

A defence of Deleuze's philosophy of multiplicity.

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of Liverpool for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy by **Charles Victor Mayell**.

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For my parents, Walter and Doreen Mayell.

Contents

Acknowledgements	p.4
Abstract	p.5
Introduction.	p.6
Summary.	p.20
Chapter 1. Repetition: Kierkegaard and Nietzsche.	p.28
Chapter 2. Difference and the equivocality of Being: Aristotle.	p.41
Chapter 3. The shackle of opposition: Hegel.	p.59
Chapter 4. Overturning Platonism.	p.78
Chapter 5. The continuous multiplicity: Bergson.	p.102
Chapter 6. An ontology of Time: Bergson and Nietzsche.	p.129
Chapter 7. A logic of multiplicity: Deleuze's Spinoza.	p.150
Chapter 8. An ontology of Ideas: Kant.	p.176
Conclusion.	p.199
Bibliography	p.215

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A defence of Deleuze's philosophy of multiplicity.

By Charles Mayell.

Abstract.

Gilles Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition* culminates in the following claim: 'A single and same voice for the whole thousand-voiced multiple, a single and same Ocean for all the drops, a single clamour of Being for all beings'.¹ The claim combines a notion of the multiple and various, with a notion of the single and the same. Alain Badiou's provocative stance is that 'Deleuze's fundamental problem is most certainly not to liberate the multiple but to submit thinking to a renewed concept of the One.'² My thesis is that Deleuze is a philosopher of multiplicity. I offer a uniquely close and systematic reading of *Difference and Repetition (D&R)* through the lens of Deleuze's concept of multiplicity. I argue that Deleuze's own explicit avowal of the philosophy of the multiple can be equated to the privilege that he grants to 'difference': 'Difference is behind everything, but behind difference there is nothing' (57). The thesis charts the same path as *D&R* through an alternative history of the philosophy of difference but illuminates Deleuze's text by reference to philosophical resources outside the frame of Deleuzian discourse. For Deleuze, multiplicity is to be interpreted in the special sense derived from the philosophy of Henri Bergson. Bergson distinguishes between a 'discrete multiplicity', which is spatially organised and conforms to our conventional view of 'the many', and a 'continuous multiplicity' which is analogous to the unbroken but ever-changing series of a temporal flow. The thesis offers more critical analysis than that of other recent commentators into how Deleuze's earlier work on Bergson informs the overall structure of the argument of *D&R*. The second component of the claim with which I began (i.e. that of the single and the same) is associated with Deleuze's explicit advocacy of the univocity of Being: the doctrine that everything that exists, exists in the same way. This doctrine is championed by Deleuze in a revivification of the philosophy of Spinoza. Todd May remarks that: 'in considering the puzzle of how a thinker of difference can at the same time be a thinker of the One and of the univocity of Being, we need to bear in mind that, in Deleuze's view, there is no contradiction between the two'.³ The solution to this puzzle lies in unravelling the status of the philosophy of Spinoza in Deleuze's own system. My solution is that Spinoza provides Deleuze with a kind of 'logic' of the multiple. I argue that Badiou's stance, in fact, becomes most pertinent in its attack on Deleuze's philosophy of 'the Two': the critical but vulnerable distinction between the virtual and the actual. I offer original arguments to refute Badiou's claims that the distinction between the virtual and the actual is incoherent and that Deleuze is 'an involuntary Platonist'.⁴ In the clinching argument of *D&R*, Deleuze refers to 'the only realised Ontology' (303). I argue that the Bergsonian ontology and the Spinozan logic of the multiple are realised (i.e. shown to be actually instantiated) via Deleuze's radical reworking of Kant's first *Critique*. The ontology of Ideas which crowns the argument of *D&R* is multiple: 'Ideas are multiplicities: every idea is a multiplicity or a variety...Everything is a multiplicity in so far as it incarnates an Idea (182).'

¹ Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. by Paul Patton (London: Athlone Press, 1994) p.304. Further references to *D&R* are given in parentheses in the main text of the thesis.

² Alain Badiou, *Deleuze: The Clamor of Being*, trans. by Louise Burchill (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), p.11. Further footnote references in the thesis are given as *CB*.

³ Todd May, 'Badiou and Deleuze on the One and the Many', in *Think Again: Alain Badiou and the Future of Philosophy*, ed. by Peter Hallward (London: Continuum, 2006), pp.67-76 (p.68).

⁴ *CB*, p.61.

Introduction.

In the final sentence of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze seems to attempt to sum-up the burden of his whole philosophy. In view of the extreme compression of meaning that such a summary would necessarily involve, he can be forgiven for lapsing into lyricism: 'A single and same voice for the whole thousand-voiced multiple, a single and same Ocean for all the drops, a single clamour of Being for all beings' (304). The image is perhaps that of a song being sung. If it is a song, Badiou claims that is the song of 'the One'. To hear it as such, however, Badiou advises that we must pay attention 'to its enthusiastic vibration even more than to its explicit content'.⁵ Badiou means that Deleuze's heart is not in the lyrics but in the *expression* with which they are sung. More prosaically, I suggest that Badiou means that Deleuze did not understand his own philosophy.

The 'single and same voice' speaks for the doctrine known as the univocity of Being. Badiou dedicates Deleuze's philosophy to this doctrine, hence: *The Clamor of Being*. If there is a case to be answered, it is the case of Spinoza. Deleuze elects Spinoza as the champion of univocity: 'With Spinoza, univocal being...becomes a truly expressive and affirmative proposition' (40). Deleuze dubs Spinoza, the thinker of the single substance, both 'the prince of philosophers' and 'the Christ of Philosophers'.⁶ Yet for all that, Deleuze openly declares: 'I conceive of philosophy as a logic of multiplicities.'⁷ I defend Deleuze's philosophy as a philosophy of the multiple partly on the grounds of this 'logic', but not only because of it. On the face of it, logic is a long way from life as we actually live it. Yet we also find Deleuze, along with Guattari, recommending an ethics of the multiple: 'In truth, it is not enough to say, "Long live the multiple"...The multiple *must be made*'.⁸ I also, therefore, defend Deleuze's philosophy as a philosophy of the multiple on the grounds of its ethical purpose. But Deleuze's ambition ranges wider still: *Difference and Repetition* culminates in an ontology of Ideas. Finally, therefore, I defend Deleuze's philosophy of multiplicity as a metaphysics: 'Ideas are multiplicities...Everything is a multiplicity in so far as it incarnates an Idea.' (182).

⁵ CB, p.11.

⁶ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, trans. by Graham Burchell and Hugh Tomlinson (London: Verso, 1994), p.48 and p.60.

⁷ *Pourparlers* (Minuit, 1990), p.201; as cited and translated by John Rajchman, *The Deleuze Connections*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2000), p.50.

⁸ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (London: Continuum, 2002), p.6.

Badiou seeks to problematize the relationship between Deleuze's dual allegiance, on the one hand, to the single voice of Being, and on the other hand, to the multiple. My thesis seeks to state the problem clearly and to solve it.

Multiplicity.

Is it a problem of the One and the multiple? Louise Burchill, the translator of *The Clamor of Being*, makes the point that 'an English-language philosopher would more naturally express this...opposition as that between "the One and the Many"...'⁹ She goes on to concede that, although she has universally translated *multiple* as the English word 'multiple', this includes instances where the English word '..."many" would, indeed, be the more appropriate term'. Paul Patton, the translator of *Difference and Repetition*, notes that 'the term "multiplicity" which is now well established in the translations of Deleuze's work, is derived from the French mathematical term [*multiplicité*] used to refer to those Reimannian objects which English mathematicians would call "manifolds".'¹⁰ I shall need to elucidate this mathematical context a little more but my initial point is only that in *Difference and Repetition*, there is a clear distinction between 'many' and 'multiple': 'It is the notion of multiplicity which denounces simultaneously the One and the many' (203). I understand this to mean that Deleuze will not accept the existence of the One. In simultaneously denouncing 'the many', he means that he will not accept a 'many', if by that one understands a concept that can only make sense in reciprocal relation to a concept of 'the One'. I suggest that part of the burden of Deleuze's use of the term 'multiple' is, therefore, to distinguish it from the 'Many', in that the 'Many' is held to entail a prior unity (the One) that Deleuze rejects. We should note, in passing, that Badiou also rejects the One: 'My entire discourse originates in an axiomatic decision: that of the non-being of the one.'¹¹

The use of the term 'multiplicity' is a happy one at least insofar as it alerts us, from the start, to the fact that Deleuze is *inventing* a concept rather than mouthing a term from common parlance. John Rajchman advises that 'Deleuze's idea of "multiplicity" is...not to be confused with traditional notions of "the many" or "the manifold"'.¹² Neither do we need to be phased by the supposed background of Deleuze's terminology in abstruse mathematics. Instead, Rajchman

⁹ Louise Burchill, 'Translator's Preface: Portraiture in Philosophy, or Shifting Perspectives', in *The Clamor of Being*, pp. vii.-xxiii (p.xviii).

¹⁰ Paul Patton, 'Translator's Preface', in *Difference and Repetition*, pp.xi-xiii (p.xii).

¹¹ Alain Badiou, *Being and Event*, trans. by Oliver Feltham (London: Continuum, 2005), p.31.

¹² John Rajchman, *The Deleuze Connections*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2000), p.54.

makes a helpful connection between Deleuze's idea of 'multiplicity' and a notion found in Wittgenstein, about the nature of the future:

Wittgenstein declares of temporal continuity, that when we think of the world's future, we always mean that destination it will reach if it keeps going in the direction we can see it going now; it does not occur to us that its path is not a straight line, but a curve, constantly changing direction.'¹³

One might object, if this *is* what Deleuze means by 'multiplicity', the choice of term is perverse. Indeed, Constantin Boundas comments that 'Neither "multiplicity" nor "the multiple" convey precisely the sense that [Deleuze] wishes to convey. One needs ...a gerund like "the multiplying"...to capture the sense'.¹⁴ Williams confirms this understanding: A multiplicity is not an identifiable unity, nor is it a number of such unities...[it is] Instead...a variety, that is, something that captures a variation rather than a fixed number or structure'.¹⁵ On this account, we must construe Deleuze's philosophy of the multiple as privileging notions of dynamism and movement. That being the case, we can see how such a multiplying series might frustrate the notion of a boundary or perimeter that would make it into a unity. For this series there is no question of 'standing back far enough' in order to see its edge: there is no edge.

Badiou does not suffer from the potential confusion to which Rajchman alludes. Badiou knows that Deleuze's avowal of the philosophy of the multiple is based on an unconventional notion of multiplicity. Badiou recognizes that it is a notion of the 'multiple' that both joined and separated him from Deleuze. Reflecting on what he calls, perhaps grandiosely, a 'change of epoch' in philosophy that followed a 'long theoretical discussion with Jean-Francois Lyotard', Badiou writes:

The publication of *L'Être et l'événement*...sealed — for me — the definitive entry into this new period. I gradually became aware that, in developing an ontology of the multiple, it was vis-à-vis Deleuze and no one else that I was positioning my endeavour. For there are two paradigms that govern the manner in which the multiple is thought, as Deleuze's texts indicate from very early on: the "vital" (or "animal") paradigm of open multiplicities (in the Bergson filiation) and the mathematized paradigm of sets...That being the case, it is not too inexact to maintain that Deleuze is the contemporary thinker

¹³ Rajchman, p.58, citing Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value* ed. by G. H. von Wright, trans. by Peter Winch (Chicago, 1980).

¹⁴ 'Constantin V. Boundas, 'Deleuze-Bergson: an Ontology of the Virtual', in *Deleuze: A Critical Reader*, ed. by Paul Patton (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), pp.81-106 (p.83).

¹⁵ James Williams, *Gilles Deleuze's Difference and Repetition: a critical introduction and guide*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), p.145. Henceforth, *GD's D&R*.

of the first paradigm, and that I strive to harbour the second...the notion of “multiplicity” was to be at the center of our epistolary controversy of 1992-94.¹⁶

Badiou’s self-proclaimed status as a philosopher of the multiple derives from ‘the mathematical theory of the pure multiple – termed “set theory” ‘.¹⁷ According to the above account, whatever status Deleuze might deserve as a philosopher of the multiple does not derive from a mathematical model at all, but is instead, ‘vital’ or ‘animal’. I justify setting aside mathematical models for the purposes of the thesis on the same grounds as Daniel Smith, who writes:

On the opening page of [*The Clamor of Being*] Badiou notes that “Deleuze’s preferences were for differential calculus and Riemannian manifolds...[whereas] I preferred algebra and sets” — leading the reader to expect, in what follows, a comparison of Deleuze’s and Badiou’s notions of multiplicity based...on these differing mathematical sources. Yet...one quickly discovers that Badiou in fact adopted a quite different strategy in approaching Deleuze. Despite the announced intention, the book does not contain a single discussion of Deleuze’s theory of multiplicities; it avoids the topic entirely. Instead, Badiou immediately displaces his focus to the claim that Deleuze is not a philosopher of the multiplicity at all, but rather a philosopher of the “One”.¹⁸

In other words, Badiou’s objection operates from *within* the Deleuzian discourse, not outside it. Badiou rejects Deleuze’s claim to be a philosopher of the multiple because Deleuze is committed to the doctrine of the univocity of Being. Badiou not only argues that these positions are incompatible but that they must be resolved in favour of the One.

The One.

What, exactly, is Badiou accusing Deleuze of, in claiming that Deleuze is a philosopher of ‘the One’? What would a philosopher of the One look like? The Platonic idea of ‘the One’ is famously associated with the dialogue, *Parmenides*. This dialogue is aporetic and therefore presents profound problems of interpretation all of its own, which are not only beyond the scope of this thesis but which also can have formed no part of Badiou’s claims. I work from the assumption that Badiou was not endeavouring to say something deep or original about the status of *Parmenides* in Plato’s oeuvre. Badiou rather invokes Plato and ‘the One’ in order to mark out some philosophical commonplace or well-beaten track that the philosophical community can

¹⁶ *CB*, pp.3-4.

¹⁷ *Being and Event*, p.38.

¹⁸ Daniel W Smith, ‘Mathematics and the Theory of Multiplicities: Badiou and Deleuze Revisited’, *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*, XLI (2003), 411-449 (411-412).

easily recognize and follow. R.E. Allen advises that ‘in the *Parmenides*...Zeno...presents an independent thesis [i.e. independent of the historical Parmenides], the denial of plurality’.¹⁹ Safe to say, then, that it is this denial of plurality that leads Badiou to associate his controversial reading of Deleuze’s position with ‘the One’. But to say that to affirm the One is to deny plurality is still too vague to allow for analysis. I must give more content to this alleged denial: a denial that flies in the face of Deleuze’s own repeated assertions to the contrary.

Allen argues that, historically (i.e. as opposed to in Plato’s dialogue) Parmenides’ primary thesis is the denial of ‘generation and destruction’:

It follows that Zeno, [in the dialogue] if he was saying very much the same thing as Parmenides, was not saying exactly the same thing. He was primarily attacking, not generation and destruction, but pluralism; he was not defending Parmenides’ main thesis, but developing a dependent theme in Parmenides’ thought... Yet the result confirms the Parmenidean conclusion: to deny plurality is to deny the existence of the sensible world, and thus to support the most striking and paradoxical feature of Parmenides’ thought.²⁰

In other words, if there can, from first principles, be no generation or destruction, then the changes that we see in the actual world are an illusion. It is this latter claim that is the precise burden of Badiou’s claim that Deleuze is a philosopher of the One: on this view, for Deleuze, and despite his protestations to the contrary, multiplicity is *not real*, it is a mere appearance.

According to Badiou, the spirit of Deleuzianism is ‘A Renewed Concept of the One’²¹. Badiou’s thesis hangs on discerning three general principles that must ‘govern the examination of Deleuze’s philosophy and that...are faithful to its spirit’:

1. This philosophy is organized around a metaphysics of the One.

Eschewing what Badiou sees as superficial readings of ‘Deleuze as liberating the anarchic multiple of desires and errant drifts’ and ‘contrary even to the apparent indications of his work that play on the opposition multiple/multiplicities...it is the occurrence of the One...that forms

¹⁹ R.E. Allen, trans. and analysis, *Plato’s Parmenides*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), p.72.

²⁰ Allen, *Plato’s Parmenides*, pp.71-72.

²¹ *CB*, p.10. Subsequent refs., p.17.

the supreme destination of thought and to which thought is consecrated'.²² I have suggested that Badiou's thesis can be reduced to the more brutal claim that, for Deleuze, the multiple is not real. This is evident at least in the *tenor* of Badiou's remark that:

In what way should the All [the One] be determined, in order that the existence of each portion of this All — far from being positioned as independent or as surging forth unpredictably — be nothing other than an expressive profile of "the powerful, nonorganic Life that embraces the world?"

I associate Badiou's phrase 'nothing other than an expressive profile' with my reading 'not real'. Burchill reaches the same view:

The truth of the matter, according to Badiou, is that Deleuze's fundamental concern ...is...the formulation of a "renewed concept of the One", in terms of which the multiple is conceived as the immanent production of this One. This, in fact, means that the multiple has a purely formal or modal, and not *real*, status (for the multiple attests the power of the One, in which consists its ontological status) and is thus, ultimately, of the order of simulacra'.²³

My defence of Deleuze's philosophy of multiplicity must, therefore, show that whatever Deleuze means by the multiple, it is real.

