosophical art of speaking of the unspeakable? An art of disclosive indirectness? One that our experiences of in-between call for? Would such an art and language have a mandate to stay focused on the ways we live, on what is ordinary in lives, even though the art might be extraordinary in the discipline of philosophy and the language extraordinary in everyday discourse? Perhaps some aspects of ordinary discourse and of the discipline of philosophy obscure ordinary occurrences. Is that possible? Even likely?

6. Not only did the course bring us together, two singularly different authors, but it focused on five quite different thinkers—Friedrich Nietzsche, Michel Foucault, Gloria Anzaldúa, Judith Butler, and Lee Edelman.

7. We note the distinction between happening and what is happening or a happening.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Nietzsche's "beyond" sounded the clarion call. In his conception and appropriation of "beyond good and evil," we began to sense unsayable experiences, attunements to happenings in the borders of reason and reflective thought that are often silent or, if glimpsed, rendered nonsense. But we would not have heard so clearly Nietzsche's refrain had we not been in the midst of attending to Anzaldúa's "nepantla." This Nahuatl word names the indeterminate happening of differences coming together, an indefinite in-between out of which new happenings emerge.⁸ Anzaldúa crafts an attentiveness to nepantla that opens her to movements beyond habituated ways of thinking and living. In our movements with the question of beyond, we also found Foucault's account of truth and his experience of the legacy of "unreason" to embody a sense of beyond that is kin, in spite of important differences, to Nietzsche's beyond in the phrase "beyond good and evil." Here, the timbre of Foucault's homophony was as resonant as his polyphony.

As we intensified our emphasis on the importance of the word *beyond*, we realized that we needed to distinguish among its various meanings in specific contexts. We and our thinkers often use the term in its multiple meanings. We sometimes talk about things that are beyond in the sense of measurement—farther away spatially or temporally. Anzaldúa grew up, for example, in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, a region just beyond the Mexican border. Sometimes we, or our authors, talk of things that are outside the limits of a subject or activity. Anzaldúa, for another example, often uses Spanish to say things that go beyond what can be said in English. As we noted at the beginning of this introduction, the word *beyond*, in our particular focus, refers to dimensions of happenings that are beyond the limits of conceptualization and organized patterns of association and meaning. It names dimensions of happenings that are beyond schemas of value and judgment. This book is about those dimensions.⁹

In the interplay of Nietzsche, Foucault, and Anzaldúa—in their various ways of destabilizing unquestioned stabilities, in their unending critique of dualisms, in the unsayables nuanced in their texts, in their

8. For a discussion of the Nahuatl meanings of *nepantla*, see Maffie 2013.

9. We will develop the thought that beyond is in no sense a thing and that it lacks sense. Our intention throughout this book is to use language that does not subject dimensions of beyond to the illusion of being subjects or objects.

commitments to transformations, in their indirect disclosures of what cannot be said directly and their styles of presentation—we encountered dimensions of beyond that lack identity and happen as incalculable, non-literal, conflicting, in-fluencing, fusing, imporing processes, such as the dynamic processes of lineages. This beyond that we speak of in this book is not something we can capture in words. We cannot sufficiently define it for you here or even in the conclusion to this book. Our intention in this writing is to occasion a practice of attunement to unspeakable dimensions of experience. Such attunements emerge in part from the desire of those of us who, in the words of Foucault, “write in order to change [ourselves] and in order not to think the same thing as before” (2000, 240). Beyond, we will suggest, is a hitherto seldom noticed dimension of liberatory thought, a dimension that in part explains our choice of interlocutors.

Our aspiration in part I is to offer a reading of these three thinkers that reflects our engagement with the dimensions of beyond that resounds in their texts and also to attend to the processes that are beyond philosophy in their thought. We will neither strive for a comprehensive reading of our chosen authors nor engage secondary literature or debates over interpretations. We choose to stay within our selected texts to offer a reading that gestures in a direction that others might find productive and that might animate attunements beyond.

