TOGETHER WE FALL:
COLLABORATION AND THE MULTIPLICITOUS MILES IN LUCAN’S CIVIL WAR

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To collaborate as part of the Roman army in Lucan’s Civil War\(^1\) is to constitute a multitude.\(^2\) The Latin word miles, used habitually throughout Civil War, translates both as ‘soldier’ and ‘army’ and frequently appears as synecdochal\(^3\) (a linguistic idiosyncrasy); this generates a holographic image in the reader’s mind – one or many or both? To call a Roman miles is to label them both a and the military body – a title which conjures questions of the individual’s relation to the crowd/mass. The theory of multiplicity established by Gilles Deleuze & Félix Guattari seems applicable to explore the miles-as-multiplicity, therefore, and the corporeal consequences of this collaboration as multiplicity. As discussed in their A Thousand Plateaus, notions of power, potential, and the model of multiplicities within multiplicities constituting an assemblage, are themes pertinent to the concept of collaboration and military ideology. This article will use Deleuze & Guattari’s theories, in conjunction and contrast with the military ideology of Civil War, to consider the collaboration of Lucan’s soldiers in their role as miles and the relationship with their general.

There is no direct translation into Latin for the English verb ‘to collaborate.’ Any research into the etymology of ‘collaborate’ invariably leads to a tenuous derivation from the Latin prefix col-, ‘together,’ and the verb laborare, ‘to work,’ but there is simply no verbalised root for this idea in the language of Ancient Rome. The closest available word, certainly in terms of phonetics, is collabor: it shares an obvious surface resemblance, compounded of the ‘together’ prefix and labor, which as a noun translates as ‘work.’ However, collabor is not a noun and labor, in this context, is a deponent verb meaning ‘to glide, slip down, fall into, flow.’ Its deponent nature means the word has the curious trait of appearing passive but actually translating as active – much like the notion of collaboration, perhaps: in order to collaborate, the individual’s own will must first become passive, then becomes active as the individual internalises another’s will as her own. Moreover, the supine of collabor, collapsus sum, suggests its English meaning before a translation is needed: ‘to fall together, fall in ruins’ or, more ominously, ‘to swoon in death.’

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1 Written 61-65 AD, under the rule of Emperor Nero.

2 Lucan’s epic is a controversial text deemed by the Romans themselves as exceptionally violent and disturbing. Despite his popularity with Roman readers, criticism of Civil War was severely divided, leading to common consensus that Lucan was simply ‘not a poet.’ See Fox’s introduction to Lucan (2012) xxxviii ff.

3 E.g. Constitit ut capto iussus deponere miles | signa foro (1.236), "When the army stood in the captured forum they were ordered to put down their standards." All translations of the Latin are my own. Latin text from Lucan (1928).
Loosely, therefore, it could be said that the Latin ‘version’ of collaboration, of ‘working together,’ implies a downward slide into fatality. Consequently, there may be no direct verbal translation but the notion of collaboration certainly exists in the military body/bodies of ancient Rome and with fatal consequences, not only for the physical body, but for the soldiers’ psychological state, willpower and sense of self. A martial unit cannot function successfully without adherence to the general’s orders and collaboration with fellow soldiers. Despite reasonably frequent appearances in Roman texts (Virgil, Livy – albeit more commonly in the participle form, collapsus), collabor is not used once in Civil War, an epic poem which details the struggle between Julius Caesar and Pompey (49-45 BC), leading to the collapse of the Republic and beginning the Roman Empire. Yet, collabor, it seems, does reflect the caste of collaboration in Lucan’s epic, with the military ideology of standing and falling together as a unit, of metaphorical (and literal) self-induced injury and self-inflicted demise. The language of sliding, slipping, falling together is visually reminiscent of Deleuze & Guattari’s multiplicities, as metastable formations who may suddenly change in nature with the introduction of new variables. In the dense and sprawling A Thousand Plateaus, multiplicities are designated as constructing aspects of society real or striven for: bodies, assemblages, machines and, most significantly, the body without organs, the housing space for multiplicities. Multiplicities, for Deleuze & Guattari, constitute being and beings; for example, in the chapter entitled “One or Several Wolves?” Deleuze & Guattari explain multiplicity in relation to the wolf pack:

“Franny is listening to a program on wolves. I say to her, Would you like to be a wolf? She answers haughtily, How stupid, you can’t be one wolf, you’re always eight or nine, six or seven. Not six or seven wolves all by yourself at once, but one wolf among others, with five or six others.”