The second and third of the three principles that govern Badiou's analysis of Deleuze as a philosopher of the One are:

2. It proposes an ethics of thought that requires dispossession and asceticism.
3. It is systematic and abstract.²⁴

I justify treating these together because they are different perspectives on broadly the same point. The first of them alludes to objections that have often dogged the poststructuralist tradition concerning the nature of personhood and the status of consciousness. One might suppose that such concerns, while pertinent in themselves, are distinct from the controversy of the One but not so, as Badiou makes clear:

²² *CB*, p.11. And subsequent ref., citing, Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p.81; translation modified.

²³ Translator's Preface, p.xiv.

²⁴ *CB*, p.17. Subsequent ref., pp.11-12.

All those who believe that Deleuze's remarks may be seen to encourage autonomy or the anarchizing idea of the sovereign individual...do not take literally enough the strictly "*machinic*" conception that Deleuze has...of will or choice. For this conception strictly precludes any idea of ourselves as being, at any time, the source of what we think or do. Everything always stems from afar...in the infinite and inhuman resource of the One.

In other words, the status of the individual person is apparently degraded. This is similar to the third principle because Badiou's point is that just as the status of the active human individual is degraded, so is the status of the actual diversity of things in the world. On this view, one starts to misread Deleuze:

As soon as one imagines that the constraint exercised by concrete cases makes of Deleuze's thought a huge description of collection of the diversity characterizing the contemporary world...The rights of the heterogeneous are...limited...It is therefore necessary to consider that Deleuze's philosophy is concrete only insofar as the concept is concrete...When all is said and done, the multiple of rippling cases that are invoked in Deleuze's prose has only an adventitious value. What counts is the impersonal power of the concepts themselves.²⁵

I will need to make clear what counts as an individual, for Deleuze, and the status of the concepts and of actual things.

Badiou recognises Deleuze's allegiance to the doctrine of the univocity of Being. Indeed, it would be difficult to miss it. I have aligned Deleuze's avowal of univocal Being with the apparent privilege that Deleuze accords to the philosophy of Spinoza. Badiou, however, conflates the doctrine of the univocity of Being with the Platonic notion of 'the One'. This conflation is sometimes quite explicit. For example, Badiou asserts: 'Deleuze retains from Plato the univocal sovereignty of the One'.²⁶ This is immediately somewhat troubling because the doctrine of the univocity of Being has a philosophical lineage peculiar to itself. Smith states that the propositions, 'Being is univocal' and 'Being is One' are: 'Strictly incompatible ...and Badiou's conflation of the two...betrays a fundamental misunderstanding of the theory of univocity'.²⁷ I suggest that they are incompatible because the Platonic 'One' entails transcendence, whereas univocity, particularly (as I shall later show) when it migrates from Duns Scotus to Spinoza, is a doctrine of immanence. I am largely going to defend the role of univocity in Deleuze's thought with reference to Spinoza. Will I, then, have lost touch with Badiou's objection? I argue not.

²⁵ *CB*, pp.15-16.

²⁶ *CB*, p.46.

When Badiou was prompted, by the adverse reactions to *The Clamor Being*, to respond, *he* identifies the problem of ‘the One’ with Spinoza, rather than with Plato. Badiou refers to those who challenge him as those who ‘regard as ironic the question “Could Deleuze’s aim have been that of intuiting the One?”’ But tellingly, Badiou adds: ‘what else exactly could a self-proclaimed disciple of Spinoza be concerned with?’²⁸

Primary sources.

Of the assumption behind his own thesis, Christian Kerslake writes: ‘I take *Difference and Repetition* as Deleuze’s major philosophical statement, and I treat all his earlier works in the history of philosophy as steps toward that statement’.²⁹ My thesis is based on the same assumption and is, therefore, anchored in that seminal text. What is more, my thesis is structured in accordance with Deleuze’s pattern of argument in that text. If I am right to claim that Deleuze is a philosopher of the multiple, one might expect to find the philosophical resources to support my claim in *Difference and Repetition*. Having said that, Deleuze is not prepared to go over old ground. I shall often have to inform the reading of *Difference and Repetition* by reference to earlier or roughly contemporaneous material which, I argue, is injected into *Difference and Repetition* in a condensed form. I also defend the use of material later than *Difference and Repetition*, such as *A Thousand Plateaus*, in order better to understand the earlier text.

A first question.

I have already stated the claim with which *Difference and Repetition* ends; to follow Deleuze’s pattern of argument, I now need to orientate the thesis relative to where it begins. This involves more than opening the first page. Ian Buchanan writes: ‘as a first question, readers of Deleuze must determine how exactly they will read his work’.³⁰ As if in reply, May writes:

When it seems in his texts that Deleuze is making a claim about the way things are, most often he is not — and he does not take himself to be — telling us about the way things are. Instead he is offering us a way of looking at things. Thus, in order to assess the

²⁷ Daniel W. Smith, ‘Badiou and Deleuze on the Ontology of Mathematics’, in *Think Again: Alain Badiou and the Future of Philosophy*, ed. by Peter Hallward (London: Continuum, 2006), pp.77-93 (p.88).

²⁸ Alain Badiou, ‘One, Multiple, Multiplicities’, in *Badiou: Theoretical Writings* (London: Continuum, 2007), pp.68-82 (p.80).

²⁹ Christian Kerslake, ‘Deleuze, Kant, and the Question of Metacritique’, *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*, 62 (2004), 481-508 (p.484).

³⁰ Ian Buchanan, *Deleuzism: A Metacommentary* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), p.40.

Deleuzian claims of difference, it is necessary to understand what it is to be a Deleuzian claim, that is, it is necessary to understand what Deleuze is doing when he does philosophy.³¹

May distinguishes between a 'normative' reading of Deleuze as opposed to a 'constitutive' reading. According to May, Deleuze's idea of difference, if 'taken constitutively', would make claims 'about what difference really is and how it really constitutes some domain'; whereas, taken 'normatively', it would be 'telling us how we ought to think about a certain domain regardless of how it is actually constituted'. May makes plain that: 'Regarding Deleuze, I read him normatively'. The normative reading of *Difference and Repetition* sees it as a book of ethics. Indeed this conforms with the topic of the opening chapter of May's later book on Deleuze, 'How Might One Live?'³² On this view, Deleuze does not purport to say anything about how things, in the world, actually are.

There is nothing in *Difference and Repetition* itself that would lead one to adopt the approach that May recommends. I find support for this assertion from May himself insofar as his argument for adopting this approach does not rely on *Difference and Repetition* but on the later, *What is Philosophy?* May's point is that in the later work Deleuze places an apparently tight stricture of what philosophy can do: 'It is the discipline that consists in *creating* concepts'.³³ May draws mostly from this, what philosophy is *not*: 'Philosophy is not the attempt, as Quine would have it, to "limn the world"'.³⁴ This seems to entail, for May, a fatal conflict with the notion that philosophy can *do* metaphysics; at least, if by that one meant the 'discovery' of the ultimate nature of reality. For May, Deleuze's concerns *are* ontological but it is never a matter of discovery, it is 'creative'.³⁵ I fail to understand how ontology can be *entirely* creative. Arnaud Villani, in his sharp response to *The Clamor of Being*, writes by way of personal testimony:

The question of Deleuze's metaphysics is, without doubt, the most complex question in a complex oeuvre. That metaphysics did indeed occupy a central place in this oeuvre is borne out in his own words: "I feel myself to be a pure metaphysician," he liked to say.³⁶

³¹ Todd May, *Reconsidering Difference: Nancy, Derrida, Levinas and Deleuze* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), p.167. Subsequent refs.: p.14.

³² Todd May, *Gilles Deleuze: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp.1-25.

³³ *Reconsidering Difference*, p.168, citing Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, p.5.

³⁴ *ibid.*

³⁵ *Gilles Deleuze: An Introduction*, pp.16-18.

³⁶ Arnaud Villani, 'La Métaphysique de Deleuze', *Futur Antérieur*, trans. by Clare Robertson and Charles Mayell, 43 (1998) 55-70 (55).

In my view, in *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze does metaphysics in order to find something out about the world, as well as in order to change how we think about the world.

In support of my more 'constitutive' reading of Deleuze, I invoke Buchanan's different interpretation of just what '*What is Philosophy?*' allows. As we have seen, Deleuze and Guattari define philosophy as the creation of concepts. Buchanan immediately releases some of the apparently paralysing effect of this with the observation that: 'Concepts are not what philosophers think about, but what they think with...they [concepts] do not reduce philosophy to a weak subjectivism'.³⁷ Buchanan finds two answers to the central question of *What is Philosophy?*: 'On the one hand it is the invention of concepts...but on the other hand, it is an aspect of the thought-brain'. In my view, Buchanan's 'second answer' relates to Deleuze's attempt to radicalise our 'image of thought'. In other words, the question becomes not so much, what is philosophy? But what is thinking? If Deleuze can show that thought is 'in the world' in the first place, rather than 'in our heads', then the thought-brain is constitutive, not merely normative.

Difference and empiricism.

Deleuze's central organising idea in his oeuvre in general, and in *Difference and Repetition* in particular, is 'difference'; it is at the heart of all that follows in this thesis and, therefore, I justify paying early attention to it. One might have expected that *Difference and Repetition* would begin with a definition of 'difference', it does not. Or not at least in terms of any attempt of the sort that one sees in analytical philosophy to define a 'concept' that is new to us, in terms of other concepts that we already know. Part of the reason for this is that, for Deleuze, difference is not a concept. At first blush, this might seem an unlikely reading, given that it is Deleuze, along with Guattari, who famously declares: 'The philosopher is the concept's friend...philosophy is the discipline that involves *creating* concepts'.³⁸ As we will see, Deleuze is also suspicious of concepts.

If 'difference' is not a concept, what is it? In the introductory chapter of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze *does* convey, albeit obliquely, something of what he means by difference. The clues that Deleuze gives as to the nature of 'difference' are conveyed via a critique of any philosophy that purports to understand the world in terms of concepts. Deleuze writes, that:

³⁷ *Deleuzism: A Metacommentary*, pp.48-49. Subsequent ref., p.41.

³⁸ *What is Philosophy?*, p.5.

A concept may be in principle the concept of a particular thing, thus having an infinite comprehension. Infinite comprehension is the correlate of an extension = 1' (11).

This is obscure. Williams advises that:

Deleuze's argument on concepts is designed to show that a concept cannot correspond to an actual object...in order for a concept to represent an object, it must correspond to that object alone (its extension must be equal to one)...for this to be the case, its comprehension must be infinite, that is, the concept must have an infinite number of predicates...that correspond to the properties of the object...Deleuze simply seems to assume that objects have an infinite set of properties.³⁹

Deleuze's point is that in principle a perfect concept would be tailored to fit just one thing. If that was how concepts were 'in practice', a conceptual understanding would equip us with a precise understanding of the whole of reality. But that is not how concepts work. Concepts are general, not particular. One might characterise the central message of the introduction to *Difference and Repetition* as an attack on 'generality' and the attempt to replace it with 'difference'. It is evident that a critique of the supposed limitations of concepts is important to Deleuze's project from the sheer amount of space that Deleuze devotes to what he calls 'conceptual blockage' (11-19) in his otherwise slender introductory chapter. I shall only follow enough of it to support, from the primary source, my contention that 'difference' is not a concept.

In the context of a discussion of what Deleuze calls 'conceptual blockage', he makes a highly condensed and idiosyncratic allusion (without any explicit scholarly reference) to what is, in fact, a famous argument from Kant's *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*: 'However far you go in the concept, Kant says...[you can] make several objects correspond to it, or at least two: one for the left and one for the right' (14). This is in need of further elaboration, which Williams provides:

For any given concept of nature there are further non-conceptual spatio-temporal properties that allow it to correspond to a plurality of objects that are identical from the point of view of the concept. In the *Prolegomena*, Kant explains this point in terms of "inner differences" between things that can only be revealed through "outer" spatial relations....We cannot put the left-hand glove on the right had, yet the gloves are the same in terms of their concepts in the sense that all their internal properties are the same or they are isomorphous...Right-handedness and left-handedness are outer relations.⁴⁰

³⁹ *GD's D&R*, p.39.

⁴⁰ *GD's D&R*, p.42.

The point seems to me that right-handedness and left-handedness, although conceptually distinct, still do not seem distinct enough to explain why we cannot put our right-hand in a left-hand glove. We cannot quite think it, we can only experience it. Hence, Kant writes:

Here are no inner differences that any understanding could think; and yet the differences are inner as far as the senses tell us, for the left hand cannot be enclosed in the same boundaries as the right...notwithstanding all their mutual equality and similarity.⁴¹

Hence, we find Deleuze, in the same context as the above allusion to Kant, talking of ‘a power peculiar to the existent, a stubbornness of the existent in intuition, which resists every specification by concepts no matter how far this is taken’ (13-14).

With this background in mind, one can now see how Cliff Stagoll, gamely attempting to define difference on Deleuze’s behalf, can with justice write:

Deleuze argues that we ought not to presume a pre-existing unity, but instead take seriously the nature of the world as it is perceived. For him, every aspect of reality evidences difference...he means the particularity or “singularity” of each individual thing, moment, perception or conception.⁴²

The ‘pre-existing unity’ of which Stagoll writes, is the unity of the ‘concepts’ that we accept as ‘given’, rather than those concepts that philosophers ‘create’. On this view, then, we are to escape the impoverishment of what Nietzsche calls: ‘the Platonic way of thinking...who knew how to find a higher triumph...by means of pale, cold, gray (*sic*) concept nets which they threw over the motley whirl of the senses.’⁴³ We shall also later see how this interpretation of the nature of ‘difference’ resonates with Deleuze’s reading of Bergson. Deleuze approves of what he takes to be Bergson’s complaint that ‘in [the] ...*dialectical* method, one begins with concepts that, like baggy clothes, are much too big’.⁴⁴ Hence, what this seems to imply is that if philosophy were to be able to discover the ‘thing in itself’, it would have to seek concepts that are tailored to the uniqueness of each moment and thing. This, however, is not attainable. Deleuze’s

⁴¹ Kant, *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1953), p.42; as cited by Williams, *GD’sD&R*, p.42.

⁴² Cliff Stagoll, ‘Difference’, in *The Deleuze Dictionary*, ed. by Adrian Parr (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005) pp.72-73 (pp.72-73).

⁴³ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1966), s.14, p.22.

⁴⁴ Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, trans. by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Zone Books, 1991), p.44; citing Henri Bergson, *Creative Mind*, pp.206-7.

idea of difference involves a partial acceptance of that fact but one which, nevertheless, refuses to give up on the project of discovering the thing in itself. I said, above, that for Deleuze, difference is not a concept. May agrees: ‘The term “difference” is not another concept designed to capture the nature of being or the essence of what there is. It is a term [Deleuze] uses to refer to that which eludes such capture...The term “difference” palpates what it cannot conceive: it gestures at what it cannot grasp’.⁴⁵

While Stagoll’s stab at a definition has merit, and takes forward my immediate purposes here, it could also, without further elaboration, lead us in entirely the wrong direction. If Deleuze’s own ‘Copernican revolution’ amounts to privileging the uniqueness of each moment and thing, then why is it not just a tired phenomenism? The reason that it is *not* phenomenism is because Deleuze is not going to be satisfied with mere phenomena. Deleuze sometimes calls his method ‘transcendental empiricism’.⁴⁶ In so doing, he must be associating his approach with Kant: the inventor of the transcendental argument. Indeed, in chapter 8 of the thesis I show how Deleuze’s notion of the multiple is inspired by Kant’s theory of ideas. But for my immediate purposes, I wish only to note that, like Kant, Deleuze contrasts phenomena with noumena. I suggest that Deleuze’s version of the noumenal, is what he calls the ‘virtual’: the notion around which much of the controversy with Badiou will turn. Unlike Kant, however, Deleuze is not content to stop at the border of the noumenal: Deleuze aims to allow philosophy access to it.

What are we to make of the *empiricism* in transcendental empiricism? If Deleuze has associated himself with Kantianism he has, at the same time, disassociated himself, from Kant’s transcendental *idealism*. At the very end of his philosophical career (indeed nearing the end of his life) Deleuze writes: ‘There is something wild and powerful in this transcendental empiricism that is of course not the element of sensation (simple empiricism).’⁴⁷ But even in the compass of this quotation, Deleuze seems both to embrace empiricism and to be apparently antagonistic towards it: note the dismissive, ‘*of course* not...simple empiricism’. The antagonism is, however, directed at what Deleuze regards as the perversion of empiricism in the wake of Kant. To grasp this we need to go right back to the start of Deleuze’s career:

⁴⁵ Gilles Deleuze: *An Introduction*, p.82.

⁴⁶ Gilles Deleuze, ‘Immanence: A Life’, in *Pure Immanence: Essays on A Life*, trans. by Anne Boyman (New York: Zone Books, 2001), pp.25-33 (p.25).

⁴⁷ ‘Immanence: A Life’, p.25.