We begin with three different thinkers, three very different voices. We do not see our work as offering a comparative reading. Indeed, it is a non-judgmental reading. Each of our authors has their own singular experiences of beyond. Each of them has cultivated their own inimitable habits of attunement that, while likely changing each of them in profound and perhaps at times unsayable ways, transformed both of us in our experiencing of their unsayables. The subtle differences in tone and intonation and not so subtle differences in focus between them carried us beyond our normalized ways of thinking. As the differences between them, and between us, and between us and them resonated in our thinking, we experienced moments of liminality, unspeakable in-betweens. The new experiences engendered by such a reading opened up futures that did not exist before our study began—new thoughts, new values, new perspectives. We hope to be as successful as they in writing in such a way that not only changes us but serves as an occasion for creative transformations of our readers.

In addition to the term *beyond* and its various meanings, there are several additional terms central to our conception of beyond philosophy that will play significant roles in both parts of the book. Our goal in the remainder of this chapter is to provide an introduction to these terms.

IN-BETWEEN

The word *between* suggests a relationship of two or more individual entities in which there is a connection of differences. You might get between two friends who are beginning to push each other in their anger, or as a mediator you might find yourself between people attempting to hear and be heard. An open space might be between two buildings. We often find ourselves between a rock and a hard place, between the devil and the deep blue sea. *In-between*, in our usage, however, means an immediacy of contact when there is a blending of differences as well as the continuing presence of the differences. In-between is a continual happening, a reminder of the deep interconnectivity of things in the making (James 1958). We will consider in this context, for example, occurrences of human intimacy, the ways in which lineages blend and mutate, human life in-between the immediacy of environments. The term *in-between* will be particularly important when we speak of transitions, transformations, and the viscous porosity of borders.

As we speak of in-between, consider the word *chiasmic*, with an emphasis on its suggestion of a crisscross structure, like the Greek χ (*chi*). In that structure two irreducibly different lines cross each other to form a crossing, a chiasm. Such a formation requires the immediate, connected, and simultaneous happening of the differences. The differences, in the language we are using, are in-between and do not constitute a bifurcation or dualism. A chiasmic eventuation happens when, for example, a conceptual structure allows the manifestation of processes and events beyond the limits of conceptual and grammatical structures that happen with the structures.

Our emphasis in this book falls on the experience of in-between. Not on an occurrence, for example, of Martin Buber's I-Thou (1970) but experiences of connection in which differences remain differences and at the same time interfuse. Interfusion: the experienced in-between, a mutual

opening with the other. Some people call it “a moment,” as in, “You and she had a moment! I saw it happen.” In chapter 7 we will describe what some therapists call a therapeutic moment. As we think of it, the moment is neither active nor passive.¹⁰ We find occurrences of in-between as ordinary parts of everyday lives. People might be closed to such happenings, frightened by them, or incredulous regarding them. Our experience is that they do happen often in many circumstances to many people. Including us.

One kind of in-between can happen in relation to works of art and in relation to texts. Our preface says, in effect, that we experienced Brueghel the Elder’s painting as an occurrence of in-between. “The presented forest drew us in as it opened itself to us,” we said. We were Nancy and Charles as we know ourselves, *and* we were also *in a border* where the painting opened to us and we to it. In that meeting we were beyond ourselves. We were ourselves beyond ourselves. In-between. When we approach texts with the primary intent of listening to them, making ourselves available to them, feeling what it’s like to think and know in the work’s terms and in its sensibilities, we often experience them in-between. We do not always like what we experience. Each of us at times might want to back off, move away from the experience, and resist what we engaged and came to understand in fusion with it. Whether we resist or want to return to it, however, we can know the work on the basis of our intimate experience with it and respond to it in many different ways. We can be infused experientially with the work and able to some degree to speak of it from it, speak of it from the in-between happening.

We hope that readers of this book will find themselves in-between with it.