Each wolf is a body of multiplicities in itself, wrapped in fur – “wolf eyes, wolf jaws,” as later described. That body is a multiplicity but also cannot be a body on its own. To apply this to the Roman army: “one wolf among others, with five or six others” is one body of multiplicities (a miles) amongst multiplicities, constituting one accumulative assemblage (the miles), a macro apprehension of conjoined micromultiplicities. This evokes the undeniable collectiveness of the army – the singular apprehension of a multiple, the substantive of military force – and using Deleuze & Guattari’s imagery creates an

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4 Replacing the older philosophical notion of 'essence' - see DeLanda (2010) 9-41, for more on this reading.
5 Deleuze & Guattari (2013) trans. Massumi, 32
6 Deleuze & Guattari (2013) trans Massumi, 34
7 Deleuze & Guattari (2005) trans. Massumi, 38: "There is no question, however, of establishing a dual opposition between the two types of multiplicities... that would be no better than the dualism between the one and the multiple. There are only multiplicities of multiplicities forming a singular assemblage, operating in the same assemblage..."
impression of Roman collaboration as some sort of jellyish mass, of worms in wet earth, and each worm is a ribbon of rings. The only easily perceivable difference between the one and the multiple, in the military model, is arguably between leader and followers – in Lucan, between Caesar and the legio XIII gemina (the thirteenth twin legion), which had been fighting under his command for a decade before the civil war began.

Within the body of the miles, any distinction between individuals is problematised firstly as it extends beyond body parts: there is a consistent ambiguity in Civil War concerning what is actually causing the violence, the soldier or their weapon, which is often signalled by switching active and passive verbs, e.g. “the sword is struck by the chest” (4.561). Arms brandishing arms create an army. This discrepancy between active and passive reflects the deponent nature of collabor, and suggests a merging of multiplicities in the miles which is fuelled by the potential for and realisation of violence – where the boundaries between man/soldier/weapon are yielding, yet drawn together by the same motivation. Arguably, one motivation for this is furor, ‘madness/rage’ (1.8), as deemed in Lucan’s proem to be the cause of “a powerful people | turning their conquering swordhands into their own guts” (1.2-3). This furor has a collective aspect, it is a shared madness, experienced by the populus potens – literally ‘a people with the power [to do something]’ – and what they choose to do is fall on their swords. Collectively. It is a madness which the Roman populus experiences passively, perhaps, but it incites action with its dual connotation of ‘rage’ and the consequence of war. The idea of shared emotions recurs throughout Lucan’s text, as in the preamble before a soldier of the thirteenth legion, Laelius, steps up to speak (1.359-86), directly following a rousing monologue from Caesar (1.299-351), who urges his army to civil war.

He spoke; but the doubtful crowd, with incoherent murmuring, mutter uncertainties amongst themselves. Although their minds are fierce and their hearts swollen with bloodshed, their devotion to their homes and country unnerves them; but they are recalled by an awful love of the sword and fear of their leader. (1.352-6)

As the constitution of this “doubtful crowd,” the soldiers’ attributes are here bracketed into “their hearts” and “their minds” as though they are a grouping of physically immanent, shared, emotions, like the previously mentioned furor. Fierce minds and hearts swollen with bloodshed equal a reliable power source, like the ambiguous fusion of soldiers and weapons. Yet, the miles are here ‘unnerved’

8 The worm metaphor is an interesting one in light of some worm species’ inability to move of their own accord.

9 ‘Rage’ is also the first word of Homer’s Iliad, as the motive behind the Trojan War, so Lucan’s furor is potentially also referencing the entire epic tradition of furious warriors.