The classical definition of empiricism proposed by the Kantian tradition is this: empiricism is the theory according to which knowledge not only begins with experience but is derived from it. But *why* would the empiricist say that? and as a result of which question? This definition, to be sure, has at least the advantage of avoiding a piece of nonsense: were empiricism to be presented simply as a theory according to which knowledge only begins with experience, there would not have been any...philosophers — Plato and Leibniz included — who would not be empiricists.⁴⁸

In other words, a better definition of empiricism would focus on why, and then by implication 'how', knowledge is *derived* from experience. So, why? For Deleuze, 'knowledge is not the most important thing for empiricism, but only the means to some practical activity'.⁴⁹ But it is in the 'how?' that Deleuze's reading of Hume takes on its most distinctive hue: 'experience for the empiricist, and for Hume in particular, does not have this univocal and constitutive aspect we give it'.⁵⁰ Buchanan explains where Deleuze is heading: 'The classical definition, by defining empiricism in experiential terms, ignores completely the role of *relations*'.⁵¹ For Deleuze, the central and defining message of Hume's famous argument concerning the nature of causation is that we do not *experience* relations. This is the burden of Deleuze's motto: 'Relations are external to their terms...This means that ideas do not account for the nature of the operations that we perform on them, and especially of the relations that we establish among them'.⁵² As Buchanan puts it, Deleuze's most general claim is that 'our experience of the world is meaningful only insofar as we institute relations between perceptions and it is these relations that makes experience cohere sufficiently to be called understanding. These relations are not founded in experience, but rather in human nature'.⁵³ Yet in order not entirely to mistake Deleuze's sympathy with Hume, it is important to note that, on Deleuze's reading, 'Hume never showed any interest in...purely psychological problems...Empiricism is not geneticism: as much as any other philosophy, it is opposed to psychologism'.⁵⁴ In the Preface to the English-Language edition of *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, Deleuze describes, more clearly, the basis of his sympathy with Hume, who 'gave the association of ideas its real meaning, making it a practice of cultural and *conventional* formations...rather than a theory of the human mind...We are habits, nothing but habits—the habit of saying "I"'.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ Gilles Deleuze, *Empiricism and Subjectivity: An Essay on Hume's Theory of Human Nature*, trans. by Constantin V. Boundas, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), p.107.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, pp.107-8.

⁵¹ *Deleuzism: A Metacommentary*, p.84.

⁵² *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, p.101.

⁵³ *Deleuzism: A Metacommentary*, p.84.

⁵⁴ *Empiricism and Subjectivity*, pp.108. Subsequent ref. pp. ix-x.

Summary.

Chapter 1 of the thesis maps on to the Preface and Introductory chapter of *Difference and Repetition*. In the introduction to the thesis I set the scene with regard to 'difference', but what of 'repetition'? I argue that repetition is a 'sign' of difference. Deleuze explicitly pairs Kierkegaard and Nietzsche: 'There is a force common to Kierkegaard and Nietzsche' (5). The force is repetition. For Deleuze, the more critical engagement is with Nietzsche's doctrine of the eternal return (see chapter 6) but I show how Deleuze's difficult category of repetition can be better understood in comparison with Kierkegaard's.

In overview, chapters 2 – 4 of the thesis are each a meditation on elements of Chapter One of *Difference and Repetition*, 'Difference in Itself'. Deleuze uses the idea of 'difference' in a way that frustrates any commonsensical understanding of that term. May takes the commonsensical view that one cannot have difference without unity: 'To put the matter baldly a thought of pure difference is not a thought at all.'⁵⁵ In the first substantive chapter of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze requires that we follow a programme of philosophical therapy designed to cure us of commonsense. Deleuze's 'alternative' history of the 'wrong' sort of difference plots an apparently erratic course: starting with Aristotle, it arrives at Plato, having gone via Hegel. My thesis charts the same course. On the face of it, the nature of difference, whilst central to Deleuze's project, is not the same as the nature of multiplicity. But for Deleuze, as Boundas puts it: 'Multiplicity = movement = becoming = difference...these are not four distinct concerns but one and the same problem...viewed from four different angles'.⁵⁶ Difference is shown to be a relation that connects rather than separates and is, in that sense, multiple.

Chapter 2 follows Deleuze's critique of Aristotle's concept of difference. If the history of difference engages with a notion of multiplicity, here it becomes entangled with the problem of the univocity of Being; it is a 'problem' insofar as it is the engine of Badiou's general objection. Aristotle denies the univocity of Being (hence, Being is 'equivocal'), while Deleuze avows univocity. I argue that Deleuze's attempt to refute Aristotle is a failure but that this is not fatal to his project.

⁵⁵ Todd May, 'Difference and Unity in Gilles Deleuze', in *Gilles Deleuze and the Theater of Philosophy*, ed. by Constantin V. Boundas and Dorothea Olkowski (New York: Routledge, 1994), p.46.

⁵⁶ 'Deleuze-Bergson: an Ontology of the Virtual', p.82.

Chapter 3 explains the rationale behind Deleuze's characterisation of Hegel as the enemy of 'positive' difference. The Hegelian dialectic is a logic of 'not': it is powered by contradiction. However, I argue that Deleuze's anti-Hegelianism obscures the Hegelian flavour of Deleuze's ontology. The pre-conceptual realm that Deleuze calls 'sense' is shown to be Hegelian in inspiration; here, thought and Being lie in the perfect registration that, in Deleuze's later reading of Spinoza (see chapter 7), will become a condition for the system of 'pure immanence' and 'expression'.

Chapter 4 explains why Deleuze blames Plato for providing Western philosophy with an understanding of 'difference' expressed in terms of a lack of 'resemblance'. I refute that element of Badiou's objection which relies on a misreading of Deleuze's concept of simulacra. Deleuze writes: 'The task of modern philosophy has been defined: to overturn Platonism' (59). However, here I also show how, for Deleuze, Plato provides an anticipation of what the 'right' kind of difference might look like.

In overview, chapter 5 of the thesis acts as a propaedeutic for chapter 6, which is a meditation on elements of Chapter Two of *Difference and Repetition*, 'Repetition for Itself'. Having followed Deleuze's history of an ersatz concept of difference, the thesis now begins to track Deleuze's account of the 'right' kind of difference. May 'christens', Bergson, Spinoza and Nietzsche, Deleuze's 'Holy Trinity'⁵⁷; Michael Hardt structures his account around these same three figures.⁵⁸ Although I find cause to agree, my own thesis will only finally be made out by reference to Deleuze's reading of Kant.

I argue that Deleuze's ontology of the multiple is inspired by Bergson's. In chapter 5 of the thesis I give a close reading of Deleuze's early essay (1956) 'Bergson's Conception of Difference' and of *Bergsonism* (1966). The justification for this departure from the main text is that Bergson's theory of Time as 'duration' (*durée*) lies behind much of the argument of Chapter Two of *Difference and Repetition*. Although inspired by Bergson's, I argue that Deleuze's ontology is not 'demonstrated' (using that term loosely) solely from within the Bergsonian discourse. At this stage, therefore, we have a 'promise', a 'hope' of an ontology. Hence, in the

⁵⁷ Gilles Deleuze: *An Introduction*, heading of chapter 2, p.26.

⁵⁸ Michael Hardt, *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy* (London: University College London Press, 1993).

early essay, Deleuze writes of his ‘hope that difference itself is something, that it has a nature’.⁵⁹ On returning to the study of Bergson ten years later, Deleuze connects the philosophy of difference with the philosophy of multiplicity: ‘Too little importance has been attached to the use of this word “multiplicity”’.⁶⁰ I argue that, in Bergson, Deleuze finds the distinction that comes to define his own concept of multiplicity. On the one hand, there is the ‘discontinuous’ or ‘discrete multiplicity’, it is ‘represented by space...It is a multiplicity of exteriority...of juxtaposition...of quantitative differentiation, of difference in degree; it is a numerical multiplicity’. On the other hand, there is the ‘continuous’ or ‘virtual multiplicity’, which ‘appears in pure duration: It is an internal multiplicity of succession, of fusion...of qualitative discrimination, or of difference in kind...that cannot be reduced to numbers’. It is the continuous multiplicity that I defend.

Chapter 6 of my thesis maps onto the argument of Chapter Two of *Difference and Repetition*. Smith writes that ‘*Difference and Repetition* can be read as Deleuze’s *Critique of Pure Reason*’.⁶¹ I argue that Chapter Two of *Difference and Repetition* indeed mimics the Transcendental Aesthetic of the first *Critique*, insofar as Deleuze provides his own account of the nature of Time. Deleuze’s argument is structured around what he calls three syntheses of Time: ‘present, past and future are revealed as Repetition, but in very different modes’ (94). The first synthesis (habit) and the second (memory) are shown to be thoroughly Bergsonian. The third synthesis, Nietzsche’s doctrine of the ‘eternal return’, is transformed in Deleuze’s reading, into a theory of ‘the future’ missing from the Bergsonian account. In the conclusion of the thesis I show how Deleuze comes to meld his readings of Nietzsche and Spinoza.

Chapter 7 of the thesis is a creative response to Chapter Three of *Difference and Repetition*, ‘The Image of Thought’. I defend taking the liberty of using Chapter Three as a vehicle for interpreting Deleuze’s reading of Spinoza, even though Spinoza is barely even mentioned in it. In the late work, *What is Philosophy?*, we find: ‘Spinoza is the Christ of philosophers, and the greatest philosophers are hardly more than apostles who distance themselves from or draw near to

⁵⁹ Gilles Deleuze, ‘Bergson’s Conception of Difference’, trans. by Melissa McMahon, in *The New Bergson*, ed. by John Mullarkey (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. 42-65 (42). Henceforth, BCD.

⁶⁰ *Bergsonism*, p.38. And subsequent refs. in this para.

⁶¹ Daniel W. Smith, ‘Deleuze, Kant, and the Theory of Immanent Ideas’ in *Deleuze and Philosophy*, ed. by Constantin V. Boundas (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), pp.43-61 (p.45)

this mystery'.⁶² Why? The answer to this question lies at the heart of unravelling the puzzle of the apparent tension in Deleuze's philosophy between the One and the Multiple and the Same and the Different.

I deny Gillian Howie's thesis that Deleuze seeks to rely on Spinoza's flawed demonstration of the single substance in order to build an apodictic foundation for his own philosophy.⁶³ For Deleuze, there are only contingent beginnings: 'We invoke throws of the dice, imperatives and questions of chance instead of an apodictic principle; an aleatory point at which everything becomes ungrounded instead of a solid ground' (200). I argue that what Deleuze takes from Spinoza is a 'logic' which is consistent with a Bergsonian ontology. Spinoza, famously, distinguishes between the infinite attributes that comprise the single substance but the means of this distinction is not numerical distinction. Deleuze concludes, 'Numerical distinction is never real...real distinction is never numerical'.⁶⁴ Central to Deleuze's logic of multiplicity is his appropriation, from Duns Scotus via Spinoza, of the concept of 'formal distinction'.

I give an analysis of *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza* (published more or less simultaneously with *Difference and Repetition*); in the Translator's Preface to the English version Deleuze is quoted as having remarked in conversation:

What interested me most in Spinoza wasn't his Substance, but the composition of the finite modes...That is: the hope of making substance turn on finite modes, or at least of seeing in substance a plane of immanence in which finite modes operate.⁶⁵

In Deleuze's reading of Spinoza, the notion of 'immanence' takes precedence over substance. I argue that Deleuze's commitment to the univocity of Being is a commitment to the parity of all existents: 'Everything is equal!' (304). The philosophy of immanence is a philosophy of connection. A system of immanence is the opposite of a system of transcendence, but what should we understand by transcendence? May remarks: 'it is the transcendence of God that forms the longest legacy. But it is not the only one'.⁶⁶ Deleuze's system is God-less, but the dead Plato also casts a long shadow. However, Deleuze distinguishes a third layer of transcendence:

⁶² Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, trans. by Graham Burchell and Hugh Tomlinson (London: Verso, 1994), p.60.

⁶³ Gillian Howie, *Deleuze and Spinoza: the Aura of Expression* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002).

⁶⁴ Gilles Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, trans. by Martin Joughin (New York: Zone Books, 1992), p.34.

⁶⁵ *Expressionism in Philosophy*, p.11. Henceforth, *EiP*.

⁶⁶ *Gilles Deleuze: An Introduction*, p.27.

the 'subject', the 'I', or the self. In his last published essay, what Deleuze calls 'A Life' includes a conception of the human as part of a 'transcendental field'.⁶⁷ Central to this notion is his opposition 'to everything that makes up the world of the subject and the object'. I agree with Claire Colebrook who argues that Deleuze identifies his cause with Spinoza's (i.e. he who 'opened up the question of univocity') because 'far from explaining the world as the relation between two beings, such as mind and world, responsible and radical philosophy accounts for the emergence of this distinction...knower and known, perceiver and perceived'.⁶⁸ I show how Deleuze tries to undermine the assumption of the conventional dialectical separation by reading Spinoza's *Ethics* as a kind of physics. It is this provides the context to the reference, in the last essay, to the 'increase or decrease in power'.⁶⁹ Deleuze seems to concede that he is bending Spinoza's conception of personhood to his own purposes, when he laments that 'Even Spinoza's conception of this passage or quantity of power still appeals to consciousness'. Be that as it may, I argue that this still explains Deleuze's boast that, 'The transcendental field...becomes a...plane of immanence that reintroduces Spinozism into the heart of the philosophical process'.

I argue that univocal Being is also a surrogate for the theory of 'expression'. In other words, the claim that in the pre-conceptual and pre-linguistic realm of 'sense', Being is unmediated and 'speaks itself'. In chapter 3 of the thesis I suggested that Deleuze's concept of expression is inspired by his reading of Hegel. However, for Deleuze, expression is best instantiated in the philosophy of Spinoza. Deleuze interprets 'expression' in such a way as to take the place of the notions of 'representation' (i.e. the Being that does *not* speak itself) and external 'causality'.

Chapter 8 of the thesis spans Chapters Four ('Ideas and the Synthesis of Difference') and Five ('Asymmetrical Synthesis of the Sensible') of *Difference and Repetition*. In chapters 5 and 6, I have argued for an understanding of the ontology of the Deleuzian multiple inspired by Bergson. In chapter 7, I argued for a logic of the Deleuzian multiple inspired by Spinoza. Christian Kerslake writes:

Deleuze presents an account of absolute difference that is formally coherent...However, for the presentation of absolute difference to be more than formally coherent, Deleuze would need to commit himself to an account of the relation between the logical (or

⁶⁷ 'Immanence: A Life', p.25.

⁶⁸ Claire Colebrook, *Deleuze: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: Continuum, 2006), p.136.

⁶⁹ 'Immanence: A Life', p.25. Subsequent refs.: p.26 and pp.27-28.

formal) and the real...In an important phrase, Deleuze claims to have revealed “the only realized ontology”.⁷⁰

How? I argue that Deleuze does this via his creative engagement with the philosophy of Kant in which Deleuze deduces, albeit from a contingent ‘given’, the existence of the structures which he calls Ideas. The Deleuzian Ideas realize the ‘hope’ of a marriage between a Bergsonian ontology and a Spinozan logic.

If *Difference and Repetition* is Deleuze’s *Critique of Pure Reason*, in Chapter Four he warps the Kantian architectonic so as to focus, *not* on the deduction of the categories in the Transcendental Analytic, but on the ‘ideas of reason’ in the Transcendental Dialectic. Thereby, Deleuze transforms Kant’s theory of ideas into his own Theory of Ideas as questions or problems. According to this theory, Ideas are ontological: ‘modern thought and the renaissance of ontology is based upon the question-problem complex’ (195). Ideas are not in our heads. What is more: ‘Ideas are multiplicities’ (182). Multiple, in the Bergsonian sense, of which Rajchman writes: ‘what Deleuze calls a multiplicity can’t be counted; its components can’t be picked out one by one, and they retain a certain vagueness’.⁷¹ What is the relation between this kind of multiplicity and a problem or a question? Rajchman goes on to cite an image used by Deleuze in the late work *Critique et Clinique* of an incomplete wall of uncemented stones.⁷² We are to imagine a kind of jagged edge, that: (1) demands to be continued (and in that sense is a question or problem); (2) never can be completed (the new leading edge will always be jagged) and; (3) will forever frustrate any attempt to predict the nature of its continuation (i.e. its solution). If Ideas are not in our heads, where are they? Chapter Five of *Difference and Repetition* again mimics the first *Critique* insofar as Deleuze here provides a critique of the Transcendental Aesthetic and his own account of the nature of Space. I follow Manuel DeLanda who argues that Ideas exist in a ‘virtual space’.⁷³

In the concluding chapter of the thesis, I argue that I have shown that Deleuze is a philosopher of the multiple because he avows *both* an ontology of the multiple and a logic of the multiple. We see now the point of Deleuze’s claim (to which I referred in my introduction to the thesis): ‘I

⁷⁰ Christian Kerslake, ‘The Vertigo of Philosophy. Deleuze and the Problem of Immanence’, *Radical Philosophy*, 113 (May/June 2002), 10-23 (p.13).

⁷¹ *The Deleuze Connections*, p.58. I have corrected an error in Rajchman’s text which reads ‘countered’ instead of ‘counted’.

⁷² *The Deleuze Connections*, p.59; citing Gilles Deleuze, *Critique et Clinique* (Minuit, 1983), p.110.

conceive of philosophy as a logic of multiplicities'.⁷⁴ I show how this logic is worked out, in detail, in Deleuze's application of the notions of disjunctive syntheses and affirmation.

On a point by point basis, I answer the arguments in the Chapter of *The Clamor of the Being* entitled 'The Virtual', which form the heart of Badiou's objection:

(1) In chapter 4 of the thesis, I rejected Badiou's reading of Deleuze's theory of actual things (beings) 'as merely superficial intensities of simulacra of Being'.⁷⁵ In other words, as not real. (I do not return to that discussion here.)

(2) Badiou conflates 'the One' with Deleuze's commitment to the 'univocity of Being'. One modern commentator interprets this as tantamount to accusing Deleuze of a return to the philosophy of identity. I show that this is a facile a reply to Badiou who understands, perfectly well, that Deleuze's system is founded on a radical notion of difference, not on identity.

