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‘Languages are so like their boots’: Linguistic Impossibility in *Flush*

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Abstract:

Reading the 1933 biography *Flush* alongside Woolf’s translation theory and Braidotti’s nomadic ‘multilinguism’, this paper argues that Woolf’s modernist dislocation of English both informs and is informed by her relationship with non-English languages. Using the Deleuzian idea of the ‘impossible’ as a way of considering a world made up of multiple co-existing yet contradictory relations, I trace the presence of a ‘linguistic impossibility’ throughout Woolf’s oeuvre. As a writer, publisher and translator, Woolf articulates a mode of being in and relating to the world that is positively constituted through the multilingual, and which in turn often constitutes the monolingual as static, ineffective, and even impossible. From the contradictory etymologies of ‘Spaniel’ offered in *Flush*, to the process-orientated relationship with languages in Woolf’s non-fiction writing, the old idea of a closed, objective and monolithic language is inadequate for communicating the nomadic movements of modernist subjectivity. Linguistic impossibility becomes a way of figuring the affirmatory possibilities of difference across, between and within languages to reveal the fluidity and multiplicity of language itself.

Keywords: Woolf, *Flush*, biography, Deleuze, multilingualism, animality, Braidotti, impossibility, possible worlds, posthuman, translation

*The nomadic, polyglot writer is suspicious of mainstream communication;
the traffic jams of meaning waiting for admission at the city gates creates a
form of pollution that goes by the name of ‘common sense’.*

Rosi Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*

In Virginia Woolf’s first novel *The Voyage Out* (1915), Miss Allen repeatedly asserts her observation that ‘people are so like their boots’ because they remain united despite their differences.¹ The first two times she states this, she is misheard. The third time, she is heard but is not understood. The fourth time, Rachel interrupts her by saying ‘something inarticulate’.² Leaving because the misunderstanding seems

'unbearable', Rachel finds a French newspaper in a deserted corner of the hotel: 'Rachel sat down, as if to study the French newspaper, but a tear fell on the blurred French print, raising a soft blot.'³ Here, the English language is a conduit of miscommunication and failure, and it is an unread but recognizable French text that allows the affective meaning of the scene to be articulated. Furthermore, this affective articulation is materially marked as a sign on the paper mimicking a 'blot' of ink. This is the modernist dislocation of English, showing that the old idea of a closed, objective, and molar language is inadequate for communicating the fluid, interior, and molecular nature of modernist subjectivity which is materially constituted. In this way, an ethics of multilingualism arises which approaches languages in the same way as Miss Allen sees boots: 'all side by side, and all different, even to the way in which they lay together.'⁴ Thus begins an oeuvre in which there are multiple encounters with different languages.

Woolf's framing of linguistic difference is echoed in Braidotti's philosophy of language. In *Metamorphoses*, Braidotti writes that a dynamic understanding of 'multilingualism' is central to creative writing.⁵ This forms an ethics of multilingualism which 'is constitutive of a concept and practice of nomadism that breaks from mono-linguism as from other forms of monolithic linearity'.⁶ Tracing these linguistic correspondences between Woolf and Braidotti, in this article I argue that Woolf's process-oriented and exterior approach to the borders of the English language gestures towards what I term 'linguistic impossibility', the simultaneous yet divergent nature of linguistic difference. My conception of linguistic impossibility is mapped via Woolf's writing on translation, Rosi Braidotti's nomadic theory, and Gilles Deleuze's reading of impossibility. Furthermore, I show how this linguistic impossibility functions in Woolf's writing to interrogate institutions of knowledge and nation building, revealing how this process is enacted via Woolf's formal experimentations with the material tool *par excellence* of these institutions: the book. Woolf's playful 1933 biography of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's pet spaniel, *Flush*, provides a fitting locus of convergence along these lines.

The articles in this special issue reveal a multifaceted literary figure: Virginia Woolf the novelist, essayist, translator, publisher, compositor, bookbinder, and librarian. This professional undecidability is mirrored in the way she locates herself; Woolf argued that her self-styled position as an 'outsider' often allowed her the distance to think in a transnational context, even if she did not experience the geographical mobility of

other expatriate modernists.⁷ Similarly, her stylistic use of English and explorations of its multiple points of contact with different languages demonstrates a self-conscious recognition of its place as only one of many fluid ways of linguistically representing the world. This propensity for linguistic (re)invention – the dislocating of a single language in order to make it become multiple – forms a central part of modernist experimental practice. As Braidotti writes in *Nomadic Subjects*: 'what else did the great modernists like Virginia Woolf, Gertrude Stein or, my least favourite, James Joyce do but invent a new English dialect?'⁸

Taking Braidotti's example of modernist linguistic deterritorialization further, I argue that an ethics of multilingualism is present throughout Woolf's work as it is in Braidotti's. By this, I mean that Woolf's work articulates a mode of being in and relating to the world that is positively constituted through the multilingual, and which in turn often constitutes the monolingual as static, unproductive, and even impossible. This ethics of multilingualism, as continued in Braidotti's work, both informs and is informed by Woolf's modernist dislocation of English and her recognition of the explicitly material manifestations of language. Woolf deserves a place in the canon of modernist multilingualism, especially for her work as a translator and publisher of Russian. However, her collaborative translations with S. S. Koteliensky remain a neglected part of Woolf's oeuvre, although recently they have garnered renewed critical attention.⁹ These critics support my contention that Woolf's work as a writer is thus inextricably intertwined with her practice as a publisher and translator, as well as the networks she formed and negotiated through this work. This entanglement is revealed in the way her writing materially engages with multilingualism via the experimental use of book devices such as paratexts.

THE PROCESS OF LINGUISTIC IMPOSSIBILITY

Though *Flush* is at first sight a monolingual text, reading it alongside Woolf's publishing, translation, and non-fiction work reveals how languages are consistently presented as a figuration of difference throughout Woolf's oeuvre. Here, I invoke both Braidotti's 'multilinguism' and the 'postmonolingual mode of reading' developed by Yasemin Yildiz which is 'a mode of reading that is attentive to both multilingual practices and the monolingual paradigm'.¹⁰ Furthermore, and crucially, I argue that in Woolf's oeuvre this linguistic difference is presented not via a logic of *one-or-the-other* but via a logic of *all-at-*

once. Through bringing linguistic difference to the foreground, there is a dislocation of the (English-language) reader's own subject position due to the realization that the gaps between these differences remain vast and require an imaginative leap on the part of the reader: in Woolf, as in Braidotti's philosophy of difference, linguistic difference is always irreconcilable but also always generative.