LINEAGES

Genealogical literature speaks of various lineages, such as: lineages of authoritative hierarchies, formations of institutions, identities, religious

10. As we will discuss explicitly in chapter 7, the middle voice, which is neither active nor passive, is a resource for thinking about in-between in which the focus is on the activity of the action, not on the doers or receivers of an action. We will often use this voice in our writing.

emotions, punishments, subjections, rejections of physical desire. The image of a line embedded in the word is unmistakable: *lineage* derives from the Latin *linea* and means linen string or thread. The Old English word *line* and the Old French *ligne* derive from the Latin word. Each of those words referred originally to a guideline, cord, or string and suggested a tool used by builders to make things level. The terms could also mean track, course, direction, or a procession of followers. *Lineage* can connote bloodlines, with the lines of begats, descent in a line from a common ancestor, tribe, species, or the ascending line of parentage. *Lineage* can have an attractive sense of straightness, neatness, purity, exactness. In the midst of the chaotic mess of the world's fusing, interconnecting, interbreeding things, one might hope to find uncomplicated clarity about certain origins by establishing a distinct line of descent from a common ancestor or an uncorrupted (we hesitate to say virginal) originary site. We do not, however, deploy that particular sense of *lineage* but instead agree with Foucault that "at the historical beginning of things is not the inviolable identity of their origin; it is the dissension of other things. It is disparity" (1977, 142).

Linea, linen string or thread. People have long used linen thread, not only to set a straight line or as a means of measuring, but to weave cloth and to connect the various parts of shoes, sails, and saddles.¹¹ It can be twisted, knotted, entwined with other threads. It can be fused with wax or polyester threads, for example, to make connections more durable, or it can be infused with dyes for various colors. Linen thread can be criss-crossed to form designs, shirts, clothes of many shapes and turns. It is a connector that invites many different influences, shapes, and interpenetrations. It can connect complex, diverse things together, as lineages do. But even when it measures, a line need not be straight to be a line. You need a "lesbian rule" should you wish to measure irregular curvings.¹² For when the thing is indefinite, the rule also is indefinite. It is not the straightness of the line that matters here but the twists, turns, and intertwining of many threads, as it were, their tensions, tears, and interlaced mesh.

11. Our thinking in this section was animated in part by the writings of Tim Ingold in his marvelous *The Life of Lines* (2015).

12. As Naomi Scheman reminds us, "the rule determines the measurement of the world" and will be "dictated by interests and values" (1993, 207).

A complex lineage might include such opposing differences that happen simultaneously as cruelty and love (as we will find in Nietzsche's work), oppressive power and drives toward liberation (Anzaldúa), and orders of disorder (Foucault).

When we use the word *lineage*, we will thus have in mind, not a straight line of descent, but interconnected, interpenetrating, and interfused groups of processes that include developments of normative practices, changes in hierarchies of authority, mutating values, and much else. Lineages also include all manner of powerful environmental influences and infusions such as climates, precipitation patterns, shifting ocean currents, and species migrations. They include the effects of wars, mediums of exchange, human migrations, new knowledge, linguistic mutations, institutional developments, governmental transformations, alliances, and whatever else flows or fights its way into the inheritances of a culture or society and thus into the physical, enfolded lives of environments and individual beings. Far from being like a chain, lineages are more like a dynamic weave of processes—like a dynamic area of simultaneously happening factors—that a genealogical investigation might well consider in their specificity and power of continuing influence.

GENEALOGY

Genealogies have to do with such a variety of things! With developments of values, distinctions, identities, hierarchies, dualisms, polarities, descents, the emergence and growth of practices, habits, authorities, and sensibilities. Genealogies such as those found in Hebrew Scriptures trace not only ancient family trees, the lineages of priests, prophets, and kings, but also the divine guidance that formed a chosen people to reveal and carry out God's will. Greek mythology is filled with genealogies of Goddesses, Gods, and Demigods. Genealogies in the contexts of Nietzsche's, Foucault's, and Anzaldúa's work have to do with formations and transformations of ways of life and the images and powers that guide them.¹³

13. As we will show in chapter 4, although Anzaldúa does not identify herself as a genealogist, she does give accounts of formations and transformations and the powers that move them in lineages that are active in various ways of life. In our terminology, her work constitutes one kind of genealogy and is informed by her genealogical sensibilities.

In some instances genealogies give accounts of the formations of such capacities as reason and conscience. Genealogies, as Foucault thought of them, find, “not the inviolable identity of . . . origins . . . [they find instead] the dissensions of other things” (1977, 142). They find conflict, friction, strife, discord, contention, and, in Foucault’s words, the “disparity” of multiply interrelated things that give rise to many beginnings. Attunement to conflict and the emergence of new beginnings is also a key component of Nietzsche’s and Anzaldúa’s thought.

