

## The surexpression of wander lines

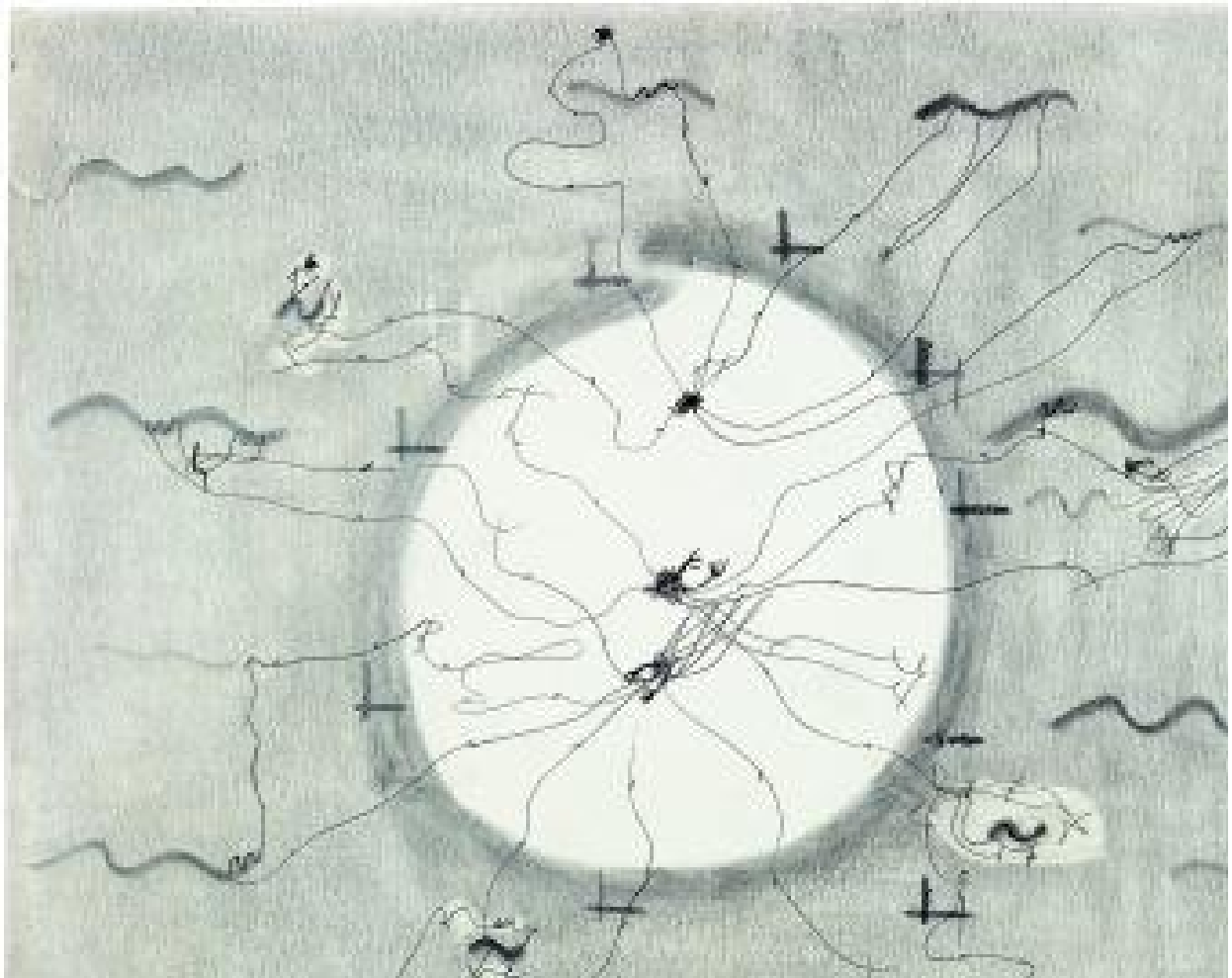
June 2013

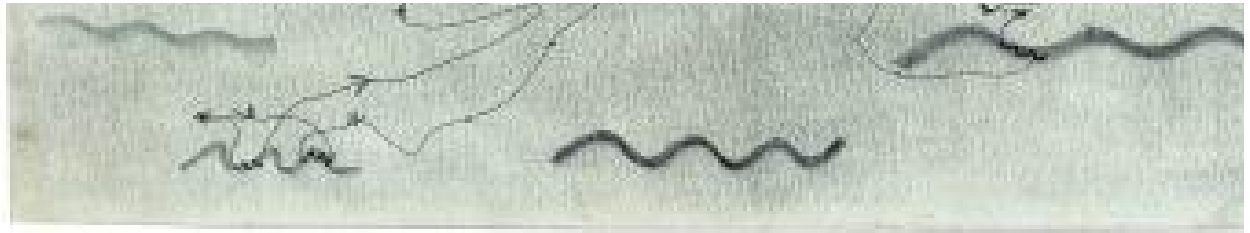
The study of the wanderings of children with autism carried out by Fernand Deligny the course of a decade opens up thinking about the determinants of travel, our own mobility identity and the invisible at play in our relationship to space and to it is mobility as an ontological expression that we are called upon to conceive.