Drawing on Deleuze's response to Leibniz's 'possible world' theory, I term this 'linguistic impossibility'.¹¹ For Deleuze, the impossible is a way of figuring the affirmatory possibilities of divergence, disjunction, and difference across a series, a way of considering a world made up of multiple co-existing yet contradictory relations. As Deleuze writes in *The Logic of Sense*, 'divergence is no longer a principle of exclusion, and disjunction no longer a means of separation. Impossibility is now a means of communication'.¹² Expanding upon this, Daniel Smith and John Protevi point towards the worldly immanence of this impossibility: 'in Deleuze, impossibilities and dissonances belong to one and the same world, the only world, our world.'¹³ Again, for Braidotti this is an ethical matter. As she recently argues, 'our capacity, our power even, to differ within ourselves, as well as between us' expresses 'a deep sense of belonging to a common world, the one world we have in common'.¹⁴ These dissonances are especially pertinent when it comes to reconfiguring the potential of literature. As Sean Bowden writes in his study of impossibility, 'if impossible worlds are affirmed as impossible, then persons, unable finally to resolve divergences, remain forever 'open' to further (re-)determinations'.¹⁵ Thus, my concept of linguistic impossibility is a way of figuring the affirmatory possibilities of divergence, disjunction, and difference across, between, and within languages to reveal the fluidity and multiplicity of language itself.

I trace this sense of linguistic impossibility throughout Woolf's writing on language and languages. In her 1925 essay 'On Not Knowing Greek', Greek is unknowable through its status as a classical language.¹⁶ In belonging to different historical epochs, Ancient Greek and modern English are unknowable to each other and are therefore impossible – it is impossible for them both to exist in the same world at the same time, and yet they do; and in doing so they open up a contradictory and socially situated space of disjunction and overlap which Woolf interrogates in her essay. In Woolf's later review essay 'On Not Knowing French', published in *The New Republic* in February 1929, this negotiation continues, this time surrounding a modern European language. Woolf's

theory of translation is informed by this uncertain status of worldliness through the impossibility of not knowing languages.¹⁷ In 'On Not Knowing French', Woolf proposes a theory of language in which attempting to cross over into regions of impossibility is precisely where moments of productivity emerge. She does this by continuing the dismantling of the hierarchy of knowing over not knowing which she began in 'On Not Knowing Greek'. Firstly, the position of the linguistic outsider becomes privileged through the productive possibilities of *not knowing*. Furthermore, the assumed meaning of linguistic 'knowing' is deconstructed. As Woolf writes in her later essay, 'to know language one must have forgotten it, and that is a stage one cannot reach without having absorbed words unconsciously as a child'.¹⁸ Here the very notion of knowing is troubled.¹⁹ As in her earlier essay, 'it is vain and foolish to talk of knowing [a language]'.²⁰ However, here unknowability is extended to all languages spoken by non-native speakers, as one can only know a language learned as a native speaker. In this apparent position of linguistic knowing that comes only with the mother tongue, a paradoxical position of *not knowing* emerges: this mother tongue must be 'forgotten'; it is 'absorbed [...] unconsciously'.²¹ Woolf continues by saying that 'in reading a language that is not one's own, consciousness is awake, and keeps us aware of the surface glitter of words' whereas the mind interacts with known-forgotten native words to 'roll around and shape them, a body rather different to their faces'.²² Woolf's theory of language here is attentive to the materiality of language—the glitter of the surface, the shape of the body, the impossibility of the two material realms in the two different processes of thought. This is what Braidotti terms the 'shimmering intensity' of Woolf's writing, an intensity which links the linguistic to the molecular, material, and co-constitutive.²³

Emily Dalgarno asserts that the materialist theory of language outlined by Woolf is informed by the position of being in-between the known-forgotten 'body' of the native language and the unknowable 'surface' of the new language, in this case French as Woolf read Proust bilingually, reading English and French editions in parallel:

If in fact reading a second language focuses the conscious aspect of a mind that faces outward, while subordinating the instinctive aspect of the mind that recognizes the body, reading a translation with enough knowledge of French to refer occasionally to the text of the *Recherche* would give the reader positioned between two languages a perspective on both body and language.²⁴

This Janus-figure of the mind grappling with reading two languages at once, one forgotten and the other unknown, is the experience of reading impossibly which gives a new 'perspective on both body and language'. Both Woolf and Dalgarno here seem to be sensitive to the material reality of language perceived via a postmonolingual mode of reading. This postmonolingual mode is precisely located in the spaces between languages, between known and unknown languages, a zone of indiscernibility which troubles the very categories of 'known' and 'unknown' in the first place. This is what Braidotti calls the nomadic mode, a 'multilinguism' which breaks from monolithic linearity:

Moving between languages, speaking several and mastering none, living in constant simultaneous translation, is a possible location for the nomadic sensibility which best expresses itself in creative writing. [...] There are no mother tongues, only linguistic sites from which one takes one's departure.²⁵

This has a clear kinship with Yildiz's conception of the postmonolingual condition. Thus, if we conceive of 'knowing' through the masculine rational humanist conception of knowledge—in Yildiz's reading of Braidotti, this is the empirical 'law of the father' in which the concept of the mother tongue or native language resides—then it is impossible to speak of *knowing* a language at all.²⁶ If we do not *know* a language, what verb should we replace it with? For Braidotti, the 'native language' may be reconfigured as a site from which we are meant to depart, and for Yildiz the postmonolingual condition means 'writing beyond the *concept* of the mother tongue' as a locus of ideological, symbolic, and molar power invoked via the mother's body.²⁷