In this book the genealogies we focus on will be especially alert to the ways that fusions (which we at times call *imporings*) and mutations characterize the lives of lineages as they bring to bear in people’s lives experiences and practices vastly different from their own. Vastly different, and yet constituent in our cultural genes—in our languages, social practices, religions, moralities, and even in our dreams. These genealogies can be interlaced with describable relations of power that accompany the dissensions and persist with the mutated lineages that infuse, stabilize, or destabilize institutions, identities, values, habits, senses of commonality, and social boundaries. We attend also to genealogies that make possible alternative knowledge, such as the knowledge generated by Nietzsche, Foucault, and Anzaldúa. They are alternative to established knowledges and structures of authority, and they often interrupt them, put them in question, and shake their foundations of certainty. These genealogies aim to create new values, new ways of using languages, new formations of authority, and new ways of thinking. Our chosen genealogies are not intended to be abstract; they are meant to affect lives and sensibilities. They are often motivated by and arise from experiences of domination and oppression. These genealogies emerge out of such things as clashes among different standards for normalcy, departures from regimens of prayer and meditation, or from dedicated forms of insubordination and disciplines of refusal. Such genealogies thus arise from dispute and defiance, passions and anxieties, fear and strong wills, cultivated inclinations toward critique and disagreement, and anger in the presence of perceived entrenched injustices or what is identified as corruption—corruption not only of individuals but of institutions, societies, or cultures. The genealogies we consider also arise from experiences of suppression, ostracism, and harmful pre-judgments concerning such things as gender, sexual practices, physical

appearance, unquestioned axioms of meanings and values, or other economies of inequality. Such passions, encounters, and experiences, when they create new ways of seeing and knowing and behaving, impact the sensibilities and systems of practices in which they arise.

The genealogies we consider not only impact the formations of authorities and sensibilities; they also arise *from* and bring to expression sensibilities, often sensibilities that are in processes of transformation or aspects of sensibilities that various structures of power and meaning have occluded or suppressed. The genealogies we emphasize aim to disclose hidden inclinations, assumptions, and evaluations in lineages of practice and ways of living, as well as to interrupt and recast the ways people recognize the world around them. Such genealogies can enact suppressed lineages and reveal and perform the undulations of broad-ranging sensibilities as axiomatic values begin to change perceptively in them and normal practices begin to erode. In these processes what has been unacceptable can move into the birthing of still-vague practices of acceptance or legitimacy, or what has been acceptable can begin to feel unsettled and vaguely disturbing. Genealogies, as we will see, can be attuned to the interconnections among lives and things, to their deep and shifting rhythms.

In both their performative expressions and their discursive content, genealogies can contribute to the slowly developing awareness of, for example, subjecting values of domination, habitual forms of recognition and identification, and institutional practices that attach to genders, sexual preferences, skin colors, and cultural practices. In their transformative contributions, these genealogies often help to create shifting attunements that increase social power for marginalized people. At their best, genealogies can incite change in the ways people think and feel and predispose them to expect that their most cherished beliefs and values are in processes of transformation. The genealogies we consider show that much of human experience occurs well beyond the sense people make of those experiences.

In addition to contributing to slow transformative processes in sensibilities, genealogies might come in times when an interconnection of those transformative, imporing processes culminates in sudden and striking change. Indeed, the inception of genealogy as we will engage it came at such a time. Such genealogies might be attuned to the movements, vibrations, tensions, rifts, and instabilities that, if not erupt, reach a turning

point, like that reached when the earth quakes and a new terrain emerges as an older terrain disappears. In such turning points, a genealogy might bring to expression the mostly pre-reflective, shifting passions, desires, and tacit knowledge in ways that join the diverging, heaving, and stressed forces breaking through cultural borders. Then accounts of the death of the traditionally conceived knowing subject, the death of god, or the questionability of axiomatic values strike a deep and involuntary chord of anxious, perhaps still resistant interest and affirmation. Or a genealogy of mental institutions works a revolution in the treatment and understanding of “the insane.” Or Latin American people begin to consciously feel discordant rhythms in their lineages as they find possibilities for different senses of identity. Or a genealogy of sexuality serves as a catalyst for those who have been persecuted and closeted for their queerness to find pride, solidarity, and a new opening for their social lives. As we will show, a puzzling element in the power of some genealogies has less to do with their correctness than with transformations of sensibilities.