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I must begin by saying a few words about the life of Fernand Deligny (1913-1996) before plunging into the testing ground up. The author of *Vagabonds efficaces* (among other works) devoted his life to children kept outside of our language – initially in institutions, and later as part of the support “network” he set up in the heart of the Cevennes. Educator, therapist, artist, mentor, communist...while labels are reluctant to stick to Deligny, we nonetheless cite some of his different “roles” them off. Indeed, finding the words to define a man who was compelled to spend his entire life blazing new trails beyond language is a difficult feat. This is where he lived. This is where we intend to find him today – on the trails he left behind we so please.

For a number of years, the works of Fernand Deligny fell into relative obscurity due to numerous works going out of print exhibitions continued to expose certain works and films from his “network.” Such was the case for the inaugural exhibition Villeneuve d’Ascq in 2010, entitled *Habiter poétiquement* (living poetically), which devoted an entire room to the present *lignes d’erre* (and the projection of the film *Ce gamin, là* . In 2007, Editions Arachnée ( <http://www.editions-arachneer.fr/>) began remedying this situation by publishing a 1845- page collection entitled *Fer* which assembles a large number of texts, analyses and documents. Two more exciting books have been added this year *d’erres*, *Traces du réseau de Fernand Deligny, 1969 – 1979* ( *Maps and Wander Lines* ) and *Journal de Janmari* .





### *Connecting through the mapping of movement*

Our focus here is based on the surprising production of the drawn maps and "routes" used by the monitors of the Deligny. Do we label these documents really matter? In her introduction, Sandra Alvarez de Toledo says "[d]espite their visual appeal, they resist the label of 'works of art' – brut or conceptual." [1]

(//C:/Users/Guillaume/Documents/SNCF/TEXTES/TEXTE%20DELIGNY/Deligny%20Final%20ENG%2011%20dec%202013) not certain that Dubuffet, on the other hand, would have been so reluctant to liken them a form of art brut. These wander common man" [2]

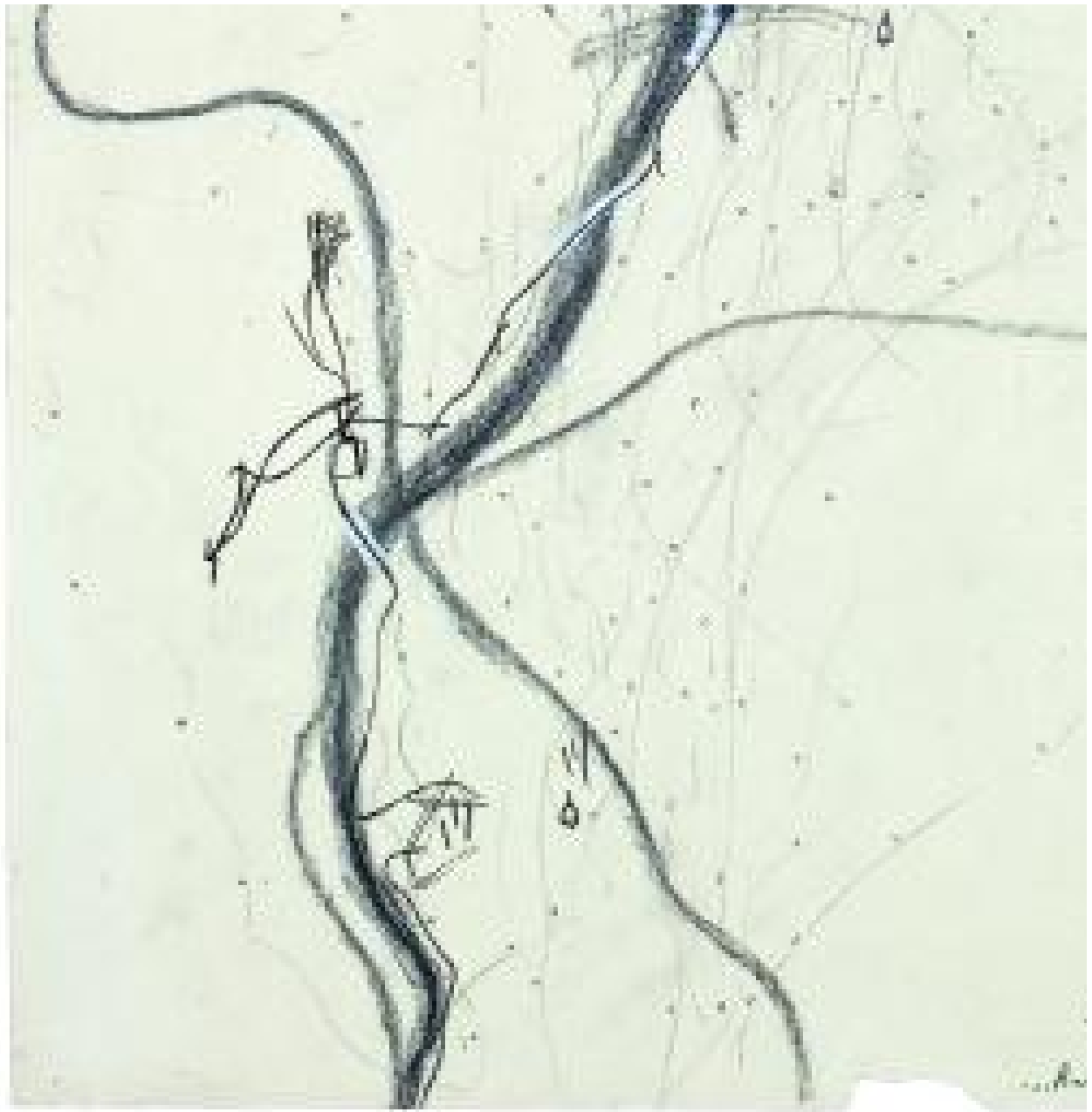
(//C:/Users/Guillaume/Documents/SNCF/TEXTES/TEXTE%20DELIGNY/Deligny%20Final%20ENG%2011%20dec%202013) seem the perfect illustration of Nicolas Bourriaud's definition of art: "Art is an activity that consists of producing relations using signs, shapes, gestures and objects." [3]