The lines of connectivity between Woolf and Deleuze via Braidotti are pragmatically present. Woolf's mode of writing the impossible through her modernist aesthetics of representing 'Life' as it really is (that is, beyond traditional epistemological or representative modes of representation) becomes for Deleuze and Guattari the locus of a new kind of empiricism which takes into account the teeming and contradictory multiplicities of being-as-becoming.²⁸ The problem of how to grasp the world *as it is* is answered via the impossible: to 'saturate every atom' with the intimate contradicting realities of 'nonsense, fact, sordidity: but made transparent', as Woolf wrote in a November 1928 diary entry regarding her writing process for *The Waves*.²⁹ For Deleuze, this forms an alternative mode of empiricism which provides a way out of the rational humanist mode:

It is a world of exteriority, a world in which thought itself exists in a fundamental relationship with the Outside, a world in which terms are veritable atoms and relations veritable external passages; a world in which the conjunction "and" dethrones the interiority of the verb "is"; a harlequin world of multicolored patterns and non-totalizable fragments where communication takes place through external relations.³⁰

Here, Deleuze outlines an empiricism which foregrounds the impossible multiplicity of the contradictory series: the *and... and...* of multiple becoming rather than the static and limited *is* of being. Braidotti explicitly situates this 'fragile conjunctive *and*' within the realm of epistemology.³¹ Deleuze, Braidotti, and Woolf are united in the materiality of their metaphors: the 'surface glitter of words' are 'veritable atoms'.³² These atoms are saturated with the multiple intimate realities of the world.³³ It is this saturation which sensually glitters as we perceive the exteriority of the unknown becoming-known language; precepts crossing the indeterminate zone of linguistic impossibility to disrupt the primacy of the 'forgotten' language: the aforementioned 'harlequin world' of fragments, patterns, and relations.³⁴ I trace echoes of Woolf's Janus-figure of the mind grappling with reading two languages at once, one forgotten and the other unknown, in Deleuze's understanding of thought in relation to exteriority, an impossible relation joined by the conjunction *and*.

This linguistic impossibility is informed by Woolf's collaborative translation from Russian with S. S. Koteliansky. I follow Claire Davison's methodology of reading these translations 'as experiments of thinking between languages and cultural codes'.³⁵ This 'thinking between' is the nomadic mode of Braidotti; the practice of navigating the dynamic and fluid spaces and relations between and within languages which I argue is played out through Woolf's experiments of thinking between material and *textual* codes. The more material, mechanical, and industrial side of Woolf's relationship with books is found in her work as a publisher and compositor. It is significant that in its first six years, eight out of the twenty-seven Hogarth Press publications were translations from Russian; these translational aims were explicitly set out in a 1922 Hogarth Press publicity statement.³⁶ Woolf's approach to Russian literature, informed by her work as a translator and publisher and compositor, gestures towards an idea of linguistic impossibility. As she writes in 'On Not Knowing Greek':

The meaning is just on the far side of language. It is the meaning which in moments of astonishing excitement and stress we perceive in our minds without words; it

is the meaning that Dostoevsky (hampered as he was by prose and as we are by translation) leads us to by some astonishing run up the scale of emotions and points at but cannot indicate.³⁷

Here, meaning is an affective and bodily experience that exists on the outside of language, as the interstices between languages. For Woolf, the impossibility of understanding *a* language points at (literally, in this passage) the impossibility of knowing language at all; that is, of knowing *through* language. Instead, meaning manifests as a plane of difference *between*; this is linguistic impossibility.

In her 1919 essay 'Modern Novels', Woolf makes a comparison between the Russian and English traditions. She asserts the openness of possibilities in Russian literature, continuing to gesture in the vein of the modernist Russophile towards the universal depth of the Russian imagination in contrast to the comparably short-sighted British one: 'they are right perhaps; unquestionably they see further than we do and without our gross impediments of vision.'³⁸ And yet, there soon emerges an impossibility: 'but perhaps we [the British] see something that escapes them.'³⁹ What, then, should the reader do with her previous assertion of the superior reach of the Russian imagination? Woolf undoes all distinction in her conclusion, using impossibility to show the expansive possibilities of literature: 'But any deductions that we may draw from the comparison of one fiction with another are futile save as they flood us with a view of infinite possibilities, assure us that there is no bound to the horizon, and nothing forbidden but falsity and pretence.'⁴⁰ Thus, the impossible literary worlds collide, and the vitalistic joy is found in navigating the immanence of the world that emerges both through and always just beyond the pages.

Woolf repeatedly positions herself as an 'outsider' in her essay writing. She acknowledges her position both as an outsider within but also (due to her privileged social status) proximate to majoritarian institutions, while celebrating this as a position with the potential to generate heretofore unforeseen affects and experiences. As we note in the introduction to this special issue, Braidotti's writing continues this project of the 'outsider within' as a position of non-belonging and also of generative power. Indeed, for both thinkers, this positioning generates a critical distance from dominant ideas and truth-claims about language, culture, the nation, and history, thus revealing the immanent assemblages, molar hierarchies, and thereby excluded subjectivities generating such truth-claims. As Woolf writes in 'On Not Knowing Greek': 'it is vain and

foolish to talk of knowing Greek, since in our ignorance we should be at the bottom of any class of schoolboys.'⁴¹ As Angeliki Spiropoulou argues, here Woolf is self-consciously using her position as a woman to interrogate majoritarian ideas about the Greek language and what we claim to know about it.⁴² Woolf takes the claim about not knowing Greek one step further: she argues that Greek is not just unknowable to epistemological outsiders such as women, but even to those who claim to have authority of and over the language. She posits Greek as radically unknowable, and it is her position as an outsider which helps to illuminate this.

This position is evident elsewhere in Woolf's work, as in the unpublished satirical diary entry 'A Dialogue upon Mount Pentelicus', written in 1906 during or following a trip to Greece. The comedy relies on a failure of communication due to an impossibility of meanings: English tourists, finding themselves unable to converse with the local tour guides, declare themselves the 'rightful inheritors' of the language and the Greeks 'barbarians'.⁴³ Dalgarno traces the political implications of this irony in terms of institutions of knowledge production and Woolf's dual presence and absence within these institutions: 'The satire comments on denying women university by creating a narrator who doubles the subject position; that is she displays the unique power to read both the intelligible world of university men and the still visible world of ancient Greece.'⁴⁴ In my own framing of Woolf's philosophy of language, Woolf's position as a linguistic-institutional outsider thus helps in constructing her use of linguistic impossibility, and even enables her to read across these existing impossibilities. As Spiropoulou continues:

Significantly, in both cases, it is this provision of impossibility that allows her to go on about these alien literatures: to claim that only the ancient Greeks themselves knew Greek, paradoxically, releases 'the truth' of Greek from its consecutive appropriations and re-enlivens it for any present and culture that approaches it. In this sense, reading Greek becomes a way of knowing not Greek itself, but English.⁴⁵

Thus, it is through linguistic *impossibility*—the divergence and disjunction and difference of linguistic meaning, and the lack of access to it—that the *possibility* or, rather, multiple possibilities, of language are revealed. English itself becomes multiple; dehierarchized and impossible. This forms the affirmatory crux of Woolf's multilingualism.