10 Literally, in the mass suicide of 4.474-581. Lucan includes the whole of the Roman population in his populus potens, yet the focus of this article is solely on the miles.
at the thought of slaughtering fellow Romans and their doubt renders them “incoherent” and unable to act – a shared uncertainty. This uncertainty potentially arises from a sudden change in intensity. Each soldier is a multiplicity of multiplicities compounded of his Roman citizenship, his family, his Roman nose and, most crucially, his ‘fierce mind’ and ‘heart swollen with bloodshed’ – in civil war, he is both friend and executioner to his fellow Romans. Fragments of the Roman body politic are here allotted different functions, though all seemingly possess the same tools; it is these specific attributed properties which assign one Roman to elite and another to miles. Function and intention determine these intensities; the soldiers extracted from the molar populus potens of Lucan’s proem merge with the molecular multiplicities of virtus\footnote{Virtue/courage in battle, of exceptional importance to Roman soldiers. See Phang (2008) 3.} or furo, undergoing a process which establishes them as miles. As Deleuze & Guattari elaborate:

> The wolf, as the instantaneous apprehension of a multiplicity in a given region, is not a representative, a substitute, but an I feel. I feel myself becoming a wolf, one wolf among others, on the edge of the pack.\footnote{Deleuze & Guattari (2013) trans. Massumi, 35}

“I feel” is the crucial statement here – the wolf as a constitution of multiplicities bound together by feeling, by virtual (beneath the actual surface) processes. The “I” is obscurely synecdochal, both the one and the multitude. As an example of the importance of shared emotions in constituting collaborative multiplicity, Lucan notes that his “crowd” were temporarily disparate (frango, ‘break in pieces, shatter’) in their uncertainty – “but,” he says, “they are recalled by an awful love of the sword | and fear of their leader” (1.355-6). They are drawn back together by their love of violence and metus of their leader – in poetry, metus connotes ‘religious awe’ as well as ‘fear, dread,’ implying that the miles recognise Caesar as a father/godlike figure. With “I feel,” Deleuze & Guattari therefore offer a way of conceptualising the thirteenth legion as a composite of multiplicities attracted together by shared emotions, most likely resulting from their ten year campaign. This “feel” therefore also incorporates Caesar, as well as the miles, as he is integral to the decade of warfare which unites them and, arguably, he might fear their rebellion as much as they fear his command.\footnote{This is pertinent in 5.237-373 – a mutiny in Caesar’s army.}

The emotional identification with each other, and the leader of the legion, comprises a stronger nexus than simply their fierce minds and hearts – perhaps traits shared with any Roman soldier. Interestingly, this reflects a major change for the Roman military organism, just prior to Caesar’s campaign. The reforms of Gaius Marius,\footnote{A consul of the Republic; his reforms were carried out in 107 BC and opposed by the upper classes. See Wake (2006).} Caesar’s uncle (who, incidentally, fought the infamous civil wars against
Lucius Cornelius Sulla, 88-80 BC, detailed in Civil War book 2), moved the army from a conscription to a volunteer system, offering the landless poor – the capite censi, ‘head count’ – a professional career as a soldier. Moreover, the loyalty of these soldiers became more strongly felt for their legion and general than simply service to Rome, and this provides an interesting contextualisation for the thirteenth legion’s willingness to follow Caesar into war against fellow Romans. In becoming miles, not only were these Roman citizens developing minds and hearts hardened to bloodshed, their allegiance transferred from the Republic to one leader. They adopted miles as their life and livelihood. In other words, they were not only equipped with weapons, but with a whole new virtuality, a collective “I feel,” we all feel, which bound them together. Likewise, the military leader is no longer solely a representative for his nation but, almost, the representative of a nation in himself owing to the miles’ distorted loyalty.

Writing on Deleuze’s multiplicity, Manuel DeLanda stresses that in “Deleuzian ontology... a species (or any other natural kind) is not defined by its essential traits but rather by the morphogenetic process that gave rise to it. Rather than representing timeless categories, species are historically constituted entities, the resemblance of their members explained by having undergone common processes of natural selection.”15 For the thirteenth legion, this “historically constituted... natural selection” would be the recruitment of their members from the capite censi combined with a decade of victorious servitude to Caesar. The landless poor, who have very little and no status, are invited into a new purpose, and a new body generated from, arguably, a new father. Lucan refers to the soldiers as a “crowd” (1.352), using the Latin word vulgus, which is significantly translated into English as ‘grouping, multitude, common people,’ something in which personal identity is lost. Sarah Elise Phang, in her work on martial ideology in ancient Rome, notes: “The Greek and Roman civilian elite tended to fear and dislike the soldiers as vulgus or ‘mob’ or as resembling paupers or brigands.”16 The bodies of the miles are therefore denoted as ‘mob, mass, common,’ never individual but always ‘of a grouping,’ which is integral to their mentality and morphogenesis as legion – by enlisting in the Roman army, they surrender what little individuality they had as part of the (plural) capite censi and integrate themselves into a structure built on sinews of fear, the collective “I feel.” It is not enough simply to label the thirteenth legion as vulgus: a bloodthirsty nature and crowd mentality might be commonplace in the Roman military, but members of Caesar’s army are drawn specifically to each other.