SENSIBILITY

Dictionaries define the word *sensibility* as the *ability* to perceive, the *capacity* for emotion or feeling as distinguished from intellect and will; it happens as mental receptivity, ready discernment, awareness, and especially responsive feeling. Our particular use of the word gives priority to its emphasis on feelings and affect and on pre-reflective perceptivity as well as on sensibilities’ power to generate meanings and values. Sensibilities in this sense allow people—predispose them—to make sense of and be especially alert to some values, practices, and things while ignoring, rejecting, or finding senseless other values, practices, and things. While we distinguish sensibility from intellect and will, intellection and willing are not separated from it as people function in their lifeworlds. Sensibilities happen in-between affect and cognition, feeling and knowing, sensing and thinking. Sensibilities incorporate and generate many borders as they infuse ways of knowing, affective responses, habitual dispositions, bodily comportments, forms of desire. We note with emphasis that while the word *sensibility* names aspects of awareness and alertness, it also can name cultural and social capacities and abilities that exceed those of individuals

in their particular will and intellect. Sensibilities allow sense to be made. We use the term to name dynamic, cultural factors that are historical in their origins and that inform specific institutions, rituals, symbols, and what we will call for the moment *cultural atmospheres*. People can live in-between sensibilities and experience meanings, values, institutional inclinations, and social movements, and hence their own predispositions, happening simultaneously and in strikingly different ways.

We want to make clear that sensibilities can constitute highly complex, dynamic, and mutational types of pre-reflective agency in the beliefs, symbols, interrelations, organizations, and environments of groups of people. These types of agency are shared and are not the province, as it were, of autonomous individuals. For human awareness and identity, sensibilities function effectively like our ability to breathe, in the sense that they are already complexly and dynamically formed and actively in place when we find ourselves in them and begin to think, recognize, or evaluate. Their capacities and contents are dynamic aspects of the world we inhabit. They are effective in language, works of art, interconnections of institutions, and the multiplex of lineages and practices to which we belong. Sensibilities in this sense are largely pre-reflective and inherently relational. Our awareness arises *from* them. We might become reflectively aware of them to some extent *within* their affects. Sensibilities do not reduce to any particular awareness of them.

How such reflective awareness might emerge and develop will be one of our defining issues as we engage Nietzsche's, Foucault's, and Anzaldúa's works. By way of anticipation, we also note that sensibilities have aspects of different, often conflicting lineages. The predispositions they occasion might be simultaneously conflicting ones, such as feeling a strong dislike of a person because of their moral standards and yet feeling an inclination to affirm them at the same time. Or a person might deeply affirm the importance of freedom from discrimination for all people and nonetheless feel that some types of people are inferior. Sensibilities might be characterized as borderlands.¹⁴ They are not unified but are more like spaces of dynamic predispositions, shifting borders of differences. With that differential dynamism also comes the possibility for affirmation of sensibilities

14. *Borderland* is a term that Anzaldúa frequently uses in several different contexts.

quite different from our own and a greater likelihood for living, in Gloria Anzaldúa's words, in borderlands without the felt requirement for unifying agreement in our language, conduct, and thought. The porous borders of these differentiations constitute the openings, fissures, and excesses that can provide sites for transformations and give rise to differences other than those to which we are habituated.

ANONYMOUS AGENCY

We, Nancy and Charles, think of human agency as an event with multiple influences and determinations that are enacted as the individual acts intentionally; a self is an event that includes all manner of determining influences. The image of human subjectivity as an autonomous reality that is, at its core, free from all determinations is a powerful fiction in the modern Western philosophical tradition. The term *anonymous agency* in our usage does not refer to something like efficient causation or intentionally directed action. It names indifferent influences that enact themselves without intention and that can directly affect people, institutions, and things.