CONFESSING OUR INADEQUACY: *FLUSH*

Flush is a literary biography accompanied by a paratext titled 'Authorities', located at the end of the book after the central narrative.⁴⁶ The title marks a final ironic gesture towards Woolf's attempt to undermine the authority of the biographer as a writer of History. 'Authorities' consists firstly of a straightforward and brief list of textual sources (or authorities) on the subject of *Flush*, such as the letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, should the reader wish to take their reading on the book's subject further. However, following this list are ten endnotes, which are sometimes published as 'Notes' separately to the 'Authorities' and sometimes as part of them, and which deviate from their expected scholarly convention. These notes and their readerly effects have been largely unexplored by critics. Craig Smith notes that some endnotes serve to clarify differences between the actual history of *Flush* and the literary leaps made within Woolf's 'biography'.⁴⁷ Pamela Caughie suggests that the endnote on Barrett's servant Wilson serves to strengthen the ways in which *Flush* resembles the writer's servant.⁴⁸ Jeanne Dubino points out that the endnotes signpost the *Zeitgeist* of the novel in questioning the dog's relation to British historical eras.⁴⁹ I argue that central to *Flush* is an approach to linguistic impossibility and that these paratexts are a further example of ontological impossibility made material in a text, in the simultaneous presentation of separate, internally different, yet coexistent linguistic locations in the same physically bounded space.

Some notes pick up on minor points in the text, which hold little or no clear historical interest, and attempt (often futilely) to get to the facts of the matter—a satirical nod to the biographer's attempt to make everything known. For example, in the description of *Flush*'s first impressions of Elizabeth Barrett's bedroom there is mention of a window-blind that 'was a painted fabric with a design of castles and gateways and groves of trees' (p. 21). The accompanying note interrogates the historical accuracy of this window-blind, citing a letter of Barrett's which makes mention of the castle. The narrator of the endnotes continues: 'Some hold that the castle, etc., was painted on a thin metallic substance; others that it was a muslin blind richly embroidered. There seems no certain way of settling the matter' (p. 158). This scholarly interrogation of a minor detail of Barrett's life leads to an impasse of uncertainty, despite the biographer's best efforts to maintain historical accuracy. The passage referenced is evidently not

rooted in objective historical empiricism – it is told from the perspective of a dog, and Flush's impressions of the bedroom are imaginative and literary: 'but everything was disguised. [...] Nothing in the room was itself, everything was something else' (p. 21). The amorphous nature of this passage makes the biographer-narrator's attempt to pin down the material reality of a small detail in the 'Authorities' seem not only futile but comically contrary to the tone and purpose of the passage it is referencing. The note pays close attention to the specific material of the blind, but leaves the sources of these specific possibilities vague and anonymous – 'some' authorities claim one thing and 'others' hold otherwise.

This epistemological indeterminacy mirrors the generic indeterminacy of the text itself. Like Woolf's better-known work *Orlando*, *Flush* is a piece of extended prose writing, but is neither a novel, an essay, nor a biography. Instead, it is a blend of fiction and nonfiction which occupies the generic borderlands. For example, the fifth impression of *Three Guineas*, published in 1968 by the Hogarth Press, includes a paratext which lists *Orlando* under 'Fiction' and *Flush* under 'Biography' (1968, ii).⁵⁰ Like *Orlando*, *Flush* is a piece of historical writing that is subtitled 'A Biography'. However, unlike *Orlando*, which can more easily be indexed under 'Virginia Woolf: Fictional Work', the people and events contained in *Flush* are, for the most part, historically real. The caveat is that the subject of the biography is unconventional. The text narrates the life of Flush, a cocker spaniel companion of the Victorian poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning. From this central premise, *Flush* undertakes multiple playful and experimental departures from the rules of literary biography.

The narration attempts to represent animal experience through a non-anthropocentric perspective, offering the reader, as Derek Ryan writes, 'conceptualizations of the material world where the immanent and intimate entanglements of human and non-human agencies are brought to the fore'.⁵¹ This transmutation of literary biography – that its central subject can be profoundly unknowable in the traditional sense – opens up the genre, revealing a converse space which allows for explorations of alternative configurations and possibilities. These possibilities are simultaneous and yet incompatible and mutually unknowable: they are impossibilities. The book does this self-reflexively, with the narrator at times adhering to biographical convention by acknowledging the historical sources used in *Flush*'s composition and at times undertaking a characteristically modernist divergence into the clearly imaginative, translating the necessarily extra-linguistic animal experience of the world

into literary language: 'Flush, tossing in an uneasy sleep, dreamt that they were couched together under ferns and leaves in a vast forest; then the leaves were parted and he woke' (pp. 99–100). Gestures towards a more abstract form of translation such as these foreground the idea of translation in a general sense, echoing Braidotti's assertion that writing itself is 'a process of constant translation'.⁵² Translation between species connects with other translational gestures I locate in Woolf's work – such as interlingual translation – by situating the reader *in-between* in the most practical, literal, and concrete way. Actual linguistic translation becomes a figuration of this more conceptual type of translation. This is what Braidotti calls the 'movable diversity' of the polyglot, thus forming a linguistic map on which to explore these other less linguistically tangible translations: nomadic movement-acts of transition, of intransitivity, and becoming.⁵³