Furthermore, Deleuze opposes the categorisation of natural phenomena purely with regard to empirical ‘truths’ crystallised over time; as DeLanda states, “terms which purport to refer to natural categories in fact refer to historically constituted individuals.”17 Shared resemblances are the result of virtual morphogenetic processes, as opposed to static typographical traits that have been recurring, rather than

15 DeLanda (2010) 10
16 Phang (2008) 18
17 DeLanda (2010) 39
evolving, throughout history.\(^\text{18}\) In light of Deleuze & Guattari via DeLanda, it is here interesting to recall the slipping, slidingness of Roman collaboration-collabor: as the army moves, changes, evolves, losing and gaining members, apprehending new territories and new enemies, it remains still the thirteenth legion by virtue of not only title, but the gel of shared experience, history, which binds its multiplicitous members together, a brotherhood under one father figure – a family. The binding agent is not a glue, because it does not fix permanently. This gel is translucent to the perceiving eye, but it is by no means transcendent and fundamentally permeates the bodies/body of the miles – it is the ‘we feel’ which determines their action and allegiance. They stand (and fall) together.

It is important to consider that, although Caesar is arguably not equal to his army, for example in rank, it is apparent that he is fundamental as a uniting agent for the thirteenth legion. The feelings which draw them together correlate with his leadership and, likewise, he is bound to them symbiotically through need of a military body to accomplish his ambitions. Without them, he is a leader with nothing to lead. Therefore, when Laelius expresses the legion’s loyalty to their general, he is reasserting this mutual reliance:

> Was our loyalty to you lacking?  
> While hot blood moves these breathing bodies  
> and while these arms have the strength to hurl javelins,  
> will you suffer the corrupt citizenry and the rule of the senate? (1.362-65)

Laelius urges, ‘while these intensive multiplicities compose your forces, Caesar, they will serve to follow you, you will not have to submit to Pompey and the Senate.’ To do anything other would be to ‘change in kind,’\(^\text{19}\) to no longer be your soldiers.\(^\text{20}\) Moreover, if Caesar had to submit to the Senate’s regulations, he would be unable to forge his dictatorship – and he is able to do this, Laelius declares, by means of his military body. Deleuze & Guattari’s micromultiplicities, the (molecular) multiplicities existing in the virtual depths which scaffold the actual (molar, macromultiplicities), are intensive,\(^\text{21}\) i.e. powered by intention and purpose. The ‘historically constituted’ purpose of the thirteenth legion is to fight for Caesar’s cause, so this purpose is embedded in the intensive multiplicities which constitute their extensive nature: their

\(^{18}\) This concept might be read alongside Henri Bergson’s ‘duration,’ a tremendous influence on Deleuze's multiplicity. See Deleuze, Bergsonism.

\(^{19}\) See DeLanda (2010) 25: "Deleuze argues, however, that an intensive property is not so much one that is indivisible but one which cannot be divided without involving a change in kind."

\(^{20}\) Interestingly, when Caesar crosses the Rubicon, instigating civil war, he is stopped by the personification of Rome and declares to her that he is "ubique... tuus miles" – “everywhere your soldier” (1.202).

\(^{21}\) See Deleuze & Guattari (2013) trans Massumi, 37: micromultiplicities as "libidinal, unconscious, molecular, intensive multiplicities composed of particles that do not divide without changing in nature..." The comparison with the unconscious suggests a kind of groundwork for the macro form.
arms, breath, blood. ‘Arm’ is the most frequently occurring body part in Civil War, feasibly because of its dual connotation as both limb and weapon. The imagery sparked by ‘hot blood in breathing bodies’ and the disembodied ‘arms hurling javellins’ mirrors the slipping, gliding miles’ collaboration discussed above, the worms in wet earth.