Consider the enactments of lineages, for example. Lineages are neither mental nor intentional, and yet they are enacted in the languages we speak, the foods we eat and the ways we eat them, the ways we connect with one another, and so forth. Nietzsche, Foucault, and Anzaldúa each work explicitly with lineages, the ways they function as anonymous agents, and the force of their many influences. Art will constitute other examples of anonymous agency. In this book's preface we noted a painting's anonymous agency as we were absorbed by it. We will see in chapter 7 the way Wassily Kandinsky describes the anonymous agency of paintings.

People are vulnerable to so many anonymous agencies, including those that arise from our natural and cultural environments. Indeed, sensibilities, as we understand them, function as an assembly of dynamic anonymous agencies in individuals' lifeworlds. We people are in our choices and intentional actions extended agents, as distinct from nucleus-like centers of free, intentional power. We live *in* our interrelations. We *are* interrelational, and significant parts of our interconnections are anonymous agencies.

As we wrote this book our intention was to inscribe in it our affirmation of the importance of anonymous agencies and hence of affectional vulnerabilities in our lives, and to affirm as well the implications they have for the ways we think and the ways we experience our environments. These are important steps for us in thinking and writing in the force of genealogical sensibilities.

GENEALOGICAL SENSIBILITY

In the context of this book, we use the term *genealogical sensibility* to name sensibilities that are alert to lineages of oppressive practices, to silenced or suppressed lineages, and to the tensions and fissures in them. Such lineages, for example, as those in particular types of authoritative knowledge, in some moralities and religions, in racial and gender classifications, or in class structures. *Genealogical sensibility* in this context has a distinct nuance of liberation and transformation, as in the affirmation of the freeing and transforming power that Anzaldúa found in the fissures in and among the multiple lineages active in her life. Individuals do not need to carry out genealogical studies to have genealogical sensibilities. They might or might not be familiar with Nietzsche's or Foucault's genealogies when they are inclined to reanimate suppressed lineages or to put in question practices and policies that carry out oppressive mind-sets. When people are familiar with those genealogies, whether or not they agree with what Nietzsche or Foucault specifically says, they, in their genealogical sensibility, will be inclined to affirm the genealogists' spirit and directions of thought. They will be attuned to power vectors, to the often ignored or obscured ways that relations of power function in social structures, systems of justice, and standards of normalcy. They will be alert to quests for purity. They will question unquestioned stabilities. "Who is served by these values?" is always an appropriate question for people who make sense of the world in genealogical sensibilities.

At the end of the last section we spoke of the force of genealogical sensibilities. Consider the experience of entering into the writing of Nietzsche, Foucault, or Anzaldúa, "entering" in the sense that you are guided by a desire to experience the writer's desire, undergo the living dimension of the writing, feel the feelings in what the writer writes. You want to

attune yourself to the writing in the writing as you read, and you want to hear what the writing says and means to communicate. That degree of subjection is similar to what a well-trained actor experiences when becoming—acting—a part, becoming so much the character in the play or film that the character can take over the actor's gestures, change the scripted words, and feel its own feelings. When people read Nietzsche, Foucault, or Anzaldúa that way and, to the extent possible, leave aside for the moment desires to argue or to remain in their own state of mind, they will experience a genealogical sensibility. It might be very different from the readers' own basis for making sense of the world. Some readers might want to have nothing further to do with *that* experience and its implications. Others might be affirmatively drawn to it and want to carry out the sensibility's strong intention to disrupt what appears as delusions of permanence in a world of becoming, to unsettle illusions of unfractured unities without lineages filled with dissension and mutation, or to interrupt fantasies of unchanging truths and values in always-changing cultures. The forces of genealogical sensibilities impact those who engage them. They—the sensibilities—collide with unquestioned assumptions and axioms. They push toward personal and social transformation. In our experience the push is toward taking decisive, liberatory action to loosen the soil of fixed beliefs and practices in ourselves and in what we will call normalizations, to expose relations of power that silence and marginalize certain kinds of people, and to open new prospects of exposure to what we cannot now perceive or think.

Some of the people we engage do genealogies, and each has distinct sensibilities expressed and accessible in their work. We engage with others whose work emerges from and expresses what we are naming genealogical sensibilities. Some of them keep the genealogies of others alive by stirring the ground those genealogies have rendered instable. We too are not writing a genealogy in this book. But we identify ourselves as writing in a genealogical sensibility.