Woolf refers to *Flush* as a 'joke' on at least two occasions: first in a letter to her friend Ethel Smyth in December 1932 and again in a letter to the American publisher Donald Brace in January 1933.⁵⁴ Ryan suggests that here Woolf is not being entirely honest. Rather, he proposes that she is being self-deprecating because she is apprehensive of the reactions of her correspondents to the book, and Ryan goes on to note that the book has unfairly 'often been written off as a relatively trivial escapade'.⁵⁵ However, the book is at least partly a joke, and that is not to trivialize it. As Caughie writes, 'to take *Flush* as a joke might not be to dismiss it but to keep from taking oneself too seriously as a leader or figure, to keep from taking a firm position'.⁵⁶ The book is indeterminate, contradictory, and ludic, and Woolf herself states this in a letter to Lady Colefax following *Flush*'s publication where the writer also reveals her dismay at the prevalent rather two-dimensional readings of her book: '[*Flush*] is all a matter of hints and shades, and practically no one has seen what I was after.'⁵⁷ These 'hints and shades' mark the generative and vitalistic politics of uncertainty in the book, an often-comical uncertainty that revolves around linguistic difference, the impossibility of the archive, and failures of communication. As a radically unknowable and non-linguistic subject, *Flush* becomes the singularity where these productive uncertainties, or impossibilities, collide.

In his 1916 essay 'On Language as Such and on the Language of Man', Walter Benjamin outlines a conception of language. He asserts that all expression of the contents of mental life should be classed as language, and verbal and written communication in the form of words is only one part of language.⁵⁸ Though this essay was

unpublished in Benjamin's lifetime, it articulates an increasing concern with new assessments of language which were characteristic of European modernist reconfigurations of previous understandings during the flux of modernity. As Vincent Sherry writes, after the outbreak of World War I 'language was being freed from those old ratios of measured and decorous sense, the rationalist standards being discredited in an exercise of increasingly evident falsehood'.⁵⁹ We can expand Sherry's framing of the context of the War to consider this wide destabilization of rationalism throughout the philosophical, artistic, and scientific forms of expression of the period, both in Europe and beyond. Benjamin writes that the unfavourable rationalistic idea of language, that 'man is communicating factual subject matter to other men' is 'the bourgeois conception of language'.⁶⁰ He continues: 'It holds that the means of communication is the word, its object factual, and its addressee a human being. The other conception of language, in contrast, knows no means, no object, and no addressee of communication'.⁶¹ This 'other conception of language' is that of creation, and in his 1923 essay 'The Task of the Translator' Benjamin makes a case for translation as an art form in itself; one that takes place as one language passes into another.

This new art form, rather than being a derivative means of communicating creative meaning to a reader, 'ultimately serves the purpose of expressing the central reciprocal relationship between languages'.⁶² Benjamin goes on to explain that this reciprocal relationship found in the discordances and echoes between different languages gestures towards a totalizing unity of linguistic difference: 'All suprahistorical kinship of languages rests in the intention underlying each language as a whole – an intention, however, which no single language can attain by itself but which is realized only by the totality of their intentions supplementing each other: pure language'.⁶³ Thus, this 'pure language' is achieved through linguistic difference. Translation, as a means of passing from one language to another and thus revealing their differences, is a creative means of expressing the possibilities of 'pure language'.

What, then, does this mean for the linguistic impossibility in *Flush*? In the following section I want to tease out the impossible implications of Benjamin's theory of pure language in line with Woolf's and Braidotti's framings of linguistic difference as molecular, material, and generative. As Sandra Ponzanese has noted, Benjamin's philosophy emerges in Braidotti's 'viral and vital notion of translation' as nomadic thought via Deleuze's concept of becoming-imperceptible.⁶⁴ For now, I turn to a more archaeological mode, tracing the strata of impossibility

in Deleuze's reading of Leibniz and Giorgio Agamben's reading of Benjamin's theory of history and language, before demonstrating how this linguistic impossibility is present in Woolf's canine biography. Benjamin's idea of pure language is a gesture towards a pre-Babelian Adamic language, as Giorgio Agamben writes in his essay 'Language and History in Benjamin'. Agamben begins by clearing up the apparent confusion between language and history present in Benjamin's work, through explaining why the two are inextricably linked:

Because man can only receive the names which proceed him in this process of handing down, access to the foundation of language is mediated and conditioned by history. Speaking man does not invent words, nor do they emit from him like an animal voice: they come down to him, as Varro says, *descending*, that is within a historical process of handing down.⁶⁵

Thus, this Benjaminian idea of Adamic language is rooted in linguistic history. As language exists through time, it becomes more saturated with difference; a kind of linguistic entropy.

The figure of Adam as a nexus for conceptualizing difference is present in Deleuze's writing on impossibility—in this instance, through Leibniz's possible world theory. In his correspondence with Arnauld (1686–87), Leibniz posits that the entirety of human history could hypothetically be deduced by returning to its perceived origin. This origin is rooted in an essential idea of a determinate Adam 'chosen from among an infinity of possible Adams'.⁶⁶ As Leibniz argues in his conceptualization of a modal metaphysics, in our world (that is, the best of all possible worlds created by God), each property of an individual existing substance is essential to it. Continuing to use the originary figure of Adam as an example of compossibility, he writes:

Therefore, we must not conceive of a vague Adam, that is, a person to whom certain attributes of Adam belong, when we are concerned with determining whether all human events follow from his assumption; rather, we must attribute to him a notion so complete that everything that can be attributed to him can be deduced from it.⁶⁷

While Leibniz proposes this figure in a theological sense first and foremost, in light of Benjamin's argument I want to frame it as a conceptual moment of historic-linguistic origin.

In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze reworks Leibniz's conception of Adam. Rather than the essential and determinate Adam who Leibniz argues emerged from possible Adams, Deleuze is precisely interested in the 'vague Adam' whom Leibniz disregards. This is the departure point for Deleuze in his theory of impossibility.⁶⁸ In Deleuze's analysis of

Leibniz the interesting and important element of Leibniz's assertion is not the apparent essentialism to which Leibniz gestures. Instead, it is his tantalizing mention of a 'vague Adam' who has the potential to exist impossibly between possible worlds. This relates back to Deleuze's multiple and convergent metaphysics—and Braidotti's ethics—of the conjunctive 'and' mentioned earlier: 'It is not the elements or the sets which define the multiplicity. What defines it is the AND, as something which has its place between the elements or between the sets. AND, AND, AND—stammering'.⁶⁹ For Deleuze, then, the example of the Adamic myth in Leibniz provides the conceptual personae for his conceptualization of impossibility. In *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze draws the conclusion that 'there is an objectively indeterminate Adam' occupying impossible worlds which thus 'become the variants of the same story'.⁷⁰ Going one step further than Deleuze, I posit that the same is true for the idea of Adamic language as of the mythological figure. The figure of Adam then becomes a conceptual persona for a cartography of linguistic impossibility. Uniting this model of impossibility with Benjamin's theory of linguistic difference, the impossible 'variants' become the different languages and the 'same story' becomes the Benjaminian pure language.