This is where the comparison with Deleuze & Guattari’s multiplicities is an interesting one: they are not governed by one within the mass, but converge with other multiplicities to form macro structures, assemblages, machines, which lack strict peripheral organisation by an external source. In contrast, Caesar’s legion act whilst passively governed by their general, as a morphogenetically modified body with violent intensity, established and constrained by an internalised extrinsic force. Caesar may be one, but his purpose and identity are embedded within the body of the multiplicity – he is leader, but also highly dependent on their collaboration, making his connection to the miles much more reciprocal than simply ‘one within the mass.’ He cannot slide away from them and remain a general, likewise their livelihood depends on his leadership – not to mention the binding mutual feelings of a decade’s bloodshed.

There is therefore a feeling generated within the Roman military of, rather antithetical, surrender in order to collaborate (as evoked by collabor’s deponent nature). Ellen O’Gorman, writing on military psychology, states that the governing ideology of the Roman legion is “structured around the demand that the individual give up his life, or at any rate his instincts for self-preservation, in order to become part of ‘the body without organs’: the army, the state.” It is intriguing that she here uses Deleuze & Guattari’s term ‘body without organs’ in relation to the miles. The intensive structure and career of the Roman soldier necessitates that he entirely dedicate the fate of his body, his life, and his own will, to his leader (not just the ‘democratic’ Republic). In A Thousand Plateaus, the ‘body without organs’ is the housing space for multiplicities, a body without organisation – something which draws multiplicities together, the greenhouse of their morphogenesis, yet allows them the freedom to disentangle themselves just as quickly. In other words, a state space where nothing is fixed and nothing repeats, where intensive micromultiplicities can move through and across the body without fear of organisation or stasis. The body without organs is “not an empty body stripped of organs, but a body upon which that which serves as organs (wolves, wolf eyes, wolf jaws?) is distributed according to crowd phenomena... in the form of molecular multiplicities.”

22 Dinter (2012) 22. The Latin words are separate, however: armus is 'arm' and armum is 'weapon,' but they share a phonetic resemblance.

23 There is certainly an awareness of the periphery in Deleuze & Guattari’s multiplicities, but it is not clear whether it is extrinsically constituted and certainly one external organising force seems contrary to their philosophy of multiplicity.

24 O’Gorman (2010) 123. It is also worth considering this in light of Michel Foucault’s "Society Must be Defended" and the concept of the 'sovereign' and 'biopower,' however there is not space sufficient in this article.

25 Deleuze & Guattari (2013) trans Massumi, 34
Yet, the symbiotic relationship of leader-miles described above does not seem to correlate with a ceaselessly shifting state space. Without structure, without organisation, the Roman miles or any military body would not function as an army. There must be direction so that the soldiers know who the enemy is and where to thrust their weapons; a soldier must surrender selfish instincts, as O’Gorman explains, and act in the interests of the general, thereby the interests of the army. A soldier must collaborate. The “crowd phenomena” and intensive “molecular multiplicities” described by Deleuze & Guattari pertain to the miles by constituting the basis for the construction of a molar multiplicity, Caesar’s army. The attracting forces of Caesar’s will, shared emotions and experience, and the societal standards expected of Roman miles, generate the macro miles of the thirteenth legion. Their morphogenesis, a decade in the making, stemmed from Caesar’s command and, from now on, Caesar directs the movement of his military body – very much applying organisation to it. To put it alternatively, if the thirteenth legion is a corpus (of intensive multiplicitous arms), Caesar is the caput (the eyes, ears and jaws). A body cannot function without a head – and what is a head without a body?

In fact, Laelius vows that the soldiers will not only bow to Caesar’s leadership, but will even alter their senses/intentions at his whim:

No citizen of mine is he, against whom I hear your trumpet call,
Caesar. By standards victorious in ten campaigns,
I swear, and by your triumphs over whichever enemy,
if you order me to plunge my sword into the breast of my brother
and the throat of my father and the childbearing stomach of
my teeming wife, I will perform it all, even with an unwilling hand; (1.373-8)

Caesar, as the head of the martial body, is now Laelius’ eyes and ears. ‘Whatever sound you make, Caesar, we will adhere to it. Whoever you see as your enemy, we will see him thus also. Direct our (albeit unwilling) hands, and we will perform it all.’ Laelius is essentially stating that anything that ties him, and the rest of the miles, to a body other than the corpus militis will be severed, and by referencing the “standards victorious in ten campaigns,” he acknowledges the binding intensity of a decade at war. Any intensive changes are qualitative changes, within the muscular tissue of the body, and here Laelius validates this distinction by describing how his muscles will move in whichever direction Caesar orders – creating a curious oscillation of active and passive. The “unwilling hand” supports this reading, by hinting at rogue elements within the multiplicity, which will be reorganised to ‘fall in line’ and forced to collaborate. Laelius will compel his hand to perform these acts despite it being unwilling, which stresses the power of Caesar as external governing force and the breakdown of ownership which Laelius has over his own body. This sustains O’Gorman’s description of the army as surrendering their bodies to the