(3) Badiou claims that Deleuze's notion of the 'virtual image' is incoherent: it is, 'an optical metaphor' which 'does not hold up'.⁷⁶ I refute this by reference to Bergson's argument for the co-existence of the past and the present.

(4) I argue that Badiou's objection reaches its most penetrating form not, in fact, by characterising Deleuze as a philosopher of 'the One': 'In this circuit of thought, it is the Two and not the One that is instated'.⁷⁷ In other words, Badiou attacks Deleuze's central distinction between the virtual and the actual. Badiou rightly claims that 'Deleuze ends up by posing that the two parts of the object, the virtual and the actual, cannot in fact be thought as separate. No mark or criterion exists by which to distinguish them. They are "distinct and yet indiscernible".' I offer at least some amelioration of the force of the objection that 'Deleuze undertakes an analytic of the indiscernible' by reference to Deleuze's treatment of Bergson's differences of nature which are also both radically distinct and yet intimately joined.⁷⁸

⁷³ Manuel DeLanda, 'Space: Extensive and Intensive, Actual and Virtual', in *Deleuze and Space*, ed. by Ian Buchanan and Gregg Lambert (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), pp.80-88.

⁷⁴ *Pourparlers*, as cited by Rajchman, p.50.

⁷⁵ *CB*, p.44.

⁷⁶ *CB*, p.52.

⁷⁷ *CB*, p.53. And subsequent ref.

(5) Badiou paints Deleuze as 'an involuntary Platonist'. I refute the claim that the virtual 'grounds' the actual (i.e. that the virtual is merely a surrogate of Plato's realm of the Forms) by underlining the *reciprocal* nature of the relationship between the virtual and the actual.

Finally, I return to the problem of the place of Spinozism in Deleuze's system. Badiou complains that Deleuze's 'Spinoza was (and still is) for me an unrecognizable creature'.⁷⁹ There is surely some justice to this. In chapter 7 of the thesis I have already shown how Deleuze's reading of Spinoza alongside Duns Scotus 'is to risk certain distortions'.⁸⁰ To this we must add Deleuze's inversion of Spinozism: 'to make substance turn around the modes' (304). I show how Nietzsche's doctrine of the eternal return provides Deleuze with the resources for this inversion.

⁷⁸ *CB*, p.52. Subsequent ref. p.61.

⁷⁹ *CB*, p.1.

⁸⁰ *EiP*, p.66.

Chapter 1: Repetition: Kierkegaard and Nietzsche.

Introduction to the chapter.

This chapter of my thesis relates to the Introductory Chapter of *Difference and Repetition*, 'Repetition and Difference' (1). The terms in the title of the book are transposed in the title of the Chapter.⁸¹ Hence, *Difference and Repetition* does not start with 'difference': it starts with 'repetition'. Despite all that I have said in my introductory remarks about the primary status of 'difference', does 'repetition' come before difference? I suggest that Deleuze's concept of 'repetition' is parasitic on difference. I argue that we are to understand Deleuze's concept of 'repetition' as an oblique experience, a sign, of difference. It is this, I conjecture, that lies behind the transposition of the terms. We are going in search of difference via repetition. Hence, in the Preface to *Difference and Repetition* we find Deleuze insisting on the inseparability of the two terms: 'These concepts of a pure difference and a complex repetition seemed to connect and coalesce' (xx).

Difference and Repetition begins in earnest with the words: 'Repetition is not generality' (1). In this chapter I show that what Deleuze means by 'repetition' is remote from our intuitive understanding of that term. But I also need to make clear what Deleuze means by 'generality'. In doing so, I further justify my early treatment of Deleuze's idea of difference. For in that context I have already given some indication of what we are to understand by Deleuze's attack on the notion of generality: it is as an attack on the way in which conceptual structures suffocate real differences. When Deleuze asserts that 'Repetition is not generality' he means to *deny* that an event B at T^2 is a *repetition* of an event A at T^1 , if events A and B can be gathered under the same general concept.

Kierkegaard and repetition.

Deleuze provides the justification for a brief early excursion from the text of *Difference and Repetition*: 'There is a force common to Kierkegaard and Nietzsche...Each of [them]...makes repetition...the fundamental category of a philosophy of the future' (5). Although it is Nietzsche that will ultimately prove the more influential over Deleuze, I shall first follow the allusion to

Kierkegaard. Deleuze provides no reference but is clearly alluding to Kierkegaard's *Repetition: An Essay in Experimental Psychology*.⁸² Under the pseudonym Constantine Constantius, Kierkegaard tells a story (with autobiographical as well as philosophical resonances) about how he has counselled a young man in love. Kierkegaard's *Repetition* is a highly nuanced text. Clare Carlisle describes it as 'a strange, elusive book that is more like an experimental novel than a conventional philosophical treatise'.⁸³ Nevertheless, she poses the same question, 'What does Kierkegaard mean by repetition?', that I am posing with reference to Deleuze. What is more, in summary reply, Carlisle offers an answer that is redolent of the kind of answer that we might also anticipate for Deleuze: 'That repetition is more than a concept is integral to its meaning, for, as a movement, repetition exceeds ideality'. I mean to point up the similarity to Deleuze's attack on a purely *conceptual* understanding of repetition.

The character and actions of Constantius come to represent an inauthentic or false repetition, in contrast to those of the young man which are diagnostic of what Kierkegaard thinks of as an authentic or true repetition. Constantius says of himself: 'I am inclined to preserve an attitude of observation toward people'.⁸⁴ Carlisle advises that, for Kierkegaard, this reflects the 'disinterested attitude to existence and preference for ideality' that cannot make for an authentic repetition.⁸⁵ We might still object that the test of repetition would surely lie in what one *does* rather than how one thinks. Accordingly, in Part One of *Repetition*, Constantius goes on a trip to Berlin — significantly, it is a journey that he has made before: 'I will...proceed to tell a little about a voyage of discovery I undertook in order to investigate the possibility and the significance of repetition'.⁸⁶ The whimsical style of *Repetition* perhaps doomed it to be misunderstood. Kierkegaard was so exasperated by the gross misinterpretation of it by contemporary commentators (in particular, that of Professor J. L. Heiberg⁸⁷) that he wrote his own subsequent commentary. We have, therefore, Kierkegaard's own later testimony, albeit still 'in character', as it were, as to the philosophical burden of the return to Berlin:

⁸¹ Gilles Deleuze, *Différence et Répétition*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires De France, 1981), p.7.

⁸² S. Kierkegaard, *Repetition: An Essay in Experimental Psychology*, trans. and ed. by Walter Lowrie (London: Oxford University Press, 1946)

⁸³ Clare Carlisle, *Kierkegaard's Philosophy of Becoming: Movements and Positions* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2005), p.70. And subsequent refs. in this para.

⁸⁴ *Repetition*, p.8.

⁸⁵ *Kierkegaard's Philosophy of Becoming*, p.80.

⁸⁶ *Repetition*, p.36.

⁸⁷ Editor's introduction, S. Kierkegaard, *Repetition*, p.xiv.

The young man's problem is, *whether repetition is possible*. It was as a parody of him that I [Constantius] made the journey to Berlin to see whether repetition was possible...the most inward problem is here expressed in an outward way, as though repetition, if it were possible, might be found outside the individual, since it is within the individual it must be found, and hence the young man does exactly the opposite, he keeps perfectly still...Everything decisively affirmed about repetition is contained in the second part of the book. Everything that is said in the foregoing part is either jest or only relatively true.⁸⁸

The story of the second trip to Berlin falls in Part one of the book. We are to understand that when Constantius simply does the same thing again, he has *not* managed to repeat. For Kierkegaard, this is not an authentic repetition.

What does Deleuze see in this? Answering this question is not assisted by the fact that in the Introductory Chapter of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze conceals his own position behind that of Nietzsche: 'What separates [Kierkegaard and Nietzsche] is considerable...But nothing can hide this prodigious encounter in relation to a philosophy of repetition: *they oppose repetition to all forms of generality*' (5). Carlisle extracts from Kierkegaard's text a series of linked oppositions or tensions:

The opposition between ideality and movement is also...an opposition between philosophy and existence;
This comparison between [Platonic] recollection and repetition echoes the opposition between idea and movement;
Constantin [Constantius] is an intellectual, an abstract thinker, whereas the young man is a lover, a fiancé, whose self-awakening precipitates an ethical crisis.⁸⁹

Each of these oppositions speaks of an inauthentic versus an authentic repetition. I suggest that the most immediate point of contact with Deleuze's project in *Difference and Repetition* is that there we also find, an outer (inauthentic) and an inner (authentic) repetition: 'The repetition at the level of the external conduct echoes...a more secret vibration which animates it, a more profound, internal repetition' (1). Having said that, the problem of repetition, as posed in the above oppositions, cannot define Deleuze's project in quite the same way as Kierkegaard's.

To explain this, I would like to attend to Kierkegaard's controversy with his contemporary, Heiberg. In his commentary on *Repetition*, Heiberg writes: 'Repetition has an essentially

⁸⁸ Kierkegaard, 'A letter to the real reader of the book', quoted in Editor's introduction to *Repetition*, pp.xx-xxi.

⁸⁹ *Kierkegaard's Philosophy of Becoming*, pp.67-69.

different significance in the natural and in the spiritual sphere. The author [Kierkegaard] presumably has had the natural category in view, and perhaps without knowing it has stretched the validity of the concept beyond its proper limits'.⁹⁰ In other words, Heiberg claims that Kierkegaard has failed to recognize that the way in which repetition applies to the human individual, might well differ from how repetition applies to nature. Although Deleuze gives no reference, he must have Kierkegaard's subsequent indignation in mind when, in *Difference and Repetition*, he writes: 'Kierkegaard declares that he does not speak at all of repetition in nature, of cycles and seasons, exchanges and equalities (6).' Walter Lowrie confirms: 'There is not a word in [*Repetition*] about repetition in nature — recurrence of the seasons, of day and night, etc., upon which Professor Heiberg laid stress...S.K. was thinking of the history of the individual'. Kierkegaard, in his own later commentary, writes: 'Now if one desires to elucidate the fact that repetition in the world of individuality means something different from what it is in nature and in the case of a plain repetition, I do not know how one can do it more clearly.'

My point is, simply, that Deleuze's project in *Difference and Repetition* is ontological as well as ethical — and, therefore, Deleuze's concept of repetition cannot be identical to Kierkegaard's. When Deleuze asserts that 'repetition is not generality', we are I suggest, bound to react somewhat similarly to Heiberg against Kierkegaard. What about the outcomes of scientific experiments or the tick of atomic clocks and so on? We must resist jumping to the conclusion that Deleuze must concede that there are repeated objective events in the natural world, which proceed according to the invariable laws of physics. If we did jump to that conclusion, we might suppose, that Deleuze, like Kierkegaard, is making a distinction between repetition as it applies to the individual, as opposed to an objective or scientific application of the concept of repetition. But this is not the case. When Deleuze asserts that 'repetition is not generality' this extends to the recurrence of the seasons, day and night and the ticking of clocks. I gave, above, a series of oppositions which sought to define the status of the problem of repetition for Kierkegaard. For Deleuze, there is an analogous opposition between a false and a true repetition: it is between, 'A bare, material repetition (repetition of the Same) [which] appears only in the sense that another repetition is disguised within it, constituting it and constituting itself in disguising itself' (21).

Deleuze's point seems to be that although we might intuitively think that repetition has, essentially, to do with sameness, it does not. Williams first makes a point that, he implies, might

⁹⁰ Editor's Introduction, S. Kierkegaard, *Repetition: An Essay in Experimental Psychology*, trans. and ed. by Walter Lowrie (London: Oxford University Press, 1946), p.xiv. Subsequent references: p.xv; p.xxii

be too trite for Deleuze to have deemed it worthy to stoop to, but upon which Deleuze might still to some extent rely: ‘Something has to be different for there to be repetition, since there must be some way of distinguishing two repeated things’.⁹¹ But Williams is right to say that this is not *really* the nub of what Deleuze wants to persuade us of. It is rather that, as Deleuze puts it: ‘To repeat is to behave in a certain manner, but in relation to something unique or singular which has no equal or equivalent (1).’ Constantius’ two trips to Berlin were a kind of outward repetition, whereas the philosopher must, it seems, seek a kind of inner repetition. Kierkegaard makes sense of such an inner repetition within a Christian philosophy centred on human subjectivity and active choices. Deleuze must make sense of it within a God-less universe in which the human is often the passive subject of a kind of ontological repetition.

Deleuze’s presentation of this thesis in the Introductory Chapter of *Difference and Repetition* is opaque for reasons which I shall shortly explain. At one point, Deleuze states, apparently without irony, what I take to be the exact opposite of the thesis he wishes to defend: ‘We are right to speak of repetition when we find ourselves confronted by identical elements with exactly the same concept’ (23). But the argument that I have provided, thus far, *is* consistent with the burden of the closing summary of the introductory chapter to *Difference and Repetition*. Here Deleuze poses what I take to be a rhetorical question:

So long as we take difference to be conceptual difference...repetition to be extrinsic difference between objects represented by the same concept, it appears that the problem of their relation may be resolved by the facts. Are there repetitions — yes or no?...Hegel ridiculed Leibniz for having invited the court ladies to undertake experimental metaphysics while walking in the gardens, to see whether two leaves of a tree could not have the same concept. Replace the court ladies by forensic scientists: no two grains of dust are absolutely identical, no two hands have the same distinctive points, no two typewriters have the same strike...Why, however, do we feel that the problem is not properly defined so long as we look for the criterion of a *principium individuationis* in the facts? (26)

In other words, for Deleuze, there are no two things or two states of affairs which can be judged to be repetitions of one another, because they are judged to be ‘the same’ by virtue of some objective test of the facts. Deleuze’s position is the radical one that there is no such thing as the repetition of the *same*, anywhere, ever. This is the agenda of the philosophy of difference.

⁹¹ *GD’s D&R*, p.32.

In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze purports to align himself (albeit concealed behind Nietzsche) with Kierkegaard, who is said to ‘oppose repetition to the laws of nature’ because: ‘According to the law of nature, repetition is impossible’ (6). In fact, as I have shown, Kierkegaard is silent on the laws of nature: they are not his problem. I return, therefore, to the question, what is it that Deleuze takes from Kierkegaard? It is, I suggest, that although Deleuze demurs from the primacy of human subjectivity, it is, nevertheless, human *feelings* that will emerge, over the course of *Difference and Repetition*, as the ‘given’ of Deleuze’s philosophy. What Deleuze draws from Kierkegaard, therefore, is an understanding of repetition that is grounded in the nature of lived human experience, rather than one based on an extrapolation, to the human condition, of some pseudo-scientific assumption about the laws of nature. The opacity of the opening arguments of *Difference and Repetition* is a function of how Deleuze is trying to play-out these *feelings* (i.e. theatrically), rather than argue for them in the manner of a conceptual analysis.

Nietzsche and repetition.

In *Difference and Repetition* as a whole, and in the Introductory Chapter alone, Nietzsche is the primary inspiration behind Deleuze’s concept of repetition. Although it is Deleuze’s thesis that Kierkegaard and Nietzsche share a concept of repetition, Deleuze seems to feel forced into recognizing an objection. I have seen how it is that Deleuze comes to claim that ‘Kierkegaard...condemns...every attempt to obtain repetition from the laws of nature’ (6). Deleuze goes on: ‘It will be said that the situation is not so clear with Nietzsche’ (6). What is the burden of this apparently throwaway remark? It seems to imply that *some*, maybe even *most*, will say that Nietzsche *did* try to obtain repetition from the laws of nature. For Deleuze, this view is mistaken but, nevertheless it is still worth taking stock of what this apparently erroneous view is, because it will enable me to prepare the ground for Deleuze’s radical reading of Nietzsche’s doctrine of the eternal return.

In Nietzsche’s writings, we find a conjecture concerning a kind of cosmic repetition:

The greatest weight. — What, if some day or night a demon were to steal after you into your loneliest loneliness and say to you : “This life as you now live it and have lived it, you will have to live once more and innumerable times more: and there will be nothing new in it...everything unutterably small and great in your life will have to return to you,

all in the same succession and sequence...The eternal hourglass of existence is turned upside down again and again, and you with it speck of dust!"⁹²

This is a vision of a universe in which novelty is entirely absent. Were Deleuze to endorse such a view there could be no prospect of making his philosophy coherent as a philosophy of the multiple. Such a philosophy would conform to Badiou's portrait of the philosophy of the One in that, in such a universe, everything that *is*, has already been prepared for, inasmuch as it has all existed before. The status of actual things is degraded to that of reflections or echoes of what has been. But Nietzsche's parable, here at least, only takes the form of a conjecture: what if? It is not, without other evidence, the same as the claim that this is how the universe actually is. Both in the work that Nietzsche authorised for publication and in the notes collected after his insanity in *The Will to Power*, one finds passages that seem to address the conjecture of the eternal return to the ethical implications of a purposeless universe:

Duration "in vain", without end or aim is the most paralysing idea...Let us think this thought in its most terrible form: existence as it is, without meaning or aim, yet recurring inevitably without any finale of nothingness: "*the eternal recurrence*".⁹³

The doctrine of the eternal return can be read as an ethical test. 'Ethical', in the sense, that we are invited to test our choices in this world not just against the demands of current contingencies but against the background that those same choices will reverberate forever. Indeed, in the earlier book *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze is not averse to regarding this reading as part and parcel of Nietzsche's purpose. He sees it as Nietzsche's version of Kant's categorical imperative: 'The eternal return gives the will a rule as rigorous as the Kantian one...As an ethical thought the eternal return is the new formulation of the practical synthesis: *whatever you will, will it in such a way that you also will its eternal return*'.⁹⁴ For some modern commentators, this is all that the doctrine of the eternal return can ever, coherently, entail. Danto, for example, writes:

The doctrine of Eternal Recurrence entails the meaninglessness of things, and the doctrine of the *Übermensch* [often translated as 'the overman'] is a response to that significance which man is obliged to will...Stated as an imperative: So act (or so be) that you would be willing to act exactly the same way (or be exactly the same thing) an infinite number of times over.⁹⁵

⁹² Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, trans. by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1974) section 341, p.273.