To return to Woolf, the matter of there being a possibility of an essential and determined origin—like Leibniz's theologically ordained Adam—is present from the opening sentence of *Flush*. The narrator begins by tracing the origin of Flush, and then by association the origin of the spaniels as a canine breed:

It is universally admitted that the family from which the subject of this memoir claims its descent is one of the greatest antiquity. [...] Ages passed; vegetation appeared; where there is vegetation the law of Nature has decreed there shall be rabbits; where there are rabbits, Providence has ordained there shall be dogs. There is nothing in this that calls for question or comment. (p. 1)

Here, certainty is assured where the subject of the book is concerned. However, the impossibilities—the figure of the 'vague Adam'—emerge when linguistic and interlingual difference are introduced to the mix. On the question of the linguistic origin of 'spaniel', the narrator continues:

But when we ask why the dog that caught the rabbit was called a Spaniel, then doubts and difficulties begin. Some historians say that when the Carthaginians landed in Spain the common soldiers shouted with one accord 'Span! Span!'—for rabbits darted from every scrub, from every bush. And Span in the Carthaginian tongue signifies rabbit. (p. 2)

The passage traces the translingual history of the name of the breed from an Adamic point of origin, 'ordained' by 'Providence'. However, Woolf continues to give variants to the same story regarding the transhistorical and multilingual origins of the word:

There many of us would be content to let the matter rest; but truth compels us to add that there is another school of thought which thinks differently. The word Hispania, these scholars say, has nothing whatsoever to do with the Carthaginian word span. Hispania derives from the Basque word *españa*, signifying an edge or boundary. [...] As for the third school of antiquaries which maintains that just as a lover calls his mistress monster or monkey, so the Spaniards called their favourite dogs crooked or cragged (the word *españa* can be made to take these meanings) because a spaniel is notoriously the opposite—that is too fanciful a conjecture to be seriously entertained. (p. 2)

Here, the variants exist across time, geographical space, and languages. They are linguistically impossible, presented as possible—'truth compels us'—yet mutually impossible at the same time. An added level of irony is present in the fact that one possible etymological possibility is that the word means border—'an edge or boundary'—the very thing to which these impossible etymologies refuse to adhere.

As a radically unknowable and non-linguistic subject, Flush the dog becomes the singularity where these productive uncertainties, or impossibilities, collide. This is the generative and vitalistic politics of uncertainty in the book, an often-comical uncertainty that revolves around linguistic difference, the impossibility of the archive, and productive failures of communication. Like much of Woolf's work, *Flush* may seem, on the surface, an assuredly monolingual work unconcerned with interlingual difference. However, like her earlier 'On Not Knowing' essays, *Flush* presents the reader with a consideration of multilingualism through the monolingual position of not knowing: using a sense of linguistic impossibility to break through the monolingual paradigm to expose the multiple and differentiated realities of the multilingual condition.

These linguistic impossibilities are organized via the materiality of the book and come to the fore in the book's paratexts. Like *Orlando*, the paratextuality of *Flush* is intimately tied to the generic conventions of biography: they purport to be empirical authorities. However, they are full of impossibilities. One example is the paratextual microhistory of Elizabeth Barrett's maid, Lily Wilson, of whom Woolf writes 'since she spoke almost as seldom as Flush, the outlines of her character are

little known' (p. 161). Immediately following this, Woolf maps out a long, detailed, and literary biography of Lily.

Similarly, the note to page 41 tells us that the author knows that 'Mr Kenyon mumbled slightly because he had lost two front teeth' (p. 158). The author knows this because a reported and censored letter from Mrs Mitford indicates it. However, all is not as it seems: 'There can be little doubt that Mr. — was Mr. Kenyon; the blank was necessitated by the peculiar delicacy of the Victorians with regard to teeth. But more important questions affecting English literature are involved. Miss Barrett has long been accused of a defective ear' (p. 159). Here, we have a character who may or may not be Mr Kenyon whose own words may or may not be distinguished due to their phonetic *similarities*: 'silence and ilence would really sound very like one another' (p. 159). We are told of the 'defective utterance' and 'amiable indistinctness' of Mr Kenyon's spoken language via one source (the censored letter), but the narrator of the notes suggests that it is uncertainty on the part of the listener—that is, Miss Barrett's uncertain hearing—rather than in the origin of the message. Uncertainty and the unknown are centred in the endnotes—which present precisely a paratextual space that is conventionally designed to provide the certainty and contingency of our possible world. However, in *Flush* the paratexts gesture towards worlds that both do and do not exist at the same time. Referring back to Woolf's letter to Lady Colefax, '[*Flush*] is all a matter of hints and shades, and practically no one has seen what I was after'.⁷¹ This impossibility is centred through the encounter with *Flush* as a radically unknowable subject: the impossibility of linguistic difference.