(//C:/Users/Guillaume/Documents/SNCF/TEXTES/TEXTE%20DELIGNY/Deligny%20Final%20ENG%2011%20dec%202013) From both an esthetic point of view and their ability to "render visible" (in the words of Paul Klee [4]

(//C:/Users/Guillaume/Documents/SNCF/TEXTES/TEXTE%20DELIGNY/Deligny%20Final%20ENG%2011%20dec%202013) create emotions and thoughts, to show what others do not see, their place in The History of Art seems obvious, and like inclusion in the *Cartes et figures de la terre* exhibition at the Centre Pompidou in 1980 and the *Habiter poétiquement* ex 2010.

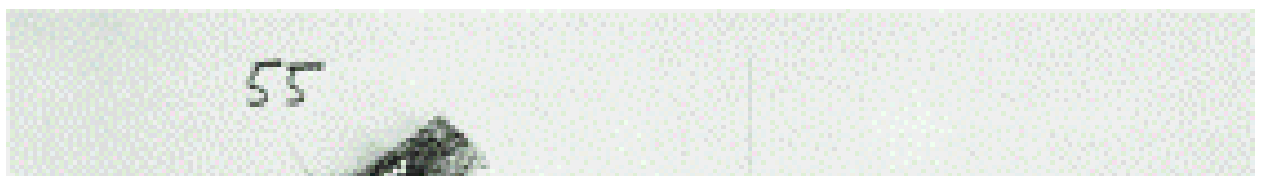
These wander lines were largely drawn over a decade, starting in the mid-60s up and until the mid-70s. Jacques Lin, a "close presence) and fellow traveler who worked with the children, one day expressed his frustration at seeing the latter against rocks and his chagrin at not being able to connect with them through language. Ferdinand Deligny advised him to initiate an approach not through language - which these children did not have - but through their patterns of movement