⁹³ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. by Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), s.55, p.35.

⁹⁴ *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p.68.

⁹⁵ Arthur, C. Danto, *Nietzsche as Philosopher* (New York: Macmillan, 1968), pp.211-212.

According to Danto, there the matter should rest. But Deleuze will not let it rest there: he seeks a cosmological reading as well as an ethical reading.

What exactly is the cosmological hypothesis of the eternal return? Alexander Nehamas puts a first version of it, very clearly:

It holds that everything that has already happened in the universe, and everything that is happening right now, and everything that will happen in the future, has already happened, and will happen again, preceded and followed by exactly the same events in exactly the same order, infinitely many times. Each of these cycles is absolutely identical with every other; in fact, it would be more correct to say that there is only one cycle, repeated over and over again in infinity.⁹⁶

This is a more prosaic version of the conjecture which I quoted above from *The Gay Science*. Scholarly controversy surrounds how one should interpret Nietzsche's version of the doctrine of the eternal return but, for my purposes here, all we need to note is that Deleuze utterly rejects the kind of interpretation given above. In *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze writes:

Nietzsche's account of the eternal return [as a cosmological and physical doctrine] presupposes a critique of the terminal or equilibrium state. Nietzsche says that if the universe had an equilibrium position, if becoming had an end or final state, it would already have been attained.⁹⁷

In other words, for Deleuze, 'the eternal return' as a cosmological doctrine, is not to be equated to any terminal or equilibrium state: it is, rather, a critique of that supposed state. Deleuze quotes:

If the universe were capable of permanence and fixity, and if there were in its entire course a single moment of being in the strict sense it could no longer have anything to do with becoming, thus one could no longer think or observe any becoming whatever.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Alexander Nehamas, 'The Eternal Recurrence', *The Philosophical Review* Vol. 89 No.3 (1980), pp. 331-356 (332).

⁹⁷ p.47.

⁹⁸ *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p.47, citing Nietzsche, *VP* II 322. The translator of *Nietzsche and Philosophy* has in general used the most widely available English translations of Nietzsche's works (see trans. note, p.xv). Deleuze's ref. is, however, to *La Volonté de Puissance*, trans. by G. Bianquis (from the edition of F. Würzback), NRF, 1935 and 1937. The trans. explains: 'This [VP] is not available in English and [what is more] has not been fully collated with the standard arrangement known as the *Will to Power* and which has been translated'. Hence, there is, in this case, no exact parallel to 'the standard arrangement'.

Nietzsche and Philosophy also includes reference to ‘an analogous text’ in the more widely available English translation of the *Nachlass*:

If the world had a goal, it must have been reached...If it were in any way capable of a pausing and becoming fixed, of “being”, if in the course of its becoming it possessed even for a moment this capability of “being”, then all becoming would long since have come to an end...The fact of “spirit” as a form of becoming proves that the world has no goal, no final state, and is incapable of being.⁹⁹

This is the opposite of the claim that all novelty had passed from the world.

We are still left with a problem. How does one reconcile Deleuze’s presupposition (i.e. a world of becoming, not of being) with Nietzsche’s championing of Zarathustra as the prophet of eternal return; and with Nietzsche identifying himself as the teacher of eternal recurrence? This is perhaps the very question that Deleuze anticipates with his own question: ‘How does the thought of pure becoming serve as a foundation for the eternal return?’¹⁰⁰ Nietzsche provides a reply in terms which, although still cryptic, nevertheless provide some textual evidence in support of Deleuze’s reading: ‘That *everything recurs* is the closest *approximation of a world of becoming to a work of being*: — high point of meditation.’¹⁰¹ We come at last to the nub of Deleuze’s reading of Nietzsche’s concept of repetition:

We misinterpret the expression “eternal return” if we understand it as “return of the same”. It is not being that returns but rather the returning itself that constitutes being insofar as it is affirmed of becoming and of that which passes. It is not some thing that returns but rather returning itself is the one thing which is affirmed of diversity or multiplicity.¹⁰²

Deleuze can, therefore, embrace the doctrine of the eternal return but *only* because of a special understanding of the eternal return that he will maintain until the end of his philosophical career:

We must not make of the eternal return a *return of the same*. To do this would be to misunderstand the form of the transmutation...for the same does not preexist the diverse...*It is not the same that comes back*.¹⁰³

⁹⁹ *The Will to Power*, s.1062, p.546.

¹⁰⁰ *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p.48.

¹⁰¹ *The Will to Power*, s.617, p.330.

¹⁰² *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p.48.

¹⁰³ Gilles Deleuze, *Pure Immanence: Essays on A Life*, trans. by Anne Boyman (New York: Zone Books, 2001), p.87.

This is to affirm the status of the multiple.

I have shown that the denial of any conventional account of repetition is part and parcel of Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*: the universe does not repeat itself, if by 'repeat', we mean an endless round of the same. This background is carried over into the Introductory chapter of *Difference and Repetition* in the, otherwise, dense remark that, 'If [Nietzsche] discovers repetition in the *Physis* [Nature] itself, this is because he discovers in the *Physis* something superior to the reign of laws...Nietzsche opposes "his" hypothesis to the cyclical hypothesis (6).' In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, the animals say: 'All things themselves dance for such as think as we: they come and offer their hands and laugh and flee — and return. Everything dies, everything blossoms anew; the year of existence runs on for ever'¹⁰⁴; and later the animals dub their master, Zarathustra (and by implication Nietzsche), 'the *teacher of the eternal recurrence*'. Deleuze injects the argument of *Nietzsche and Philosophy* into the introductory chapter of *Difference and Repetition*, in the guise of Zarathustra's response to the animals. Deleuze points out how Zarathustra, mildly but nonetheless firmly, corrects the animals. In R. J. Hollingdale's translation:

"O you buffoons and barrel-organs, do be quiet!" answered Zarathustra... "That I have to sing again — *that* comfort...did I devise for myself: do you want to make another hurdy-gurdy song out of that too?"¹⁰⁵

In the English translation of *Difference and Repetition*, we find the same passage from Nietzsche rendered: 'O buffoons and barrel-organs...you have already made a refrain out of it [the eternal return]' (6). Deleuze comments: 'The refrain is the eternal return as cycle or circulation, as being-similar and being-equal — in short, as natural animal certitude and as sensible law of nature' (6). For Deleuze, Nietzsche is telling us, precisely, that the next verse is *not* the same as the first: the same song is not sung again, there is no refrain. In plainer terms, we are to 'oppose repetition to the laws of nature' (6). In plainer terms still: repetition is not an objective fact.

¹⁰⁴ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. by R.J Hollingdale (Middlesex: Penguin, 1986), Pt. 3 (The Convalescent), p.234. Subsequent ref., p.237

¹⁰⁵ *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, p.236.

Deleuze goes on to critique the concept of repetition in terms of both moral laws and habits. But I now turn to what repetition *is*, rather than what it is not. In so doing, I take an example that Deleuze often returns to in *Difference and Repetition*: learning to swim. In the introductory chapter Deleuze writes:

We learn nothing from those who say: “Do as I do”. Our only teachers are those who tell us to “do with me”, and are able to emit signs to be developed in heterogeneity rather than propose gestures for us to reproduce (23).

The reference to ‘signs’, here, is important to Deleuze’s overall system. Williams comments: ‘The reason why repetition matters has nothing to do with the repetition of the same thing but, rather with the repetition of difference that can only be approached through indirect signs and not actual differences’.¹⁰⁶ To repeat, mechanically, the movements of the swimming instructor, for example, gets us nowhere. Much later in *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze returns to this example:

Learning to swim...means composing the singular points of one’s own body...with those of another...element, which tears us apart but also propels us into a hitherto unknown and unheard of world of problems. To what are we dedicated if not to those problems which demand the very transformation of our body...? (192)

What are we to understand by this? With apparently the above passage in mind (although she gives no reference) Colebrook writes:

I will only learn to swim if I see what the instructor does not as a self-contained action but as a creative *response*. I do not repeat his arm movements; I repeat the sense of the water or feel for the waves that produces his arm movements...I have to feel how a swimmer acts, rather than literally copying these movements.¹⁰⁷

One can emphasise this further by re-invigorating the same example; Colebrook imagines, that having learnt to swim ‘breaststroke’ (acquired that habit) one then attempts to learn ‘butterfly’:

No amount of repetition of breast-stroke will help me, so how do I open a new relation, break with habit and create a new relation to the water? I have to remember what it is to learn to swim, what it is to take on a habit. I have to feel the water as if for the first time, while the memory of what it is to learn to swim enables me to draw again on the power to learn, the power to create one’s body as a swimming body’.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ *GD’s D&R*, p.51.

¹⁰⁷ Claire Colebrook, *Gilles Deleuze*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), p.136.

One might be inclined to accept this, but object that, having learned to swim, it *then* becomes merely a repetition of the same: a habit. But this is still denied by Deleuze. Williams advises, on Deleuze's behalf, that: 'A habitual repetition is never the repetition of the same'.¹⁰⁹ The reason, I suggest, is that there is, for Deleuze, always something that escapes our conscious attention but which, nevertheless, generates a creative response in the act of swimming, for example. The habit that we have acquired is how to 'feel the water', from moment to moment, and to match our movements to it, not how to move our arms and legs in a mechanical fashion.

Interim conclusion.

Williams anticipates that what we want, at the beginning, is an answer to the question: 'How do we recognise repetition?'¹¹⁰ What we expect is an answer in terms of some kind of conceptual analysis. But Deleuze is trying to dramatize for us, that this is the wrong question. The questions we should be asking are: 'Why does repetition matter?', 'Why is it significant?' and 'How do we repeat well?' Williams writes: 'Put simply, [Deleuze's] view is that we have intimations of significance prior to well-defined concepts and to knowledge, not the opposite'. This is part, then, of the anti-conceptual philosophy. This is the idea behind the aphorism: 'The head is the organ of exchange, but the heart is the amorous organ of repetition' (2). This felt significance is the sign of an originating difference in, for example, the fall of the Bastille (1): a difference whose disruptive influence is never exhausted and echoes down the years. Each Federation Day is, therefore, an irruption, in the present, of the past — but it is the past made new. As Adrian Parr puts it: 'To repeat, is to begin again; to affirm the power of the new and the unforeseeable'.¹¹¹ The new and unforeseeable, to which Parr refers, is a prior or original difference.

Deleuze writes: 'Our problem concerns the essence of repetition. It is a question of knowing why repetition cannot be explained by the form of identity in concepts or representations' (19). But has Deleuze explained the *essence* of repetition? Not yet, at least. Instead we have been told how we might experiment in reversing our normal way of thinking about repetition and that 'all the concepts of nature and freedom' might be revised in this way (19). But why should we accept this way of thinking? Unless one were to take the view, like May, that for Deleuze, nothing is ever just *the case*, repetition must be something *other* than our experience of it. There must be

¹⁰⁸ Deleuze: *A Guide for the Perplexed*, p.81.

¹⁰⁹ *GD's D&R*, p.35.

¹¹⁰ *GD's D&R*, p.32. Subsequent references: p.32.

some 'condition' that explains the nature, the essence, of repetition. That Deleuze accepts these reservations becomes evident when in Chapter Two of *Difference and Repetition*, 'Repetition for Itself', he goes on to supply the missing rationale.

¹¹¹ Adrian Parr, 'Repetition', in *The Deleuze Dictionary*, pp.223-225 (p.223).

Chapter 2. Difference and the equivocity of Being: Aristotle.

Introduction to the chapter.

This chapter is the first of three which follow what one might call Deleuze's alternative history of 'difference' in Chapter One of *Difference and Repetition*; a history that begins with Aristotle. Why not Plato? I shall suggest an answer when I come to Plato (see chapter 4). Deleuze's critique of Aristotle's concept of difference is instructive, not because of what it tells us about Aristotle but because of what it tells us about Deleuze. Deleuze's chapter is entitled 'Difference in Itself' and yet, for reasons that I have already indicated, Deleuze does not offer any conventional definition of difference. Instead, he points to what difference *is* (or palpates it, as May would say) by means of showing what difference is *not*. In effect, difference is not what Aristotle claims it is.

Having said that, Deleuze's critique of Aristotle is not wholly negative. It includes a recognition that as well as being the enemy of difference, Aristotle is also the 'sometime' friend of difference. This tentative befriending of Aristotle by Deleuze is instructive for my thesis because it shows that Deleuze's account of the nature of difference is equivalent to his account of the nature of multiplicity. Why? Because, for Deleuze, difference is a means of connection, not a means of separation; multiplicities are held together by differences. For Deleuze, reality is fundamentally connected, not disconnected. Hence, Williams can distil out of *Difference and Repetition* the Deleuzian ethical principle that: 'It is best for our actions to connect with all things that have brought them about and that they can bring about'.¹¹² In Deleuze's words, 'connection' is directly linked to 'difference' (i.e. heterogeneity) in the concept of the 'rhizome' (a later version of the idea of the multiple): 'Principles of connection and heterogeneity: *any* point of a rhizome can be connected to anything else, and must be.'¹¹³ Aristotle is the 'sometime' friend of difference insofar as he too looks for connections not disconnections.

The critique of Aristotle's concept of difference operates at three levels: (1) Genus; (2) Species; and (3) the Individual. Deleuze begins in the middle, with Species. Aristotle here stands accused of a 'confusion disastrous for the entire philosophy of difference: assigning a distinctive concept of difference is confused with the inscription of difference within concepts in general' (32). This

¹¹² *GD's D&R*, p.5.

¹¹³ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, p.7. (Henceforth, *ATP*).

is a very obscure way of saying something that is really quite straightforward. For Aristotle, 'difference' comes after 'identity'. In other words, given two species, for example, 'man' and 'bird', which fall under a common concept or genus 'animal' — one can make sense of the differences that exists between those species. The implication is that, *without* that prior identity, no difference can exist. Indeed, I suggest that this is our commonsensical understanding of what a difference is. Deleuze despises commonsense: his project is, instead, devoted to making sense of a difference that comes *before* identity. In the current context, I will show how he seeks to do this by undermining Aristotle's account of what difference is. In a nutshell, he argues that in Aristotle's account, the nature of difference that obtains at the level of the Species, is fatally inconsistent with the nature of difference as it obtains at the level of the Genus and the Individual.

Central to my thesis is the problem that, if everything is radically different, how can Deleuze also commit himself, without incoherence, to the univocity of Being (which, on the face of it, appears to be a commitment to everything being the same)? This problem arises, for the first time in *Difference and Repetition*, in the context of Deleuze's critique of Aristotle's concept of Generic difference. Deleuze identifies Generic difference with the difference that obtains between the Categories. G. M. Gillespie writes, that the status of the 'categories' in Aristotle's system has:

Always been somewhat of a puzzle. On the one hand, they seem to be worked into the warp of the texture...On the other hand, both in the completed scheme of his logic and in his constructive metaphysic they retire into the background.¹¹⁴

We should not be surprised to find, therefore, that there is deep obscurity as to the exact nature of Aristotle's arguments and also a wide range of scholarly opinion. Be that as it may, what do the categories comprise? Aristotle gives us what he calls 'a rough idea':

Examples of substance are man, horse; of quantity: four-feet, five-foot; of qualification: white, grammatical; of a relative: double, half, larger; of where: in the Lyceum, in the market place; of when: yesterday, last year; of being-in-a-position: is-lying, is-sitting; of having: has-shoes-on, has-armour-on; of doing: cutting, burning; of being affected: being-cut, being-burned.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ G.M. Gillespie, 'The Aristotelian Categories', in *Articles on Aristotle V.3 Metaphysics*, pp.1-12 (p.1. Subsequent reference, p.7.)

¹¹⁵ Aristotle's *Categories* and *De Interpretatione*, trans. by J.L. Ackrill (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), (*I^b25*), p.5.

How did Aristotle arrive at this list of categories? Ackrill replies: 'Though the items in categories are not expressions but "things", the identification and classification of these things could... be achieved only by attention to what we say'.¹¹⁶ As Jonathan Barnes puts it, the categories are concerned with classifying types of predicate: indeed *katēgoria* is Aristotle's word for 'predicate'.¹¹⁷ But the point remains, as the quote from Ackrill makes clear, that Aristotle's categories are groups of 'things', not 'words'. Deleuze regards the classification as ontological not semantic and he is right to do so. Finally, we need to note that the ten categories which emerge from Aristotle's analysis are not all equal: 'there is a primary sense (the sense in which *substances* have being) to which all the others are related'.¹¹⁸

If Aristotle is largely the enemy of difference, he is also the enemy of the univocity of Being. It is Aristotle who famously declared:

Being is spoken of in many ways, but with respect to one source. For some things are called beings because they are substances; others are called beings because they are attributes of substances, others because each is a route to a substance; either destructions or privations or qualities or productive or generative of substance; still others are called beings because they are things spoken of in relation to substance, or negations of one of these or of substance.¹¹⁹

According to the theory of the equivocity of Being, the category of 'substance', for example, contains beings whose 'way of existing' is distinct from the way of existing of the 'attributes of substances' which are distributed across other categories. Aristotle is taken, therefore, to defend the contrary position to Deleuze's. That being the case, Deleuze's critique of Aristotle's counter-claim will again inform how best to understand his own claim.