See Jones and Roffe (2009) 245, for more on how this aspect of Deleuzian philosophy stems from the work of Henri Bergson.
miles, and Marius’ reforms which shifted loyalty from Rome to general.

As a result of this regimentation, throughout Laelius’ twenty-seven lines of speech, the reader witnesses a transformation from “doubtful crowd” to fratricidal/uxoricidal/suicidal warrior. In civil war, the boundaries between friend and enemy are significantly non-fixed, as Laelius demonstrates, and can be changed in an instant – like one micromultiplicity sliding away from another. He will sever (literally) any ties to a body other than the miles, creating a new body without the governing organisation of Roman and ready to be adopted by a new macromultiplicity, or a new puppeteer. When O’Gorman states that “the army, the state” are like a body without organs, perhaps this can be read as meaning, firstly, that the Roman state-as-battlefield in civil war is a transmutable space, with enemies and allies ceaselessly gliding around on its surface. Secondly, to be miles means both being under strict command and being ready to change, to adopt new intensities and directions at the sound of a trumpet call; to surrender the organisation of one human body to a governing force, the assemblage of the general Caesar.

Furthermore, to be miles means being willing and ready to dismantle from the inside out, intensively, the forces which bond soldiers to objects outside of the military body, creating a body with no organisation other than the general’s command. When Laelius asks provocatively, “Is it so miserable to be victorious in civil war?” (1.366), he outlines the synecdochal philosophy of the collaborating army – any army: to slough off any other ties and follow the general, marching/gliding “over whichever enemy.” By changing their intensity from Roman to Caesarian, the soldiers (Caesar included) are no longer connected by the “I feel” of being-Roman, so would feel no misery in slaughtering Romans not integral to their Caesarian assemblage. ‘I individual’ is overruled by ‘I soldier’ and feelings not conducive to the victory of Caesar (misery, doubt) are not permitted to run through the sensory organs of the military body. This is, again, where O’Gorman’s comparison is not an easy fit – to state that the army is a body without organs suggests a free-flow of intensities and micromultiplicities yet, in the thirteenth legion, the “I feel” in this particular legion becomes ‘Caesarian-feel,’ motivated by intensities conducive to Caesar’s victory and riding on a ten-year high of success. A body without organs, as state space, might not hold together micromultiplicities for so long – or, at least, would require an extremely powerful attracting force to sustain the assemblage – yet the thirteenth legion is a body celebrating its tenth ‘birthday’ by taking on the original father and replacing him with a new one-as-multiple. In an obtuse way, this almost reflects Deleuze & Guattari’s philosophical denunciation of psychoanalysis (one-father-as-origin), replacing it with their rhizomatic model of multiplicities.

Laelius’ extreme and controversial statements escalate his speech from apologetic to brutally assertive, arguably demonstrating a speedy change of intensity for the soldiers, induced by the incorporated extrinsic force of their general. Consequently, if caput-Caesar controls the “wolf eyes” and ears of the miles, it is logical that his power extends to the “wolf jaws” as well. Consider, as a final supplement to

27 Both Deleuze & Guattari (2013) trans Massumi, 34
the model of the military body governed by caput-general, a fascinating aspect of Deleuze & Guattari’s theory concerning speech: “There are no individual statements, only statement-producing machinic assemblages... Each of us is caught up in an assemblage of this kind, and we reproduce its statements when we think we are speaking in our own name; or rather we speak in our own name when we reproduce its statement.”