To conclude, it is clear that Virginia Woolf developed an ethics of multilingualism, despite not being known as a writer of multilingual literature. Woolf's ethics of multilingualism is continued in Braidotti's work, for whom 'The polyglot is a linguistic nomad. The polyglot is a specialist of the treacherous nature of language, of any language'.⁷² This ethics of multilingualism thus follows Yasemin Yildiz's call for 'a postmonolingual mode of reading' which is 'a mode of reading that is attentive to both multilingual practices and the monolingual paradigm'.⁷³ It is precisely through acknowledging linguistic uncertainty and difference—as developed in her essays—that Woolf outlines a theory of language, translation, and linguistic difference. Woolf's sensitivity to this linguistic impossibility is intimately tied to her self-styled mission to navigate strangeness and alienation, a position which showed to her how 'foreigners, to whom the tongue is strange, have us at a

disadvantage'.⁷⁴ This impossible position of 'being neither here nor there', as Braidotti writes, means that 'the polyglot is a variation on the theme of critical nomadic consciousness; being in between languages constitutes a vantage point in deconstructing identity'.⁷⁵

Delve into Woolf's work and one enters a vast cartography of linguistic impossibility. This is developed through her translational practice and outlined in the philosophy of translation presented in her non-fiction work. This practice is intensely attentive to materiality, as shown through Woolf's engagement with paratext forms in *Flush*. This engagement in turn was informed by her practice as a publisher, compositor, and editor. In *Flush*, material and linguistic impossibility point to contradicting yet co-existing interspecies worlds which refuse any attempt at an arborescent or linear origin. Linguistic impossibility is thus threaded throughout Woolf's oeuvre, and it is Woolf's multifaceted and process-oriented practice which allowed her to portray this sense of 'having seen Life in the living or the Living in the lived'.⁷⁶ Woolf navigated the interrelated roles of translator, novelist, essayist, biographer, compositor, and publisher, and all these practices informed each other. I locate the concept of linguistic impossibility through a Deleuzo-Braidottian reading of Woolf. This impossibility is intimately linked to Woolf's modernist aesthetics, her material-textual desire to 'saturate every atom' of language with the immanence of the material world and its contradictions, differences, relations, and multiplicities; 'nonsense, fact, sordidity; but made transparent'.⁷⁷

NOTES

1 Virginia Woolf, *The Voyage Out* (London: Hogarth Press 1929), p. 314.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 314.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 315.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 314. Rebecca L. Walkowitz writes about Woolf's use of languages in a similar way, arguing that in *Three Guineas* Woolf employs multilingualism 'to create, at once, the experience of translation [...] as well as the experience of singularity'. *Cosmopolitan Style: Modernism Beyond the Nation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), p. 46.

5 Rosi Braidotti, *Metamorphoses* (Cambridge: Polity, 2002), p. 94.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 94. Braidotti's thinking on the relation between translation, multilingualism and becoming is explored further in Sandra Ponzanesi's work on the subject. See Sandra Ponzanesi, 'Translating Selves: On Polyglot Cosmopolitanism', in *The Subject of Rosi Braidotti*, edited by Bolette Blaagaard and Iris van der Tuin (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), pp. 189–197.

- 7 See, for example, her idea of the 'Society of Outsiders' in *Three Guineas*. Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas* (London: Hogarth Press, 1968), p. 186.
- 8 Rosi Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory*, second edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), p. 44.
- 9 See Stuart N. Clarke, ed., *Translations from the Russian by Virginia Woolf and S. S. Kotliansky* (Fairhaven: Virginia Woolf Society of Great Britain, 2006); Emily Dalgarno, *Virginia Woolf and the Migrations of Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Rebecca Beasley, 'On Not Knowing Russian: The Translations of Virginia Woolf and S. S. Kotlianskii', *The Modern Language Review*, 108.1 (2013), 1–29; Claire Davison, *Translation as Collaboration: Virginia Woolf, Katherine Mansfield and S. S. Kotliansky* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014); Jean Mills, *Virginia Woolf, Jane Ellen Harrison, and the Spirit of Modernist Classicism* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 2014); Rebecca Beasley, *Russomania: Russian Culture and the Creation of British Modernism, 1881–1922* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).
- 10 Yasemin Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue: The Postmonolingual Condition* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012), p. 21.
- 11 In arriving at the idea of linguistic impossibility I am indebted to Tamara Radak's tracing of the literary impossibility of closure and hypertext in Flann O'Brien's work. Tamara Radak, "'Walking Forever on Falling Ground'": Closure, Hypertext and the Textures of Possibility in The Third Policeman', in *Flann O'Brien: Problems with Authority*, edited by Ruben Borg, Paul Fagan and John McCourt (Cork: Cork University Press, 2017), pp. 242–254.
- 12 Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, translated by Mark Lester and Charles Stivale, edited by Constantin V. Boundas (London: The Athlone Press, 1990), pp. 173–174.
- 13 Daniel Smith and John Protevi, 'Gilles Deleuze', in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Spring 2018 Edition, edited by Edward N. Zalta: <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2018/entries/deleuze/>> [accessed 2 May].
- 14 Rosi Braidotti, "'We" Are In This Together, But We Are Not One and the Same', *Bioethical Enquiry*, 17.4 (2020), 465–669 (p. 469; p. 468).
- 15 Sean Bowden, 'Deleuze's Neo-Leibnizianism, Events and the *Logic of Sense*'s "Static Ontological Genesis"', *Deleuze Studies*, 4.3 (2010), 301–328 (p. 319).
- 16 Virginia Woolf, 'On Not Knowing Greek', in *The Essays of Virginia Woolf, Volume IV: 1925–1928*, edited by Andrew McNeillie (London: Hogarth Press, 1994), pp. 38–53.
- 17 See Juliette Taylor-Batty, 'On not knowing languages: modernism, untranslatability and newness', in *Understanding Misunderstanding vol.1: Cross-Cultural Translation*, edited by Tamara Brzostowska-Tereszkiewicz, Magdalena Rembowska-Pluciennik and Beata Śniecikowska (Bern: Peter Lang, 2019), pp. 41–65.
- 18 Virginia Woolf, 'On Not Knowing French', in *The Essays of Virginia Woolf, Volume V: 1929–1932*, edited by Stuart N. Clarke (London: Hogarth Press, 2009), pp. 3–9 (p. 3).
- 19 The relationship between 'known' and 'forgotten' (or consciously manipulated and unconsciously mastered) aspects of language are central to much linguistic theory from Saussure onwards. Indeed, in Braidotti's early framing of the conceptual persona of the nomadic polyglot, she acknowledges her poststructuralist inheritance via Foucault: 'Maybe I just see myself as structurally displaced in between