Aristotle's concept of specific difference.

Badiou scorns those who seek to depict 'Deleuze as the joyous thinker of the world's *confusion*...Philosophically, the world's confusion undoubtedly means...that it can be explained neither by the One nor by the Multiple'.¹²⁰ He mocks: 'the commonly accepted image (Deleuze

¹¹⁶ Aristotle's *Categories* and *De Interpretatione*, p78.

¹¹⁷ Jonathan Barnes, *Aristotle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), p.40.

¹¹⁸ Ackrill, Aristotle's *Categories* and *De Interpretatione*, p71.

¹¹⁹ Aristotle, *Met.* 1003^b6-10, as quoted by Christopher Shields, *Order in Multiplicity: Homonymy in the Philosophy of Aristotle* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), p.217.

¹²⁰ *CB*, p.10.

as liberating the anarchic multiple of desires and errant drifts)...'.¹²¹ In other words, some notion of total disorder, of disconnection, is relevant neither to Badiou's own avowed position (the reality of the multiple) nor to the position that Badiou accuses Deleuze of adopting: subservience to 'the One'. The very first words of the first substantive Chapter of *Difference and Repetition* describe, albeit with poetic obscurity, 'the world's confusion':

Indifference...the undifferentiated abyss, the black nothingness, the indeterminate animal in which everything is dissolved – but also the white nothingness...upon which float unconnected determinations. (28)

It is significant that this passage is placed immediately prior to the critique of Aristotle. By implication, Aristotle's concept of difference marks an advance. Aristotle is thus the 'sometime' friend of difference in that he too denies the world's confusion. For Aristotle, we are told: 'Difference in general is distinguished from diversity or otherness' (30); and later, despite its admittedly negative context, Deleuze concedes: 'generic or categorical difference remains a difference in the Aristotelian sense and does not collapse into simple diversity or otherness' (33).

It is not fanciful of Deleuze to attribute a concept of difference to Aristotle. Deleuze cites *Metaphysics X*, where Aristotle asks: 'What is the greatest difference?' (30). This question is on a par with what we shall later see of Deleuze's readings of Spinoza and Bergson insofar as both of these philosophers also search for the nature of real distinction. Aristotle interprets this search in terms of asking, what is the maximum scope, or stretch, of difference? He seeks a 'perfect difference'. One is perhaps intuitively tempted to reply that such a perfect, or maximal, difference must be that in which two terms contradict one another. This is one of the temptations that Deleuze is trying to free us from; in fact, Aristotle does not succumb to it. In Deleuze's reading, Aristotle's failure to set difference 'free' is not a consequence of assigning maximal difference to dialectical contradiction (that error is laid at Hegel's door). Deleuze claims that, for Aristotle, contradiction is *not* perfect difference because 'contradiction...belongs to a subject, but only in order to make its subsistence impossible' (30). I take this to mean that, for Aristotle, the 'perfect difference' would be one that is able to survive (to subsist) whereas contradiction is held to lead to the destruction of one of the differing terms and, therefore, difference is dissipated.

In seeking the perfect difference, Aristotle has dismissed contradiction. What is left? Deleuze names Aristotle's solution, 'contrariety'. What characterises this concept of difference is that

¹²¹ *CB*, p. 11.

'two terms differ when they are other, not in themselves but in something else, thus when they also agree in something else' (30). What is intended is best demonstrated in an example. To be 'different', in the maximal sense that Aristotle seeks, man and bird must first, in some sense, be the 'same'; and by the same we are to understand that they share the same concept, e.g. 'animal'. Deleuze can assert, therefore, that for Aristotle, perfect difference is always subject to a prior identity. This makes sense of the quotation I gave in my introduction to the chapter that, for Aristotle, 'assigning a distinctive concept of difference is confused with the inscription of difference within concepts in general'. Identity of concept is not sufficient, however, to define Aristotle's concept of contrariety: a distinction between matter and form is also brought to bear. Differences of matter might be 'contraries', to the extent that they fall within the scope of an identical concept, e.g. a white cat and a black cat are both cats, but they cannot be opposed in perfect difference. This is because differences of matter 'are corporeal modifications, 'accidents', which give us only the 'empirical, accidental concept of a still extrinsic difference'. For Aristotle, the perfect or maximal difference is, therefore, a contrariety in essence or form. The perfect difference, in effect, becomes a process of determining genus and species. According to Aristotle, the members of that 'category' that he calls 'substances' can be hierarchically ordered according to a series of increasingly more general essential definitions that give their species and genera. Within that structure, Deleuze writes, 'Contrariety in the genus is the perfect and maximal difference' (30). Contrariety in 'form' (or essence) becomes synonymous with 'specific difference'.

To follow Nathan Widder's example of what Deleuze means: 'The specific *differentia* "rational" and "winged" define the species "man" and "bird", respectively, within the genus "animal"'.¹²² Aristotle's 'greatest difference' is specific difference in that it delineates species within genera. This reading of Aristotle receives confirmation from outside the Deleuzian discourse. J.M. Le Blond writes:

There is a third form of analysis that may be used for definition: analysis by genus and difference...It singles out, first, the element an object has in common with other objects (thus in humanity, animality is common to man and to other creatures), and secondly, the characteristic that the object alone possesses (in humanity, rationality is the *specific difference*).¹²³

¹²² Nathan Widder, 'The Rights of Simulacra: Deleuze and the Univocity of Being', *Continental Philosophy Review*, 34 (2001), p.439. Widder seems to go wrong in his choice of differentia because 'rational' and 'winged' are not on the same range.

¹²³ J.M. Le Blond, 'Aristotle on Definition', in *Articles on Aristotle V.3 Metaphysics* ed. by Jonathan Barnes, Malcolm Schofield, Richard Sorabji (London: Duckworth, 1979), pp.63-79 (p.67)

Deleuze wishes to privilege difference over identity. Aristotle's deference to an 'identity' of concept is the target of Deleuze's negative critique, but what Deleuze means by 'difference' also converges to some extent with Aristotle's notion of difference. Deleuze recognizes and endorses the manner in which, for Aristotle, difference can only operate over a certain range. Difference, once it is over-stretched, breaks and assumes a different nature. Once it escapes the domain of identity it 'tends to become simple otherness...established between uncombinable objects which do not enter into relations of contrariety' (30). This is not difference: this is the realm of the black abyss and the total white-out. However, for Deleuze, Aristotle's concept of difference is still misleading because 'The manner in which Aristotle distinguishes between difference and diversity or otherness points the way: only in relation to the supposed identity of a concept is specific difference called the greatest' (31). For Aristotle, the concept of 'difference' only makes sense relative to a prior concept of 'sameness': sameness comes first. Aristotle's concept of the 'greatest difference' is relative. It is only the greatest difference if one accepts the constraint of the prior identity of the concept.

Generic difference.

Having following Deleuze's account of Aristotle's concept of 'specific difference', a further question becomes inevitable. How are the differences between the genera to be explained? Williams describes Deleuze's critique of Aristotle as 'extremely dense'.¹²⁴ A less charitable reader might call it 'tangled'. In trying to untangle it, it is, I suggest, important to recognize that Deleuze takes a controversial step: he equates 'generic difference' (which we might normally think of as operating only within the category of substance) to the difference between the Categories. Hence he writes:

Specific difference is maximal and perfect, but only on the condition of the identity of an undetermined concept (genus). It is insignificant, by contrast, in comparison with the difference between genera as ultimate determinable concepts (categories), for these latter are not subject to the condition that they share an identical concept or genus. (32)

There are two points here. First, that Aristotle has claimed that he was looking for the 'greatest difference' and found it in specific difference. Deleuze is surely right in objecting that the stretch of specific difference is 'insignificant' compared to the wider range of categorical difference.

¹²⁴ *GD's D&R*, p.61.

Thus Aristotle has not found the greatest difference after all. But the second point is the one from which Deleuze will extract most of what he wants from Aristotle and which will take us into the argument concerning the univocity of Being. The second point is that there is no longer an identity of concept between, say, the category 'substance' and the category 'quality'. If there is no such identity, then Aristotle's concept of difference breaks down and he must replace it with something else. On this view, generic difference (viewed as the difference between categories) cannot operate in the same way as 'specific difference' within a genus because there can be no category of all categories, no set of all sets. Or as Badiou would, perhaps, put it: 'the One' does not exist.

One might object that there *is* an overarching single concept or genus which gathers up all the categories: the grand genus of 'Being'. If that were the case, all the categories *do* share something: they all exist; and they *do*, therefore, belong to an identical concept or genus. If such a common concept *could* be sustained then the nature of the difference between the categories could still be argued to be akin to specific difference as Aristotle has defined it (in Deleuze's reading). If he took that path, Aristotle could claim that his concept of difference was consistent after all. In fact, Aristotle spurns any such escape by insisting that 'Being is not a genus'. It is this denial that places Aristotle and Deleuze temporarily on the same side: neither of them wish to accord Being the status of a prior identity. In Deleuze's case, because it would be fatal to his project of insisting that difference is prior to identity.

Aristotle's argument that Being is not a genus.

Deleuze alludes to Aristotle's argument in only a shorthand fashion, 'Remember the reason why Being itself is not a genus: it is, Aristotle says, because differences *are*' (32). The argument to which Deleuze is alluding is conducted within the primary category of substance. Aristotle arranges the category of 'substances' in a hierarchical order. One might conjecture that the genus 'animal' might branch so as to distinguish, for example, the species 'man' from 'bird'. Aristotle argues that what makes this possible are the various *differentia*. It is for this reason that Deleuze can say of Aristotle's concept of difference that 'Difference then can be no more than a predicate in the comprehension of a concept' (32). Aristotle argues that a genus can be predicated of a species, but a genus cannot be predicated of its *differentia*. A less obscure way of expressing this is to think of what we say and what we do not say. In other words, 'animal' (the genus) can be predicated of 'bird' (the species), because we say, "a bird is an animal". But 'animal' (the genus)

cannot be predicated of 'winged' (the *differentia*), because as Widder puts it, we do not say, "winged is an animal".¹²⁵

Hence, writes Widder, we can see that the overarching concept, the genus, 'denotes what is common among its members, not what differentiates them'.¹²⁶ Within each category, the *differentia* themselves lie outside the range of the overarching concept, or genus, that heads that category. Hence Aristotle can argue that Being cannot be a genus. If Being *were* a genus, it would not conform to the pattern that we have just analysed in the case of the genus 'animal'. If Being were a genus it would mean that the *differentia* fall *inside* the overarching concept of Being; in other words, 'winged' *is* something. Albeit that the locution is an odd one, we do seem to say something meaningful when we say, "winged is". It is to this, therefore, that Deleuze is alluding to when we writes: 'Remember the reason why Being itself is not a genus: it is, Aristotle says, because differences *are*'. On this view, Being cannot be a genus in the way that 'animal' is, because 'Being' can be predicated of the *differentia* themselves. Deleuze is not innovating here but simply reporting Aristotle's own argument. Widder quotes a relevant passage from Aristotle's *Metaphysics*:

It is impossible for either Unity or Being to be one genus of existing things. For there must *be* differentiae of each genus, and each differentia must be *one*; but it is impossible either for the species of the genus to be predicated of the specific differentia, or for the genus to be predicated without its species. Hence if Unity or Being is a genus, there will be no differentia Being or Unity.¹²⁷

Where Deleuze innovates is in his assumption that we may apply exactly the same argument across an inter-categorical context. Thus far we have seen that the genus 'animal', say, within the category of substance, cannot be headed by a grand genus of Being because the *differentia are*. We must now assume, according to Deleuze, that the differences between the ten categories fall prey to the same objection. But in this wider context it is difficult to see what would count as the 'differentia' (that *are*) in the same way as occurred within the category of substance. Be that as it may, we are left with the problem of how to explain the nature of the differences between the categories. As Deleuze summarises the position, Aristotle concludes that 'generic differences are of *another* nature' (32).

¹²⁵ 'The Rights of Simulacra', p.440.

¹²⁶ *ibid.*

¹²⁷ Aristotle, *Metaphysics* trans. by Hugh Tredennick (Cambridge: Loeb Classics, 1933) 3.3, p.119; as quoted by Widder, 'The Rights of Simulacra', pp.440-441.

Analogy, homonymy and the equivocality of Being.

According to Deleuze, Aristotle resolves the impasse via the concept of 'analogy'. If Being is not a genus, Aristotle must explain the difference between the categories by means that preserve connection but depart from the principle of prior identity. In Deleuze's reading, Aristotle finds that alternative via the concept of analogy. How does the concept of analogy relate to univocity and equivocality? Although it is important to note that it is set in the context of the later Scholastics, Richard Cross gives a helpful account of what is at stake here:

We often use one and the same word in many different contexts. Sometimes we will be using the word in the *same* sense in these different contexts, and sometimes we will be using the word in *different* senses in these different contexts. If we are using the word in the same sense, we could say that we are using it *univocally*. If we are using it in wholly different and unrelated senses, we could say that we are using it *equivocally*. But we sometimes use a word in different but related or similar senses. In this case, we could say that we are using the word *analogically*.¹²⁸

In effect, analogy is a 'half-way house' between univocity and equivocality. Cross explains that by 'the same sense' he means having the same 'lexical definition' but we should not make the mistake of concluding that the issue is, therefore, purely semantic: 'we can talk of a word's having two (or more) similar senses only if there is *something in common* between the two senses. But the senses can have something in common only if the attributes signified by the terms themselves have something in common'. Deleuze explicitly ties Aristotle's concept of analogy to Aristotle's doctrine concerning the nature of Being: 'The equivocality of being is quite particular: it is a matter of analogy' (33). In other words, all existing things do not have an equal share in Being but, nevertheless, they are still connected: they all have a share.

Deleuze is wrong to attribute a concept of analogy to Aristotle in this context.¹²⁹ With regard to Aristotle's complex position in respect of the possibility of a general science of Being, modern scholarship takes its cue from G.E.L Owen's paper, first published in the early 1960s, 'Logic and

¹²⁸ Richard Cross, *Duns Scotus* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.33. And subsequent ref.

¹²⁹ Indeed Deleuze seems to concede as much himself: 'We know that Aristotle himself did not speak of analogy with regard to being', *Difference and Repetition*, p.308 Note no.5.

Metaphysics in Some Earlier Works of Aristotle'.¹³⁰ Here Owen coined the key term 'focal meaning' and distinguished it from analogy:

The claim of [Metaphysics] IV that 'being' is an expression with focal meaning is a claim that statements about non-substances can be reduced to — translated into — statements about substances; and it seems to be a corollary of this theory that non-substances cannot have matter or form of their own since they are no more than the logical shadows of substance. The formulation in terms of 'analogy' involves no such reduction and is therefore free to suggest that the distinction of form, privation and matter is not confined to the first category. To establish a case of focal meaning is to show a particular connexion between the definitions of a polychrestic word. To find an analogy, whether between the uses of such a word or anything else, is not to engage in any such analysis of meanings: it is merely to arrange certain terms in a (supposedly) self-evident scheme of proportion.¹³¹

Although still taking his bearings from Owen, Christopher Shields' more recent work situates the issue on ontological as opposed to semantic grounds. His new terminology distinguishes between trivial homonymy and the more profound brand of it upon which Aristotle's claims in respect of the science of being are based. 'Discrete Homonymy' comes about because the definition of the term 'sharp', as it would apply to a trumpet player, bears no relation to the definition of the word 'sharp' as it might apply to a philosophy student. There is no overlap between the two definitions. For homonymy to get philosophically interesting it is necessary that the definitions overlap. Aristotle's stock example of overlapping definitions is that of 'health'. It makes sense to speak of 'Socrates' health' but it also makes sense to speak of the 'health of Socrates' complexion'. 'Health' operates as a homonym in this example because it can be used *both* of Socrates and of his complexion, but the definition that one might offer of health, when applied to Socrates, and health when applied to Socrates' complexion, would be different. Nevertheless, those definitions overlap. The definitions of the meaning of the 'sharp trumpet player' and the 'sharp philosophy student' miss one another completely. The issues at stake in defining the 'health of Socrates' and the 'health of Socrates' complexion', although different, do not miss one another entirely. Shields calls this 'Core-Dependent Homonymy' and it is this concept that leads us to how homonymy is applied, by Aristotle, to 'Being'.¹³² In the case of Being, substance-Being would form the core notion and quality-Being etc. are core-dependent homonyms.

¹³⁰ G.E.L Owen, 'Logic and Metaphysics in Some Earlier Works of Aristotle', in *Logic, Science, and Dialectic: Collected Papers in Greek Philosophy* ed. by Martha Nussbaum (New York: Cornell University Press, 1986), pp.180-199.

¹³¹ 'Logic and Metaphysics in Some Earlier Works of Aristotle', pp.192-193.

¹³² *Order in Multiplicity*, Chapter 4.

Aristotle argues that all the categories of Being, though non-univocal, are related to the central category of substance-Being.