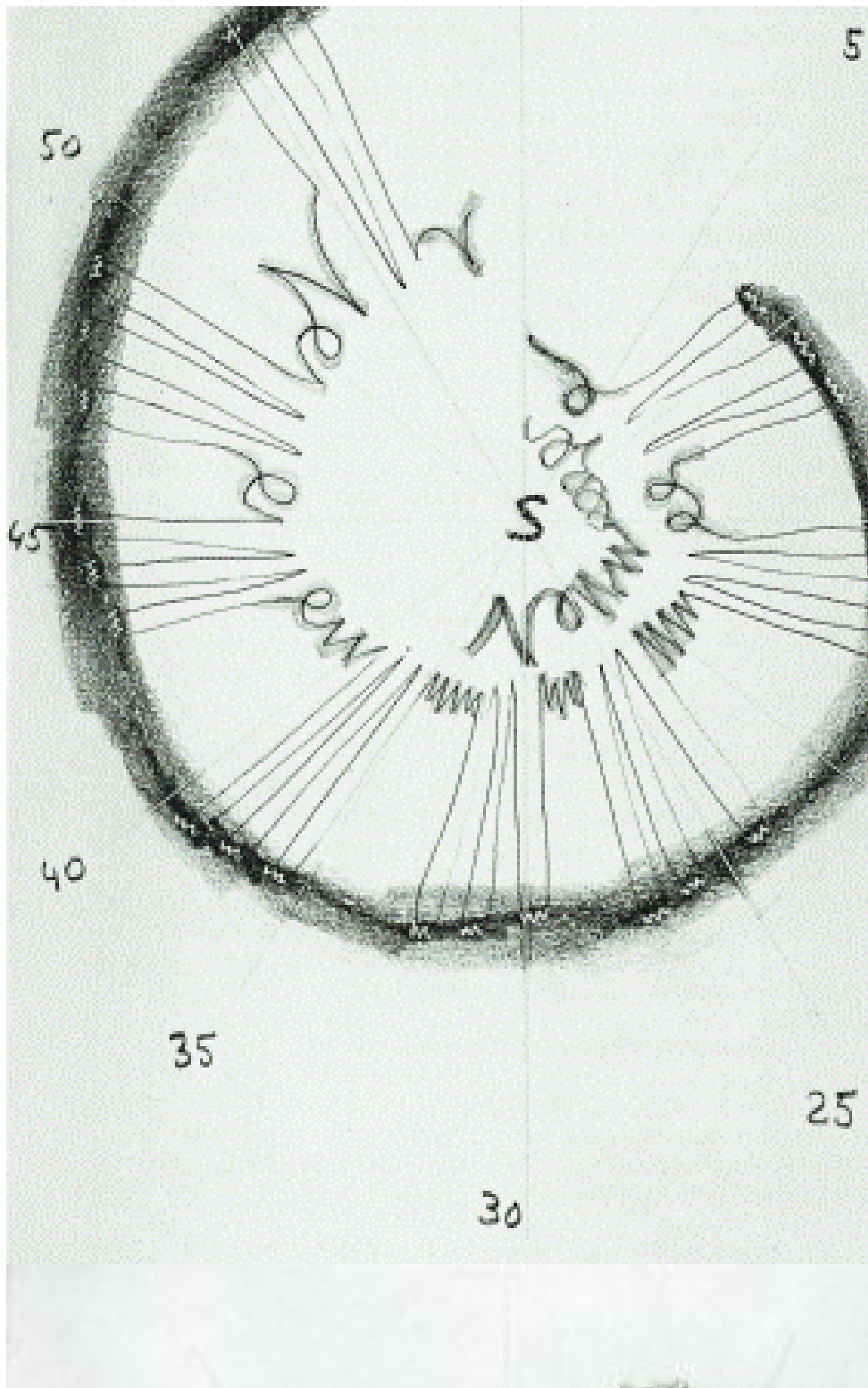


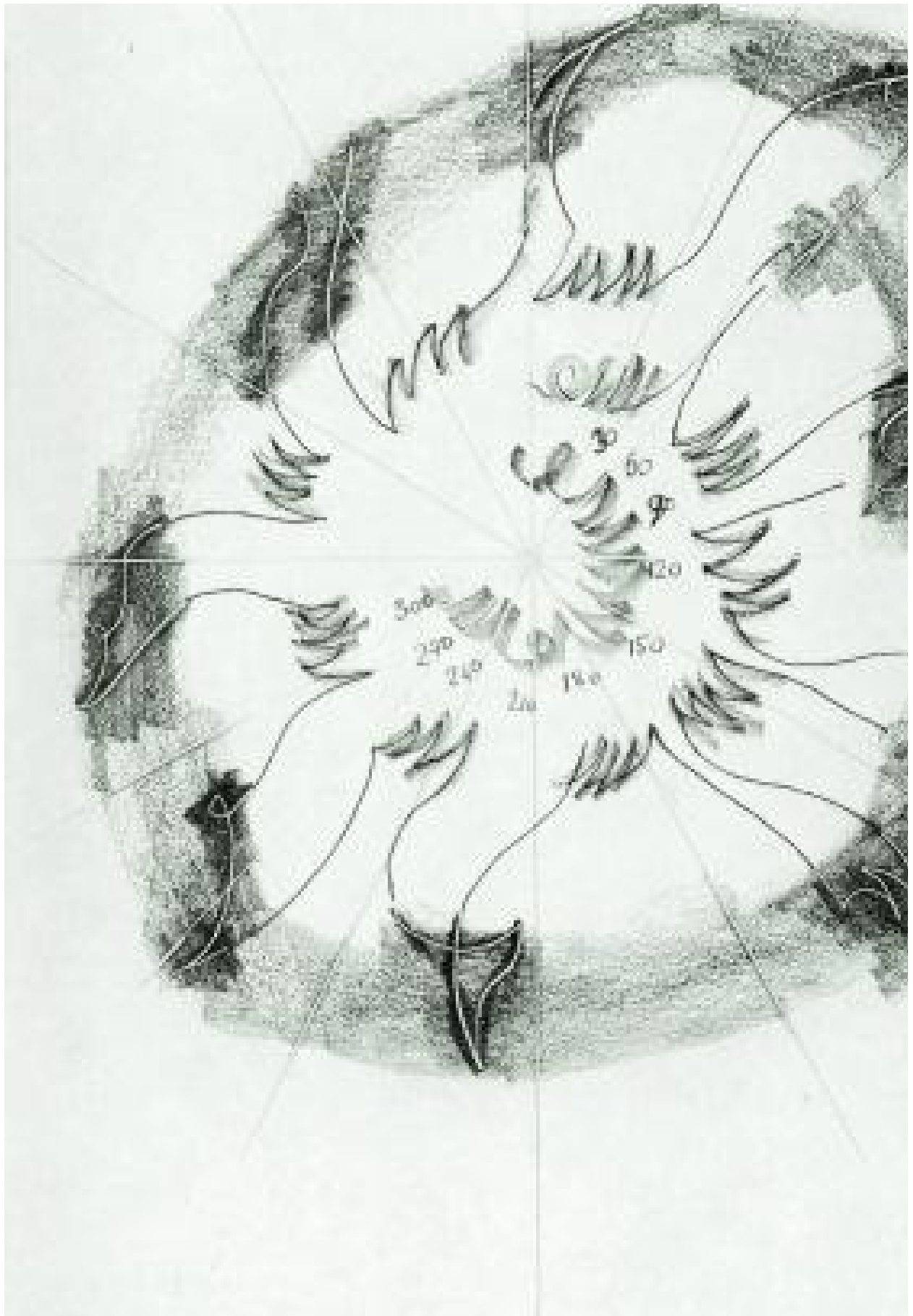


*Deligny proposes to stop "looking with words," as we constantly do with respect to our "kind," waiting for them at the cr interpretations and our linguistic intentions, to instead "follow them with lines," to follow their trails, discover where the in(visibly) not ours...Hence this surprising undertaking of building a unique country (the exact opposite of a utopia) in v slow dance, it becomes a question of superimposing without ever confusing these two territories, these two worlds of p words, theirs made of existence, and whose maps - the plotting of wander lines - are testimony. Not to bring them whe (to educate them or heal them) but rather to go to where they are in order to seek a shared experience, in the full sense c (///C:/Users/Guillaume/Documents/SNCF/TEXTES/TEXTE%20DELIGNY/Deligny%20Final%20ENG%2011%20dec%202013*

The expression of existence is manifested through wanderings and the plotting of these wanderings. And so the intens background maps (topographies of the areas of residence called "aires de séjour") and the layers to superimpose on the children's wander lines) began, and was subsequently carried out by each *présence proche*. Regular meetings gave rise allowed Deligny to share his thoughts.







Wander: the word came to me. It says a bit about everything, like all words. It ranges 'a way of moving forward, of walking to 'the acquired speed of a ship whose motor has been cut,' and also the 'tracks of an animal.' A very rich word, as we can see from the dictionary, the sea and animals and likewise has other echoes: 'to wander: to deviate from the truth; to go from one side to the other on an adventure.' Jean-Jacques Rousseau says 'to travel for travel's sake is to wander, to be a vagabond.' It is also 'to occur fleetingly on various objects with a smile' [6]

*Movement as lines : a revelation*