They seem to be referencing the ‘historically constituted’ ideological and intertextual baggage, which governs all action (so much for the body without organisation). Deleuze & Guattari suggest – with the term “reproduce” – that spoken words stem from “machinic assemblages” which open pathways for multiplicities to merge and flee, allowing qualitative changes in the micromultiplicities to occur. In the case of Laelius, the assemblage (miles) is regulated by Caesar, who permeates his statements as though Caesar himself is nestled in the vocal folds of Laelius’ larynx. Laelius must not only surrender his life and his instincts, but his words as well, becoming (part of) a body subject to another’s organisation. As the assemblage is integrally constituted of shared feelings, by reproducing the statements of the assemblage, he speaks for the “I feel,” ‘we-feel’ and ‘Caesar-feel’ all at once. Moreover, this speech occurs after Caesar has attempted to rouse his army to civil war and failed: so here, perhaps, he speaks through Laelius in an effort to permeate the sensibilities of the miles from the inside. Hence, Deleuze & Guattari’s outline of “statement-producing machinic assemblages” provides a useful way of consolidating the significance of Laelius’ speech as, not only a declaration of the thirteenth legion’s loyalty, but the necessity of their loyalty with regard to Caesar’s ambitions. To fully collaborate, the inside of the miles must be hollowed out – they must turn their swords on their own guts – so that they resonate with the commands (vocal and intensive) of their general, powered by the changing intensities of the assemblage, to become both ally and enemy of Rome.

The martial corpus is therefore a body paradoxically organised by the ability to be transformed/sacrificed, to adopt new intensities, new parts for the machine. O’Gorman’s “‘body without organs’: the army, the state” suggests a lack of fixedness or stasis in the military body, consistent only in its loyalty to the symbiotic general, surrendering any “instincts for self-preservation” and becoming-malleable. Thinking with Deleuze & Guattari fashions military ideology as providing a morphogenetic environment for a de-individualised crowd, powered by the potential for violence as the body for caput-general. To break free of this ideology would feasibly create a body of a different ‘kind’ which would no longer be an army. The synecdochal nature of the miles means that if one soldier dies, he is replaced by another, as all that really matters are the tools to fight – as though one multiplicity departs from the body (collabor, slips down, falls into, flows) and another slides into its place. We can read collabor in military collaboration as acting passively, as being subject to the crowd, ready to destroy/dismantle anything, even themselves.

Deleuze & Guattari (2013) 41. This could be read as meaning that “we” always speak with the voice of the multiplicity, of which we are an equal part, or that our “statements” are drawn from an extensive source.

This reading of Deleuze & Guattari’s ‘assemblage’ is my own; for more on intertextual baggage, see Martindale (1993).

O’Gorman (2010) 123
“With these arms,” Laelius proclaims, speaking collectively, “the driven ram will disperse the stones, | even if that city you desire to be totally obliterated | is Rome” (1.384-6).


APPENDIX: LUCAN, CIVIL WAR, 1.352-88

...But the doubtful crowd, with incoherent murmuring, mutter uncertainties amongst themselves. Although their minds are fierce and their hearts swollen with bloodshed, their devotion to their homes and country unnerves them; but they are recalled by an awful love of the sword and fear of their leader. Then Laelius, bearing the offices of the highest rank and the insignia of deserved honour – oak leaves symbolising the reward for saving a Roman citizen – “If it is permitted,” he says, “and if it is just to exert true words to the great ruler of Rome,

we complain because you held back your forces with such tenacious patience. Was our loyalty to you lacking? While hot blood moves these breathing bodies and while these arms have the strength to hurl javelins, will you suffer the corrupt citizenry and the rule of the senate? Is it so miserable to be victorious in civil war? Lead us through the peoples of Scythia, to the inhospitable shores of Syrtes, to the hot sands of thirsting Libya: so that this hand may leave a conquered world at our backs, it subdued the tumultuous waves of the ocean with an oar and diminished the Rhine frothing in a northern whirlpool: I must have the power, as much as the will, to follow your orders. No citizen of mine is he, against whom I hear your trumpet call, Caesar. By standards victorious in ten campaigns, I swear, and by your triumphs over whichever enemy, if you order me to plunge my sword into the breast of my brother and the throat of my father and the childbearing stomach of my teeming wife, I will perform it all, even with an unwilling hand; if to plunder the gods and hurl fire into their temples, the flames of the military mint will embroil the godheads; if to set up camp by the waves of the Etruscan Tiber, I shall boldly go as boundary-fixer into the Hesperian fields.

Should you wish to scatter any walls to the ground, with these arms the driven ram will disperse the stones, even if that city you desire to be totally obliterated is Rome.” To these words, the cohorts agreed together as one and, called to whatever wars, they promised their hands raised on high.