Having said that, the status of Aristotle's demonstration for the equivocality of Being is the subject of much scholarly controversy. I cling to the fact that the only scholarly consensus that exists, as to what Aristotle's argument actually *is* — is that there is no such consensus. Hence, we find Lewis warning: 'we must reckon with the extreme diversity of scholarly opinion on even the basic outline of Aristotle's arguments'¹³³. Shields agrees with Lewis only to the extent of also asserting that there is no semblance of a scholarly agreement on what the argument *is*; calling it 'a striking disarray'.¹³⁴ Shields considers that the most promising reconstruction of Aristotle's argument is that the homonymy of Being can be inferred directly or indirectly from the theory of the categories. Shields comments that, 'this...approach is most important because it represents what I take to be Aristotle's own attempt to establish the non-univocity of being'. Shields argues that Aristotle infers from the doctrine of the categories to the homonymy of being:

Those things are said to be *kath' hauta* that the types of the categories signify; for *to einai* signifies in just as many ways as the types. Since some of the categories signify what the subject is, others its quality, others its quantity, other relation, others activity or passivity, others its place, others its time, 'being' signifies the same as each of these.¹³⁵

Although obscurely expressed, let us be clear that in Shields' reading, Aristotle tells us that 'being signifies differently in each of the different categories'.¹³⁶ Hence, the 'is' in 'Socrates is' — is apparently taken to signify something different from the 'is' in 'Blueness is'. If we are right to spurn a *purely* semantic understanding of what it is to 'signify', we can read Aristotle to mean that 'what it is for Socrates to be is not the same as what it is for a colour to be'. The direct argument from the categories to the homonymy of Being claims that we are justified in moving from the recognition that there are radically different 'kinds' of thing that exist (which everyone would grant), to the distinctive claim that each of those 'kinds' (as defined by the categories) has a different 'way' of existing. But the direct argument moves too suddenly to be convincing. If there is any appeal in Aristotle's argument it is only perhaps in the notion that the categories are not equal. Armed with that idea, we can move beyond mere intuition to the distinctive claim that

¹³³ Frank A. Lewis, 'Aristotle on the Homonymy of Being', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* No.1 (Jan 2004), 1-36 (p.19).

¹³⁴ *Order in Multiplicity*, p5. Subsequent refs., p.226.

¹³⁵ Aristotle, *Metaphysics* v. 7 (1017^b22-7), as quoted by Shields, p.244.

¹³⁶ *Order in Multiplicity*, p.244. Subsequent refs.: p.244-245.

the category of substance has some sort of intuitive priority. It does seem reasonable, for example, to claim that the contents of the category of 'place' could not have an existence of any sort, without there first being some contents in the category of substance, to inhabit those places. What is it that makes us think that way? One answer is what Shields calls the 'bold conjecture...that these different kinds of being *are different ways of being* or that the different kinds of entities *have different ways of being*'. However, I rest my own case on Shields' damning conclusion of his survey of all attempted reconstructions of Aristotle's arguments: 'When we attempt to defend some precise version of Aristotle's contention, we find it wanting. This is because the doctrine is false'.¹³⁷

Individual difference.

I have disputed Deleuze's attribution of a concept of analogy to Aristotle. However, even if Aristotle did not rely on analogy, the later Scholastics did. We may, then, pick up the thread of Deleuze's argument in this new context. The Scholastics sought to solve the problem of the relation between God and the world. If God is not at the apex of his created order but transcends it, how is any natural knowledge of the divine possible (i.e. knowledge not given via divine revelation)? Aquinas answers this question via the notion of analogy. In the *Summa Theologiae* we find an argument structured in terms of species and genera and, therefore, at least reminiscent of that which we have followed in Aristotle, albeit that it is expressed in terms of the locus of agent (cause) and effect rather than differentia. Aquinas writes: 'When men reproduce themselves, agent and effect are of one species and their likeness is specific likeness.'¹³⁸ Aquinas steps from there to the position whereby cause and effect lie outside the same species but within the same genus and, from there, to consider the position, 'If the agent were outside even genus'. In this latter case, we are told: 'Its effect would bear an even remoter resemblance to the agent, presenting only the sort of analogy that holds between all things that have existence in common. And this is how everything that receives existence from God resembles him'. Hence, to return to the original problem of the relationship between God and his creatures, the being of God is not said in the same sense as the being of Man, but the two senses stand in a proportional relationship to one another. If such a relationship exists then natural knowledge of God is made possible. As Widder puts it, a concept such as wisdom 'can apply to God in a primary way, and

¹³⁷ *Order in Multiplicity*, p.266.

¹³⁸ Aquinas, St. Thomas, *Summa Theologiae: A Concise Translation*, ed. by Timothy McDermot (London: Methuen, 1992), p.17. Subsequent refs.: p.17.

in a subsidiary, but related way, to his creations'.¹³⁹ Hence, 'analogy offers a middle position between pure univocity and equivocity of meanings'.

Deleuze argues that analogy, within Aristotle's scheme as interpreted by the scholastics, produces a fresh and fatal inconsistency. We saw earlier how the concept of difference that worked for the species within a genus, failed to work for the differences between categories because there could be no parallel to the overarching identity in a shared concept. The notion of analogy seeks to resolve this by providing the basis for another sort of connection. But Deleuze argues, the site of inconsistency now shifts to the lowest level of aggregation in the hierarchy Aristotle proposed: the level of individuals. Below the species, 'man', for example, are individuals: Socrates and Plato. How are they to be distinguished? In other words, what concept of difference is to be applied to individuals? Now one might posit things like, Socrates has a snub-nose whereas Plato has a Roman nose, Socrates is short, Plato is tall etc. But these are mere 'accidentals'. These kinds of differences between individuals cannot conform to the pattern of 'specific difference' because the differences between individuals do not 'define' the individual in the way that the differences between species defined the species. Aristotle seeks to relieve this fresh difficulty by claiming, as Widder puts it, that 'one can have knowledge of more general categories such as species, but only recognition of individuals as belonging to a species'.¹⁴⁰ But Deleuze is surely right to object that Aristotle's claim is weak because the individual is 'more real' than the species to which it belongs. Thus, even if analogy *could* explain the difference between categories, it cannot explain the difference between individuals. There can be no question of a relationship of proportion between Plato and Socrates. As Widder puts it, 'What makes Socrates this particular man does not make him more of a man than Plato'.¹⁴¹ Deleuze concludes, 'It is...inevitable that analogy falls into an unresolvable difficulty: it must essentially relate being to particular existents, but at the same time it cannot say what constitutes their individuality' (38). One might take the view that, despite Deleuze's objections, Aristotle's schema is eminently sensible and forms part of our mental furniture simply because it works. But in doing so, one must choose deliberately to overlook its formal inconsistencies. It works neither at the top nor at the bottom. Hence Deleuze can say, 'It is not, therefore, surprising that from the standpoint of analogy, everything happens in the middle regions of genus and species' (38).

¹³⁹ 'The Rights of Simulacra', p.442. And subsequent ref.

¹⁴⁰ 'The Rights of Simulacra', p.440; and note 13, relying on Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 7.10, pp.361-363.

¹⁴¹ 'The Rights of Simulacra', p.443.

An objection.

Is this really ‘an unresolvable difficulty’? Let us consider the argument that has been pivotal to Deleuze’s claim: the supposed demonstration that ‘Being is not a genus’. Deleuze, and indeed Widder on Deleuze’s behalf, are too quick to accept this as proven. Shields argues that Aristotle’s argument fails. We first need to step back to consider how, in detail, Aristotle’s argument supposed to work? Shields quotes a relevant passage from Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*:

If the universal is always more of a principle, then it is clear that the highest among the genera will be principles. For these are said of all things. There will be, consequently, as many principles of beings as there are primary genera, so that both being and one will be principles and substances, for these, most of all, are said of all beings. For it is necessary that the differentia of each genus be and that they each be one; yet it is impossible either for the species of the genus to be predicated of their own differentiae or for the genus to be predicated of its own differentiae in the absence of its species. Hence, if either one or being is a genus, no differentia will either be or be one. However, unless they are genera, they will not be principles, if indeed the genera are principles.¹⁴²

Shields posits two possible reconstructions of the mechanics of the above argument. It will serve my point only to rehearse one of these reconstructions¹⁴³:

- (1) Suppose being and one are genera
- (2) Every differentia of a genus (a) exists and (b) is one.
- (3) Hence, (a) the differentia of being will (i) exist and (ii) be one; and (b) the differentia of one will (i) exist and (ii) be one.
- (4’) If (3a.i) the genus ‘being’ will be predicated of its differentia in the absence of its species.
- (5’) If (3b.ii), the genus ‘one’ will be predicated of its differentia in the absence of its species.
- (6’) It is not possible for a genus to be predicated of its own differentiae in the absence of its species.
- (7) Therefore, neither (3) nor (4’) is true.
- (8) Hence, either (1) or (2) is false.
- (9) Proposition (2) is true.
- (10) Hence, (1) our original proposition, is false.¹⁴⁴

The most immediate point of interpretation concerns the puzzling clause (that appears in step 4’) that, if being is a genus, then being will be predicated of its differentiae ‘*in the absence of its species*’. One way to deal with this is to read it in such a way as, simply, to collapse it into the claim that ‘the genus cannot be predicated of the differentia’.¹⁴⁵ Shields justification for this

¹⁴² Aristotle, *Metaphysics* iii.3 (998^b17-28), as quoted by Shields, pp.247-8.

¹⁴³ Although the workings of the alternative reconstruction differ somewhat, the outcome is the same: the demonstration fails.

¹⁴⁴ Shields, *Order in Multiplicity*, p.249. The *second* argument on this page.

¹⁴⁵ *Order in Multiplicity*, p.253. Subsequent refs.: p.251.

reading stems from *Topics* vi. 6 where Aristotle 'elucidates the requirements for intra-categorical predication, and clarifies the way predications involving the differentia function in essence-specifying definitions'. An example makes things clearer. Aristotle means that it *would* make sense to say 'two-footed man is an animal'. Here, Being ("is") — is predicated of its differentia ("two-footed") but the species ('man') is present. By contrast, it does not make sense to say, 'being two-footed is an animal' because the species ('man') is absent. In other words, 'if one predicates the genus in the absence of the species...then an illicit predication results'. If Aristotle is to overturn the assumption that Being is a genus (step 1 in the above argument) then the whole weight of the argument rests on step (6'). If it *is* possible for a genus to be predicated of its differentia, then the supposition that Being is a genus may stand; if it is *not* possible for a genus to be predicated of its differentia, then the supposition is disallowed: Being is not a genus.

Deleuze does not set out his own reasoning in any detail at all. But Widder, in his arguments on Deleuze's behalf, simply assumes that because we do not say things like 'being two-footed is an animal', it must follow that the genus cannot be predicated of its differentia. But although such locutions sound nonsensical, is that necessarily enough to convince us that this kind of predication is always illicit? Aristotle claims that, 'since every animal is either an individual or a species, then if the differentia are animals, they too must be either individuals or species'.¹⁴⁶ The point is, of course, that the differentia 'two-footed', for example, is a 'quality' not an individual or a species. The genus contains only the species and the individual members of those species. Hence, Shields summarises Aristotle's claim as being that 'we force the differentia into the wrong category by trying to predicate the genus of it in the absence of the species whose differentia it is'. Deleuze apparently accepts something like this argument without demur. Shields, however, finds grounds to conclude that it 'is not compelling'.

Shields' objection goes as follows. If the genus is to be predicated, the genus itself must be some sort of property. It is what Shields calls a 'privileged property', and what he means by this is that privileged properties are only predicated of substances. All substances are either individuals or species. Shields think that Aristotle is justified, in his 'preferred categories', in concluding that if the genus can properly be predicated of the differentia, then 'the differentia must be an individual or a species'.¹⁴⁷ It does not accord with our intuitions to regard say, 'being two-footed', as either

¹⁴⁶ Aristotle, *Topics*, 144^b1-3, as quoted by Shields, p.252. Subsequent refs.: *Order in Multiplicity* p.251; p.253.

¹⁴⁷ *Order in Multiplicity*, p.254. Subsequent ref., p.254.

itself being a species of animal or an individual animal. Therefore, Aristotle is right, thus far, to claim that we cannot properly predicate the genus of the differentia. But, Shields argues, surely with some justice, that Aristotle has no right simply to export what is true of the category of substance to the posited grand category of 'Being':

If there is a *summum genus* of being, then any given differentia falling under it will exist and so will have its genus predicated of it. Yet nothing requires that this differentia be treated as a species or individual other than the general principle that if G is a genus predicated of S, S must be either a species or an individual...In seeking to apply this principle to a postulated category of being...Aristotle presumes that we have independent reason for supposing that it would hold true even in the case of being...the...argument under consideration provides no such independent grounding.

Shields denies that the genus-species-individual pattern must necessarily obtain within all tiers of the categorial hierarchy in the same way. In other words, the grand category of 'Being' could legitimately differ. I suggest that the same argument might be used against Deleuze's insistence that the concept of difference must apply consistently at all tiers of the genus-species-individual pattern.

Interim conclusion.

Deleuze, who asserts the univocity of Being, has no argument by virtue of which it is demonstrated. If this seems shocking, it is no less shocking than the fact that Aristotle, who denies the univocity of Being, does not have an argument either. I have showed how Deleuze's critique of Aristotle contains some serious flaws. What would Deleuze have made of these objections? Although we do not know how he would have responded to particular objections, we do know what he thought about objections in general. In conversation with Parnet, Deleuze said: "Every time someone puts an objection to me, I want to say: Ok, Ok, let's go on to something else".¹⁴⁸ May tells us that 'This is not because he does not want to be faced with any shortcomings his work might have'. More trenchant critics will, of course, tend to think otherwise.

But it is possible, in this context, to put a positive spin on Deleuze's programme of always wishing to 'go on to something else'; of not allowing objections to form an impasse to

¹⁴⁸ Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues* p.1; as cited and translated by May, *Gilles Deleuze: An Introduction*, p.22. Subsequent ref., May, p.22.

philosophical creativity. Deleuze, by engaging with Aristotle's argument concerning first specific and then generic difference, is provoked into discovering a way of thinking about difference that are important to his project: 'difference in itself' is not going to be a product of a prior identity. Further, we can at least follow the argument that if the 'categories' are not connected by virtue of their identity within a higher genus, how are they connected? Deleuze argues that Aristotle, unwittingly, points the way to a new and radical philosophy of difference. This unwitting sign, from Aristotle, seems to excite Deleuze intensely and inform his whole philosophical project. Aristotle fumbles with this notion of a difference of 'another nature'. Deleuze claims to be able to form it into a new philosophy:

It is as though there were two "Logoi", differing in nature but intermingled with one another: the logos of Species...which rests upon the condition of identity or univocity of concepts...taken as genera; and the logos of Genera...which is free of that condition...above all is this not...a new chance for a philosophy of difference? Will it not lead towards an absolute concept, once liberated from the condition which made difference an entirely relative maximum? (32-33)

For Williams, Aristotle's commitment to equivocity is a principle of disconnection:

It is different to be a rock and an animal — they are in different ways. Therefore, to be is to be what you are and not simply to be. Being is equivocal and the relation between different existents is analogical...What you are disconnects you from other things...and positions you in a hierarchy of distinct sets or categories.¹⁴⁹

This seems to me to be an accurate assessment of Aristotle's position and also to mark Aristotle as the enemy of Deleuze's project. Deleuze's notion of the multiple is, precisely, one that facilitates radical connections and forbids any limitation on those connections by virtue of prior fixed categories. For Aristotle, as Williams puts it: 'To be is to be what you are and not simply to be'. Another way of putting this, I suggest, is to say that there is nothing which all existents share. For Deleuze, Being is not an empty term. Williams writes, for Deleuze: 'All things are in the same way and this way has substantial attributes'. In other words, there is something that all existents share. Hence, Deleuze finds some value in talking of 'Being'. The point is, that this 'something' that all existents share is not identity but difference. Being, for Deleuze, is difference: 'Being is said in a single and same sense of everything of which it is said, but that of which it is said differs: it is said of difference itself' (36). Being, therefore, is not static, it is

¹⁴⁹ *GD's D&R*, p.63.

dynamic. All the things that *are*, share a constant state but, paradoxical though it may sound, that constant state is only the state of 'becoming'. This is not to say that Deleuze will deny the obvious fact that things fall into group, it is instead to deny that things must fall into certain groups. Eugene Holland writes, with reference to Deleuze's concept of nomadicism: 'The organisation of a nomadic group is not imposed from above by a transcendent command'.¹⁵⁰ Or as Colebrook concedes: 'There are still hierarchies but these are not determined by a separate principle'.¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ Eugene Holland, 'Nomadicism + Citizenship', in *The Deleuze Dictionary*, pp.183-184 (p.183).

¹⁵¹ Colebrook, 'Nomadicism', in *The Deleuze Dictionary*, pp.180-182 (p.181).

Chapter 3. The shackle of opposition: Hegel.

Introduction to the chapter.

This chapter continues my analysis of Chapter One of *Difference and Repetition*. Deleuze's overall objective is 'To rescue difference from its maledictory state' (29). To do this he claims he must release it from 'the four shackles of mediation. Difference is "mediated" to the extent that it is subjected to the fourfold root of identity, opposition, analogy and resemblance' (29). In the previous chapter of the thesis I followed Deleuze's critique of Aristotle's concept of difference which was mediated by identity and analogy. Deleuze goes on to claim that it is Hegel who shackles difference to 'opposition'. Much of Deleuze's explicit critique of Hegel in Chapter One of *Difference and Repetition* is aimed at characterising Hegel as the philosopher of infinite representation (42-50). I argue that this informs our view of how Deleuze's own philosophy is 'grounded' in the virtual.