Wander. Deligny needed a term with broad meaning, with an echo of *séjour*, or sojourn. The movement takes place around *séjour*, with its landmarks linked to everyday activities, its rituals repeated day after day. Sometimes a more fundamental result of a 'transhumance'(gathering, on foot, at another of the network's *aire de séjour*, often in the company of a hiker) enables the expression of new behaviors as regards movement.

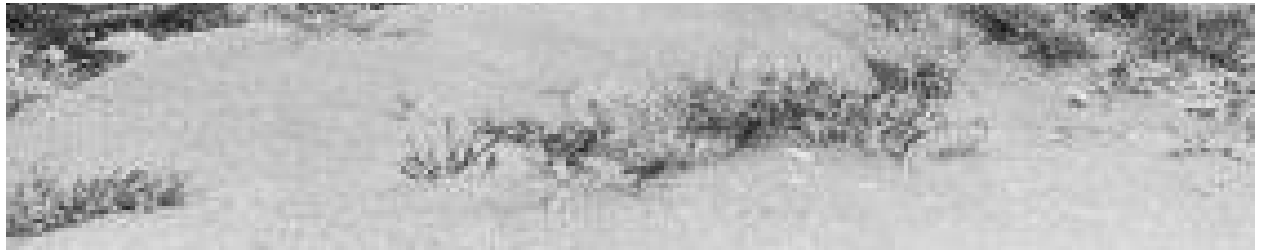
*"Twenty miles that day, from the old place to the new one, through the weathered waves of the Hercynian chain...The children [and are] puzzled by this journey today that does not end at or return to the typical place."*[7]

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*... now we just have to see what comes out in this completely new place, to give rise to new initiatives again...This is what we call for N. The capital [N] doesn't mean "North." It is Nous [Us], but not us in person: it isn't a guy, or a woman for that matter [this] N. As there is a geography of the body, there will be an identifiable geography of the human space."*[8]

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The series of drawings bear witness to the "thousand and one paths taken and retaken" [9]  
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this "identifiable geography of human space." The trajectories of the adults combine with those of the children. The "int  
adults' movements seems clear: getting water, wood, etc. A purpose that is immediately accessible and understandable  
with their lines, while those of the children are meandering and spin around.

*" That child*

*spins around NOTHING*

*on nothing*

*desperately*

*lost*

*so was he looking for it, this self*

*that he was seeking?" [10]*

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What is contained in this "NOTHING" that nonetheless dictates movement? We mustn't exclude the nothingness. Delign  
did not stop there. Language stumbles once more. Via these tracks, we follow trails within a space of non-language. On  
beginning. The movement expressed. It expresses for expression's sake. The journey foreseen as a mode of communic  
hematic.