PHILOSOPHY AS BORDER ART

Our intention is to connect with the works we engage in a way that brings to expression an attunement—a resonance—with dimensions of

occurrence that happen outside the grasp of philosophical thought and the boundaries of normative values. This intention means that while we want what we say about the texts to accord with those texts and want to interpret them responsibly, our primary goal is not a thorough account of the authors' works. Our expositions are means to express attunements to what the authors cannot convey directly or literally yet make evident indirectly. Attunements, for example, with lineages that are dynamic and forceful in people's lives and beyond people's grasp and control, like those that Nietzsche, Foucault, and Anzaldúa encounter. Attunements with silences, for another example, at thresholds of transformative processes, silences that are unspeakable.¹⁵ We want to be aware of happenings beyond exposition in our expositions so that we can stay focused on the regions that are beyond philosophy, normative values, and literal expression.

When people's awareness is attuned to dimensions in their experiences that happen beyond what responsible description or exposition can say, they are *in* borders of expression and experience that happen as an occurrence of in-between. We are referring to being *in* borders and not between them as between two houses or between two ideas. Being in borders is rich with possibilities for attunements and resonances with happenings, none of which survives objectification or literal expression. We, Charles and Nancy, are thinking in our experiences of being in borders as we, in our specific differences, experience attunements to happenings beyond the borders of comprehension or schematization in the writing of others or in our own compositions. To write of such happenings, to elicit attunements with what cannot be directly expressed, calls for an art of indirect disclosure—a border art, we call it. We intend our writing to constitute such a border art, to carry overtones, resonances, nuances, and shades of meaning that allow more to appear in the ways people live their everyday lives than they can say or ordinarily expect to say. We will see, for example, that lineages in their mutational dynamism require border art philosophy if philosophers are to invoke the dynamic happenings of lineages in their accounts of them.

15. Silences that are not anything in particular and that yet occur are indeed strange. Uncanny, we might say, as they slip our grasp.

We found the *ascesis*, the discipline, of being alert in the borders of our lives difficult at times and always enlivening. We experienced this kind of awareness as one of the privileges that came with the efforts of composition, something like a gifting that joined our personal experiences with our professional experiences and made the jointure of our thought interpersonal in, for us, a new kind of intimacy—a *poiesis* happening again and again as we worked together philosophically. The word *intimacy* gained enriched meaning for us. Intimacy with a painting? With philosophical cogitation? Intimacy with, of all things, Nietzsche? Yes, and with much more, as you will see in the course of this book. When we speak of philosophy as border art and of being in-between, this intimacy and the kind of vulnerability it brings with it are like the tain of a mirror that invisibly allows the reflection of something that is not a reflection at all.

A NOTE ON READING THIS BOOK

We have said that we intend to develop ways of speaking of the unspeakable, to find how to speak in attunement with dimensions of experience that happen beyond formations of representation and objectification, dimensions that happen beyond meaning and sense. As we think, we cultivate forms of expression in attunement with happening beyond forms. In the poet Mary Oliver's words, our concern is with "the edge and making forms out of the formlessness that is beyond the edge" (2016, 28). As we think of edges where meaning and reason cease, our emphasis falls on nuance, feeling, resonance, and release from expectations of transcendent meaning and reason. We are thinking of such edges as we write, and we are on them as we think.

Our attention to dimensions that happen beyond meaning is cultivated through our reading of the three thinkers—Nietzsche, Foucault, and Anzaldúa—whose work we find to be particularly salient to our efforts to cultivate habits of attunement to beyond, three thinkers whose attention to unsayables and silences deeply resonates in our own thought and in our own efforts to speak about attunements to silent happening outside the borders of reason. There are other thinkers, both past and present, whose work connects with questions of happening beyond philosophy. Our aim is not to provide an exhaustive list or to offer comparative or historical

studies of such thinkers. We hope, however, that our efforts in this book will catalyze others to attend to thinkers and artists who write and create in attunements with indeterminate beyond and in so doing to thicken the dialogue we begin here and further animate indirect disclosure of unsayable dimensions of experience.