- different languages and find in poststructuralist thought an adequate conceptual representation of a state I experience intimately as my own way of being'. Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, p. 12.
- 20 *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- 21 *Ibid.*
- 22 *Ibid.*
- 23 Rosi Braidotti, *Posthuman Feminism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2022), p. 179.
- 24 Dalgarno, *Virginia Woolf and the Migrations of Language*, p. 111.
- 25 Braidotti, *Metamorphoses*, pp. 94–95.
- 26 Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue*, p. 11.
- 27 *Ibid.*, p. 14.
- 28 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchill (London: Verso, 1994), p. 172. Here I want to clarify the difference between empiricism and materialism in the works of Deleuze and Guattari, and Braidotti. Materialism is the positioning of matter as the metaphysical foundation of being and subjectivity. Empiricism is the epistemological mode of knowing the world through experience of it. This empiricism can indeed be one grounded in the material: the proximate, relational and immanent processes of becoming.
- 29 Virginia Woolf, *The Diary of Virginia Woolf, Volume III: 1925–1930*, edited by Anne Olivier Bell and Andrew McNeillie (London: Hogarth Press, 1981), pp. 209–210.
- 30 Gilles Deleuze, 'Hume', in *Pure Immanence: Essays on a Life*, translated by Anne Boyman (New York: Zone Books, 2001), pp. 35–52 (p. 38).
- 31 Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, p. 225.
- 32 Woolf, 'On Not Knowing French', p. 3; Deleuze, 'Hume', p. 38.
- 33 *The Diary of Virginia Woolf, Volume III*, p. 209.
- 34 Deleuze, 'Hume', p. 38.
- 35 Davison, *Translation as Collaboration*, p. 7.
- 36 Laura Marcus, 'The European Dimensions of the Hogarth Press', in *The Reception of Virginia Woolf in Europe*, edited by Mary Ann Caws and Nicola Luckhurst (London: Bloomsbury, 2008), pp. 328–356 (p. 348).
- 37 Woolf, 'On Not Knowing Greek', p. 45.
- 38 Virginia Woolf, 'Modern Novels', in *The Essays of Virginia Woolf, Volume III: 1919–1924*, edited by Andrew McNeillie (London: Hogarth Press, 1988), pp. 30–37 (p. 36).
- 39 *Ibid.*, p. 36.
- 40 *Ibid.*, p. 36.
- 41 Woolf, 'On Not Knowing Greek', p. 38.
- 42 Angeliki Spiropoulou, "'On Not Knowing English": Woolfian Encounters With The Other', *Études britanniques contemporaines*, 48 (2015) <<http://doi.org/10.4000/ebc.2217>>.
- 43 Virginia Woolf, 'A Dialogue upon Mount Pentelicus', edited by S. P. Rosenbaum, *Times Literary Supplement*, 11 September 1987, p. 979.
- 44 Emily Dalgarno, *Virginia Woolf and the Visible World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 50.
- 45 Spiropoulou, "'On Not Knowing English"'.

- 46 Virginia Woolf, *Flush: A Biography* (London: Vintage, 2002), p. 155. Subsequent references to this work will be given in the main body of the article.
- 47 Craig Smith, 'Across the Widest Gulf: Nonhuman Subjectivity in Virginia Woolf's *Flush*', *Twentieth Century Literature*, 48.3 (2002), 348–61 (p. 356).
- 48 Pamela L. Caughie, 'Flush and the Literary Canon: Oh Where Oh Where Has That Little Dog Gone?', *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, 10.1 (1991), 47–66 (p. 60).
- 49 Jeanne Dubino, 'Evolution, History, and Flush, or The Origin of Spaniels', in *Virginia Woolf and the Natural World: Selected Papers of the Twentieth Annual International Conference on Virginia Woolf*, edited by Kristin Czarnecki and Carrie Rohman (Clemson, NC: Clemson University Digital Press, 2011), pp. 143–51 (p. 147).
- 50 Woolf, *Three Guineas*, p. ii.
- 51 Derek Ryan, *Virginia Woolf and the Materiality of Theory: Sex, Animal, Life* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), p. 4.
- 52 Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, p. 45.
- 53 *Ibid.*, p. 41.
- 54 Virginia Woolf, *The Letters of Virginia Woolf, Volume V: 1932–1935*, edited by Nigel Nicolson and Joanne Trautmann (London: Chatto and Windus, 1982), p. 140; p. 155.
- 55 Ryan, *Virginia Woolf and the Materiality of Theory*, p. 97.
- 56 Pamela Caughie, *Virginia Woolf and Postmodernism: Literature in Quest and Question of Itself* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1991), p. 154.
- 57 Woolf, *The Letters of Virginia Woolf, Volume V*, p. 236.
- 58 Walter Benjamin, 'On Language as Such and on the Language of Man', in *Selected Writings, vol. I: 1913–1926*, edited and translated by Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), pp. 62–74 (p. 62).
- 59 Vincent Sherry, *The Great War and the Language of Modernism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 65.
- 60 Walter Benjamin, 'On Language as Such and on the Language of Man', p. 65.
- 61 *Ibid.*, p. 65.
- 62 Walter Benjamin, 'The Task of the Translator', in *Illuminations*, translated by Harry Zohn, edited by Hannah Arendt (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1968), pp. 69–82 (p. 71).
- 63 *Ibid.*, p. 73.
- 64 Ponzanesi, 'Translating Selves: On Polyglot Cosmopolitanism'.
- 65 Giorgio Agamben, 'Language and History in Benjamin', translated by Karen Pinkus, *Differentia*, 2 (1988), 169–183 (p. 171).
- 66 Gottfried Leibniz, 'From the Letters to Arnauld (1686–87)', in *Philosophical Essays*, edited and translated by Roger Ariew and Daniel Garber (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1989), pp. 69–90 (p. 72).
- 67 *Ibid.*, p. 73.
- 68 Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, pp. 113–114.
- 69 Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues II*, translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), p. 37.
- 70 Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, p. 114.
- 71 Woolf, *The Letters of Virginia Woolf, Volume V*, p. 236.
- 72 Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, p. 8.
- 73 Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue*, p. 21.

- 74 Virginia Woolf, 'On Being Ill', in *The Essays of Virginia Woolf, Volume V: 1929–1932*, edited by Stuart N. Clarke (London: Hogarth Press, 2009), pp. 195–208 (p. 202).
- 75 Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, p. 12.
- 76 Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p. 172.
- 77 *The Diary of Virginia Woolf, Volume III*, pp. 209–210.