*"...communication, in addition to establishing relationships, is also what we communicate, the medium and the messa  
passage from one place to another; the door and road are communication; to no longer be able to distinguish end and  
communication is the road, then it is journeys; if it is voice, it's language...Which means that meanderings of action are  
speech." [11]*

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An eternal return to the question of language via these wanderings. This is not to say that these children want to comm  
Deligny, but that their movement communicates. Wander lines explore the link between Action (walking and the gestur  
and speech – existential speech reminiscent of that of the poet, founding speech, the speech examined by Heidegger  
*there in the world ( Dasein ).*

*Language is not a free tool; quite the contrary, it is this coming into view (Ereignis) that itself has the ultimate power of  
being." [12]*

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In his own words, Deligny writes:

*"Drawing [wander lines] is a trace of being, if we understand that this 'being there' is not that; it is being and not the be  
represents nothing." [13]*

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*What governs individuals' mobility?*

The markings on the maps challenge our sense of movement and our rational approach, as though there were some ki the swervings of these children which clashes with the purposeful prevalence of movement in modern societies. Are movement based on economic efficiency: saving time/not wasting it/maximizing it – as we manage money? The law applied to mobility. Movement for movement's sake is rare, even in the sphere of vacations and leisure, where performance management still often come into play.

But can we speak confidently of freedom when talking about wander lines and their meanderings? Maybe. Unless it's n we say that these children simply move according to who they are, based on an intimate relationship (intimacy - *sui ge* to each person) with space? Their wanderings reflect a relationship – a relationship with this invisible that Deligny doe case, is it possible? or necessary?). Some suggest the effects of emotions, or the influence of energies (Deligny notes ho attracted to water. Janmari even discovered hidden springs). Let us keep in mind this image of the diviner. It is interesti relate what Deligny said about Australian Aboriginal painting in his essay "L'Arachnéen" to the drawings that Janmari, c made in his journal.