In the chapters that follow we offer practices of attunement—both our own practices of attunement and those of our three thinkers—with unsayable dimensions of beyond. We will not compare our three thinkers or interconnect them directly, as we find that doing so mutes our attentiveness to beyond. Each writer has their own engagements with happening beyond philosophy. So readers do not need to read the chapters focused by Anzaldúa, Nietzsche, and Foucault in a particular order. One chapter does not presuppose the others. If readers have more familiarity with one of the authors, they could begin with that chapter before reading the others. The point is to get into each author's performative thought, its variations of tone and shades of meaningnonmeaning. The goal is to experience the ways the author's language and thought engender further, elaborating language and thought. The aim is not agreement or disagreement, critique or consent. We want to create opportunities for readers to find or intensify their own experiences and thought with the issues and questions engaged by us and the thinkers we address.

Each chapter in this book is oriented, not by notions of supernatural entities or processes or by transcendental a priori formations, but in the context of everyday living by experiences of happenings beyond conception and by experiences of liberation in circumstances generated by sensibilities. That is, circumstances formed by the influences of lineages, porous borders, oppressive or enlivening practices, life-enhancing or life-denying mores, insistent stabilities, the power of authoritative knowledge, experiences of certainty and uncertainty within systems of belief and commitment, processes of self-formation, experiences of loving, of dying.

We hope this book, attentive as it is to dimensions of experience that are beyond formations—beyond identities, values, and meanings—and to the liberatory power that attunements with beyond can occasion will engage readers who have a wide variety of convictions and leading interests that resonate with these happenings. We hope that readers will

experience their own edges where differences begin to meld and something else that is nothing else becomes wordlessly, formlessly apparent.

We note in conclusion that the book is divided into two parts. In part I we find that resonance and attunement with beyond are shaded in the thought of Anzaldúa, Foucault, and Nietzsche. In the complex depths of their resonance and attunement with beyond, literal clarity in their thought fades out. Nuance, metaphor, and performative indirection become indispensable as borders blur, become shadowy, disappear. Meaningful intentions lose their directive power in this aspect of their work. Reading them deeply is like living with them. This experience can be tantamount to moving into a penumbral area where shadows intensify in a crosshatch of receding light and growing dark until there is no thing. Formless nothing. It is like coming, not simply to an edge, but into an edge, being in an edge. Form and formlessness seem to blend, to fuse, like lightdark at a periphery when the verge of light is dimming out and darkness fuses with formlessness. *Beyond* names a silent formlessness that is apparent in formless darkness, in dimensions of occurrences with which Anzaldúa, Nietzsche, and Foucault, in their strikingly different ways, are exceptionally attuned.

We hope that the chapters in part I will provide openings for readers to attunements with beyond that are not within the authority or power of any formation but that can have transformative power for people who form their lives in affirmation of that attunement. Isn't it true that we can be incited to think when we experience not knowing, incited, not to fill in the blanks of ignorance, but to grapple with and learn from not knowing?

In part II we intend to write and think in attunement with beyond in the impact of our engagement with Foucault, Nietzsche, and Anzaldúa as we develop what we call border art philosophy. In these five chapters and the epilogue, we will put to work the words and concepts that we discuss in the introduction as we engage such socioenvironmental issues as anthropogenic climate change, infusions of racial exploitation and environmental exploitation in the lineages of slavery, and the impacts of the use of nitrates to increase food production. We will also speak of the normativity/antinormativity debate, extended agency, anonymous agencies, erotic desire without objectification, Wassily Kandinsky's experience of his paintings, and the immediacy and feeling of livingdying. Throughout

part II we engage questions of how to advance transformative, liberatory lifeways, of how to live viably and creatively in common with others, how to live with uncertainty and decisiveness *in* the liminality of thresholds. These questions give us occasions to trouble the ground—“to rattle the cages of our certainties,” we say—of normative assuredness in the context of our affirming the importance of normative values. Can people be committed in affirming the importance of their values and at the same time know that values and their meanings are formed in sensibilities that are infused with shifting, often incompatible lineages? Can they carry out their commitments, carry them out hyper-actively (we use Foucault’s term), without the illusion of fixed certainty or of the finality of justice? Can people stand the instability of where they stand? Stand the instability of intangible beyond in the midst of their ever-so-tangible lives?