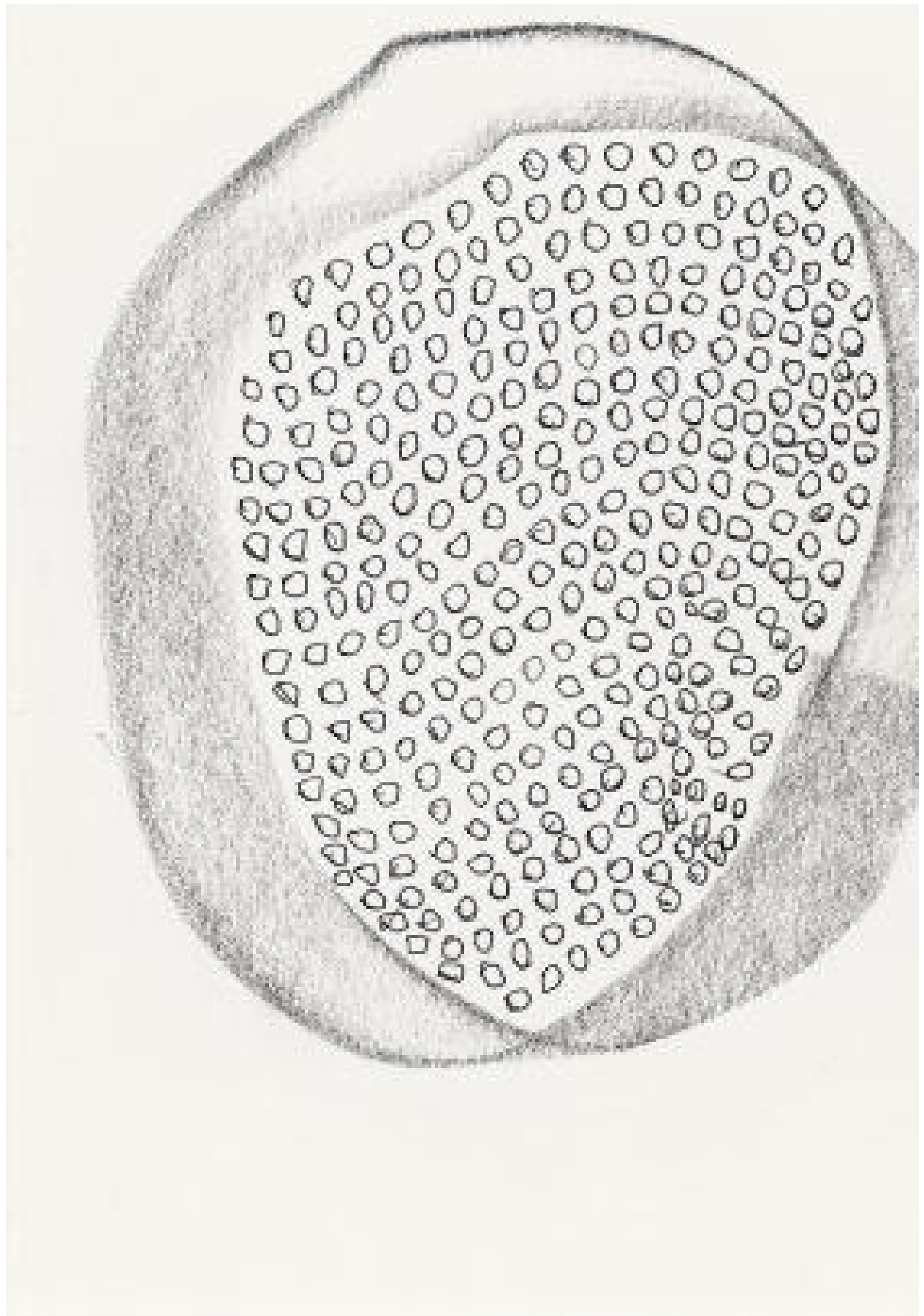


[on the gestures of Aboriginal painters]: "... with a movement of the hand that reiterates the journeys, that go back and forth, must go; this hand is not his own: it is a hand he uses like he uses the little stick that has been chewed at one end as a human that is at work. [14]

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We may extrapolate on a simple identity of form, but the small circles Janmari amasses page after page bear a striking resemblance to water holes depicted by Aboriginal artists, who are also enthusiasts of pattern repetition. Remember that Aboriginal painting is a topographical representation—that of the mythical Dream Time. The drawing of places - in lines and points - all show the traces of ancestors who modeled the continent's land, and who continue to dictate its organization via the artists connected with it.





Should we see evidence of the ability to divine in this relationship with water? This would mean adding to the drawings maps, in addition to visible representations of the environment, all in relief.

*"The world in which we live is a living world, where each thing and each creature evolves in an infinite, uninterrupted*  
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In any case, that would be one way of trying to get a little closer to these movements that, indeed, defy language, the late confined either to substance or abstraction, which hardly accounts for the full depth of the reality. We especially sense it where several wander lines intersect. Deligny calls these points "intersections."

"Of intersections one could say that it is the cause of what escapes us that escapes us. For example, the attraction to wandering autistic children. Similarly, the fact that they stop and rock at a fork in the road is a common fact of wander lines. The text simply means the fact that there is something that attracts a number of wander lines. [16]

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Something that attracts. The parallel with the image of the diviner, whose movement is dictated by the presence of water springs, is astounding. Is it intuition of an invisible of this kind that Deligny's argument points to? Or should we instead see a much more abstract reality, or as a purely psychological phenomenon that eludes us?

Drawing that lets us see... the person who does it – draws - still needs to be prepared to willingly see something more than him. [17]

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What we can say is that wander lines reveal something above and beyond the gaze. The patterns of movement are an experience that is in no way mystical; on the contrary, it's a beyond grounded in reality (under the first layer of reality) that we speak. It expresses something beyond words, beyond the gaze. Journeying thus expresses beyond the senses.

Once again, the analysis joins the ontology. Could Deligny's approach be compared to that of Nietzsche, who relied on the impossible to make philosophy using words (thus followed the composition of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*)? For Deligny, it is true for both language and action. "Modes of journeying" would be a useful term for approaching a new philosophy.

*by dint of drawing*

*wander lines*

*from each child there*

*we get to see a little of that which does not concern us*

*I mean that our blind regard of speech*

*has trouble seeing*

*us*

*it pushed him like a body*

*drawn in gray*

*almost as black as the water*

*by dint of being there no doubt*

*and going and coming [18]*

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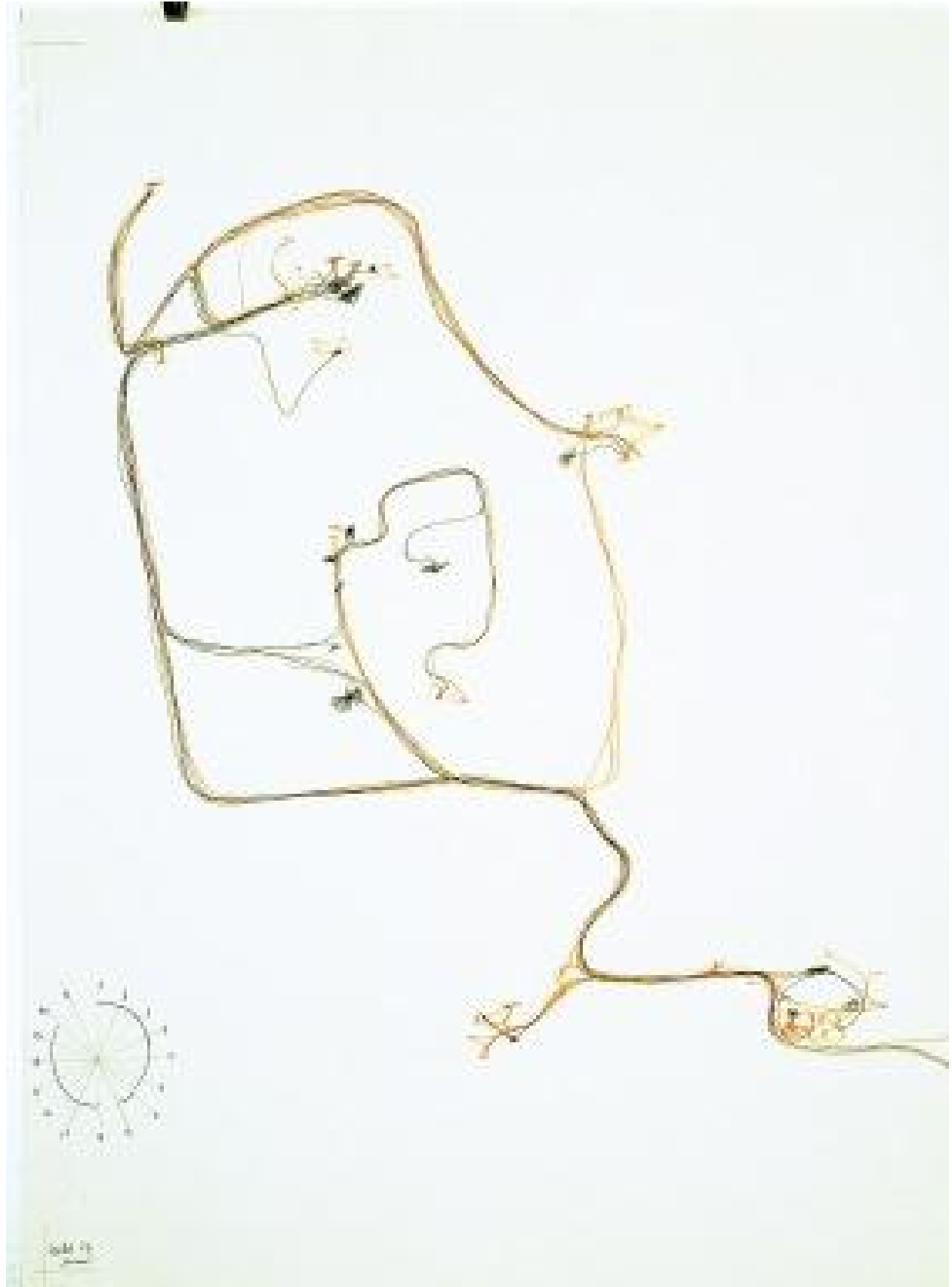
*From determinants of mobility to the development of an emancipatory mobility identity*

Deligny's lifework questions our ability to develop our own way of moving, to move based on ourselves - what we are, our relationship to space - and not on how we have learned to move, obeying outside rules that we have gradually integrated. Sandra Alvarez de Toledo talks about the relationship of the maps in Deligny's network as an "experiment in deprogram" (///C:/Users/Guillaume/Documents/SNCF/TEXTES/TEXTE%20DELIGNY/Deligny%20Final%20ENG%2011%20dec%202013

How much freedom and how much of ourselves decide our mobility? The contemplation of wander lines invites us to reorganize our modes of travel, to reflect on their origin, on what is mandated by a form of social and economic organization. The way over how we move around is to create a link to what we are — a stronger link between what makes us and reality. It is to make room for an elaborate web of intuitions and sensibilities that we are quite unused to allowing to take over. We are like diviners (to continue with the parallel between Janmari and water): in other words, to expand our perception abilities a

diviner (to continue that old paradox between earth and water), in other words, to expand our perceptivity, asides a being: to develop our own mobility identity. In the *Cahiers de l'immuable*, Deligny writes:

Diviner, this social innovator? Why not? Diviner, anybody who is, who practices perceiving the vibrations that tickle the their spines and reaching the hands – or words? – while whatever he could be thinking (about it) remains on hold. [20]  
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The art of plotting, developed by Deligny, has a double movement, both towards the other and towards the self. Wander expression of the other's being – a point of contact with the existence of the other, the place of birth and of propagatio essence.

"What is to transcribe, it is [our essence] as much as possible." [21]

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Approaching Deligny requires accepting a radical reexamination. Only through such an effort can horizons open.

*That's what I mean about maps and their history. Born of Jacques' anxiety over responding to the kids' parents, they we instrument of neither observation nor interpretation. Subverted toward the disconcerting. It's your attention to the disc available to that which breaks routines and discipline, that is the very definition of the network's libertarian stance. [22]*  
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In short, Deligny does away with the usual, comfortable analytical tools (i.e. observation and interpretation) and instead disconcert ourselves. Wander lines are first an invitation to "break" the analytical frameworks, ready-made conceptions fluidity of wander lines is the affirmation of a seizure of power by a man freed from all societal determinism. Wandering individual in his/her essence and his/her relationship to the environment, and nothing else – mark a kind of fullness o complete reappropriation of movement by the individual is the first requirement for him or her to question and challeng edification and the logic structures that organize our thinking, representations and social organization. Wander lines, re empowerment.

*Wander lines? Are they paths? With carefully traced paths, we will come back. Right now, they are life rafts, [23]*

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*three maps escorting an event: the transhumance of the herd...When the wander line manages to DO, it would seem, th handling, to the handling of drift, the ink line wants to brush up against it. Thus, wander lines are not – when maps are journeys, traces. They are ways of being in the search for that which, coming from us, allows. [24]*

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