In *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze writes: 'If we do not discover its target the whole of Nietzsche's philosophy remains abstract and barely comprehensible'.¹⁵² The hidden target that Deleuze discovers on our behalf is Hegel. Deleuze's claim in respect of Nietzsche can be turned against Deleuze himself. Deleuze's philosophy becomes clearer when seen in relation to Hegel's philosophy. Hardt argues that the Deleuzian philosophy of difference (one might equally say 'multiplicity') can be read as a critique of 'dialectical thought'. As Hardt sees it, Deleuze's whole project is to make sense of the idea of a 'nondialectical difference'.¹⁵³ 'Dialectical' can, and does, mean many different things, not all of which are at variance with Deleuze's methods and purposes. However, Hardt is referring specifically to the Hegelian dialectic. Traditional wisdom assigns to Hegel's dialectic the formula: thesis, antithesis and synthesis. M. J. Inwood cites Kaufmann's warning: 'The triad of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis is encountered in Kant, Fichte and Schelling, but mentioned only once in the twenty volumes of Hegel's works'.¹⁵⁴ In mitigation, Inwood writes: 'although most of Hegel's triads do not in fact conform to the pattern of thesis-antithesis-synthesis...it is not obvious that the use of these words misrepresents his intentions'. What is not in question, as Inwood puts it, is that: 'Thinking, and indeed everything else, develops, on Hegel's view, by the emergence of contradictions and the attempt to overcome

¹⁵² p.8.

¹⁵³ Gilles Deleuze: *An Apprenticeship in Philosophy*, pxii.

¹⁵⁴ M.J. Inwood, *Hegel* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983), p.550. Subsequent ref. p.551.

them'. In Hegel's own words: 'The insight that the nature of thinking itself is dialectical, that, as understanding, it must fall into the negative of itself, into contradiction, is a main feature of logic'.¹⁵⁵ Hence, by 'the shackle of opposition', Deleuze means that Hegel's concept of difference is constrained by contradiction, by negation.

In the Preface to *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze situates a radical notion of difference (by implication, his own) with reference to an older one that has outstayed its welcome. We are told that a new notion of difference is 'in the air' (xix). This new notion is said to have already 'taken the place...of identity and contradiction' (xix). Whether or not Deleuze is justified in claiming victory over an old philosophical hegemony is beside the point. The point is, rather, that if such a new notion of difference is 'in the air' then its (over-the-horizon) target is Hegel. Later in the Preface this is made more explicit by Deleuze's reference to what he calls 'a generalized anti-Hegelianism' (xix). However, we should note Williams' warning: 'This is the first trap of the book.'¹⁵⁶ I do not fall into the trap: I shall argue that Deleuze is closer to Hegel than he likes to pretend.

If the Deleuzian project can be importantly illuminated by reference to Hegel, why is Deleuze's critique of Hegel in *Difference and Repetition* so relatively thin? I have shown how Deleuze contended against Aristotle via an engagement with the particulars of Aristotle's arguments; Deleuze enters into no such parallel engagement with Hegel's arguments. Part of my reply to the question I have posed is to admit that we must support *Difference and Repetition* by reference to earlier material. I shall rely in part, therefore, on Deleuze's early (1956) essay 'Bergson's Conception of Difference'. But even here, Deleuze seems deliberately to mask his own position relative to Hegel. Hardt argues that Deleuze attacks 'proximate enemies': these being the, so-called, 'Mechanicists' and Plato. Hardt terms this, Deleuze's 'method of triangulation' because at the apex of the triangle lies Bergson.¹⁵⁷ It is from Bergson, therefore, that Deleuze picks up the term 'mechanicists', used to describe Darwin and his heirs.¹⁵⁸ Darwinism is a long way from Hegelianism. However, for Bergson, and in his train Deleuze, Darwinism is used as a weapon against Hegelianism. Some of the substantive work of the chapter will follow Hegel's famous

¹⁵⁵ Hegel, *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften*, vol.1.11, as cited by Inwood, p.292.

¹⁵⁶ *GD's D&R*, p.26.

¹⁵⁷ *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy*, p.4.

¹⁵⁸ See for example, the way that '[in] the final pages of *Creative Evolution*...Bergson rebukes the mechanistic model of biological evolution propounded by Herbert Spencer...'. John Mullarkey 'The Rule of Dichotomy: Bergson's Genetics of Matter', *Pli*, 15 (2004), 125-143 (p.126).

argument that Being must be 'determinate'; against this, Bergson-Deleuze insist on the 'indeterminacy' of Being as a pre-requisite for the infinite creativity of the processes of Life and hence Darwin is sucked into the argument.

Immanence and expression.

Hardt is wrong to claim that Deleuze *never* engages with Hegel's arguments directly. I also support the analysis of Chapter One of *Difference and Repetition* with a reading of one of Deleuze's very earliest pieces of philosophical writing: his 1955 review of Jean Hyppolite's *Logic and Existence*.¹⁵⁹ Kerslake argues that this review 'both makes clear how much [Deleuze] accepts of Hyppolite's reading of Hegel and provides, the only published plan...in which [Deleuze] lays out the aims of his future philosophical project'.¹⁶⁰ In this chapter I pick up on this suggestion in order to consider how Deleuze's critique of Hegel allows us to anticipate some aspects of the final destination of Deleuze's argument in *Difference and Repetition*. For Kerslake, the key to Deleuze's project is the problem of immanence. At the heart of my thesis is the problem of univocity. In chapter 7 of the thesis I show how the themes of immanence and univocity converge in Deleuze's espousal of a kind of Spinozism. I must explain how, for Deleuze, Spinoza is both the champion of univocity and the avatar of immanence. Deleuze's reading of Hegel becomes a necessary preparation for the later reading of Spinoza.

Kerslake poses an urgent question, how should we define 'immanence'? The easy answer is that, as 'immanence' is the opposite of 'transcendence', it can be taken to mean a 'God-less' system of thought. Such a definition would seem to resonate with Spinoza's reputation for pantheism but it does not get us very far because it fails sufficiently to characterise the precise attraction of Spinozism for Deleuze. There are many God-less systems, why would Deleuze choose Spinoza's? Indeed, Hegel's God seems quite as remote from the God of Christian revelation as Spinoza's and yet, for Deleuze, Hegel is the enemy whereas Spinoza is the Christ of Philosophers. Kerslake suggests what might prove be a more promising definition: 'in a philosophy of immanence, *thought* is shown to be fully expressive of *being*; there is no moment of "transcendence" of being to thought'.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹ Gilles Deleuze, 'Review of Jean Hyppolite, *Logique et Existence*' published as an appendix in Jean Hyppolite, *Logic and Existence*, trans. by Leonard Lawlor and Amit Sen (New York: State University of New York Press, 1997), pp.191-195.

¹⁶⁰ 'The Vertigo of Philosophy. Deleuze and the Problem of Immanence', p.11.

¹⁶¹ 'The Vertigo of Philosophy', p.10.

Charles Taylor argues that the cultural shift from Enlightenment to Romanticism had, at its core, 'a central problem' which demanded a solution from 'the thinkers of this time [including Hegel]. It concerned the nature of human subjectivity and its relation to the world'.¹⁶² Taylor writes:

[The] epistemological innovators, the moderns of the seventeenth century [Enlightenment] directed their scorn...against Aristotelian science, and that view of the universe which had become intricately woven with it in Medieval and early Renaissance thought...From the modern point of view, these earlier visions betrayed a deplorable...weakness of men, a self-indulgence wherein they projected on things the forms which they most desire to find.

Taylor argues that the essential difference between the 'modern' Enlightenment world-view and the one it replaced was that:

The modern subject is self-defining, where on previous views the subject is defined in relation to a cosmic order...the shift that occurs in the seventeenth century...is...a shift to the modern notion of the self. It is this kind of notion which underlies Descartes' *cogito*, where the existence of the self is demonstrated while that of everything outside, even God, is in doubt'.¹⁶³

Alongside this change in the perception of the self, the world, in-itself, becomes 'devoid of intrinsic meaning': it becomes 'objectified'. On this view, the process of objectification spreads to become the project of the science of man:

The age of Enlightenment was evolving an anthropology which was an amalgam, not entirely consistent, of two things: the notion of self-defining objectivity...and the view of man as part of nature...These two aspects did not always sit well together.¹⁶⁴

This tension is the key problem of Hegel's generation, for example:

Herder reacts against the anthropology of the Enlightenment...against the analysis of the human mind into different faculties, of man into body and soul...And he is one of the principal of those responsible for developing an alternative anthropology, one centred on the categories of expression.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶² Charles Taylor, *Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), pp.3-5. Subsequent ref., p.5.

¹⁶³ *Hegel*, p.6. Subsequent ref., p.9.

¹⁶⁴ *Hegel*, p.10. Subsequent ref., p.11.

¹⁶⁵ *Hegel*, p.13. Subsequent ref., p.14.

I have dwelt on this background: first, because Taylor claims that the category of expression is ‘central to any understanding of Hegel’; and second, because the concept of ‘expression’ becomes the focus of Deleuze’s reading of Spinoza.

Are we, then, to understand ‘expressionism’ as a kind of nostalgic hankering after the pre-modernist view in which the faculties of men and women were ordered so as to match the intrinsic order of the world and, therefore, allowed us to read the meaning of the world like a book? Taylor argues not. In the Romantic age, which Hegel criticised but of which he was, nevertheless, a part — ‘expressing oneself’ had not the linguistic connotation of the old-world view but instead, as Taylor puts it, was more like: ‘[a] giving vent to, a realizing in external reality of something we feel or desire...what is expressed is a subject, or some state of a subject’. In chapter 7, I show how Deleuze grafts a concept of expression onto the philosophy of Spinoza. He was not the first to do so, Taylor writes:

Herder and those of his generation...were...greatly influenced by Spinoza. This may be surprising in that Spinoza was the great philosopher of the anti-subject, the philosopher who...seems to take us beyond and outside of subjectivity. But the age in receiving him imposed a certain reading on Spinoza. His philosophy was not seen as denying an understanding of human life as self-unfolding...What Spinoza seemed to offer...was a vision of the way in which the finite subject fitted into a kind of universal current of life.¹⁶⁶

I suggest that this is also redolent of Deleuze’s view.

The logic of ‘not’.

With regard to the grand structure of Hegel’s oeuvre, Peter Singer writes: ‘Both *The Phenomenology of Mind* and *The Science of Logic*...have the same process as their subject, the process of Mind coming to know itself as ultimate reality’.¹⁶⁷ Indeed, the same goes for the whole corpus of Hegel’s writings which Taylor bundles together as ‘the philosophy of nature and the philosophy of spirit; which is...laid out in the latter two sections of the *Encyclopaedia*, and in the various works which expand parts of this, such as the *Philosophy of Right*, philosophies of history, religion’ and so on.¹⁶⁸ In each case, what we start with is ‘the disconnected jumble

¹⁶⁶ Hegel, p.16.

¹⁶⁷ Peter Singer, ‘Hegel, G.W.F’, in *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, ed. by Ted Honderich (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp.349-343 (p.342).

¹⁶⁸ Hegel, p.123. Subsequent reference: pp.122-123.

which we see as the world [and this will] force us to move to the vision of a system of necessity whose apex is *Geist*'. What will force us? In order to reply I need to introduce the more fine-grained structure of Hegel's philosophy; it is this structure that attracts Deleuze's attention.

In the famous opening argument of the *Logic*, Hegel invites us to think of '*Being, pure being, without any further determination*'.¹⁶⁹ In other words, Being devoid of all qualities. The thought that this is designed to provoke is that nothing just *is*; everything must have some quality. As Taylor puts it, a thing that was 'neither animal, vegetable nor mineral, etc., would be nothing'.¹⁷⁰ This is where Hegel wants us to arrive: 'Being, the indeterminate immediate, is in fact *nothing*'.¹⁷¹ The thought of pure Being is, it seems, unstable and must turn into its apparent opposite: nothing. Hegel then develops the reciprocal movement from the thought of '*Nothing, pure nothing*'. If one follows Taylor's advice 'the first two chapters of the first part of Being, Quality...form an unquestioned unity of development'.¹⁷² This allows us some licence to skip the interpolated synthesis of 'Becoming' in Chapter 1 of the *Logic* (Being), in order to pick up the broad thread of Hegel's argument again in Chapter Two of the *Logic* (Determinate Being). The basic trajectory is, therefore, that the opposition between Pure Being and Nothing is reconciled into Determinate being:

Being and nothing are the same; *but just because they are the same they are no longer being and nothing*, but now have a different significance...in determinate being. This unity now remains their base from which they do not again emerge in the abstract significance of being and nothing.¹⁷³

The pattern of the Hegelian dialectic is hence that of a triad which moves from unity to disunity and then to reconciliation. It is this that, ultimately, drives the movement to the apex of *Geist*.

Inwood asks the question which also lies at the heart of Deleuze's critique: 'How...are the members of a triad related to each other?'¹⁷⁴ The question is asked not just with regard to the members of the particular triad that I have instanced above but, quite generally, insofar as the triadic structure is seen to run right through Hegel's work. Inwood advises that Hegel seems to give two answers and then a way in which the triads themselves are related:

¹⁶⁹ *Hegel's Science of Logic*, trans. by A. V. Miller (New York: George Allen & Unwin, 1969), p.82.

¹⁷⁰ *Hegel*, p.232.

¹⁷¹ *Hegel's Science of Logic*, p.82. Subsequent reference, p.82.

¹⁷² *Hegel*, p.232.

¹⁷³ *Hegel's Science of Logic*, p.108.

The first [answer] is that the second term of the triad is the negation of the first, and the third the negation of the second, the negation of the negation...The second answer is that the second term is the opposite of the first, and that the third term is in some sense the unity of these two opposites...the Logic is supposed to continue in virtue of the fact that the last term of one triad itself has an opposite and can therefore be the first term of the next triad.¹⁷⁵

Sometimes this structure is played out in a manner which might seem roughly intuitive, but mostly it is not. Inwood comments:

Only rarely does the second term of a triad seem to be the opposite of the first. In what sense, for example, is causality the opposite of substantiality or quantity that of quality? Again, the third term is not generally the only possible combination of the first two, even if it is a combination of them at all.

Whatever we think about these objections (and legions of others) as Taylor puts it: 'It is important to stress...that Hegel is not proposing the use of a dialectical "method" or "approach". If we want to characterize his method we might just as well speak of it as "descriptive"...For his aim is simply to follow the movement in his object of study'.¹⁷⁶ Carlisle concurs: 'Hegel attempts to construct a philosophical thinking that moves as consciousness moves; he suggests that concepts, and the consciousness in which they are embedded, reciprocally develop and unfold themselves.'¹⁷⁷ Hegel's claim is that the dialectic is not a method by which philosophers criticize concepts, rather it is the concepts that criticize themselves. Hegel writes:

Dialectic is usually regarded as an external art, which wilfully introduces confusion into determinate concepts and a mere *illusion of contradictions* in them...Often, too, dialectic is nothing more than a subjective see-saw of toing and froing argumentation, where the content is lacking and the nakedness is clothed in the subtlety which produces such argumentation. In its proper character dialectic is rather the very own, true nature of the determinations of the understanding, of things and of the finite in general...Dialectic...is this *immanent* going beyond, in which the onesidedness and limitedness reveals itself for what it is, namely, as its negation. It is the nature of everything finite to sublimate itself.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁴ Hegel, p.295.

¹⁷⁵ Hegel, p.295. Subsequent ref., p.296

¹⁷⁶ Hegel, p.129.

¹⁷⁷ Kierkegaard's *Philosophy of Becoming*, p.40.

¹⁷⁸ Hegel, *Enzyklopädie* vol.1. 81. as cited by Inwood, p.304.

I argue that, for Deleuze, the elements of the multiple are connected by differences and that, because of that, Deleuze's philosophy is a kind of logic of difference. It is instructive, therefore, to note that Hegel's philosophical system is held together by a kind of logic of contradiction. Hence even Inwood, who has no interest in Deleuze's project, can write:

At the end of the *Logic* we are presented with a single, comprehensive conceptual system or system of systems. The contradictions within each element of it are not simply the way in which we advance from one element to another, but they are also what holds them together in a single system. Contradictions are, as it were, the rivets of the edifice.¹⁷⁹

On the face of it, this does not seem that far removed from Deleuze's own ambition.

The gap between Hegel's position and Deleuze's becomes apparent when one starts to reflect on the gap between Hegel and Spinoza. For Hegel, as Hardt puts it: 'The existence of something is the active negation of something else'.¹⁸⁰ Or as Taylor summarises it, 'determined' beings are in a kind of 'struggle to maintain themselves in the face of others', and hence, are seen as 'negating each other in an active sense'.¹⁸¹ Hegel picks up Spinoza's dictum: '*Omnis determinatio est negatio*'.¹⁸² But only to turn it against Spinoza. As Taylor explains, for Hegel:

The only way to characterize determinate being is in terms of some property, and property terms can only be made intelligible by being opposed, contrasted to each other. [E.g. if we describe something as red, then it follows that it is not-blue, not-green etc.] In this sense, therefore, Hegel takes up the Spinozan principle that all determination is negation.¹⁸³

This also lies at the heart of Hegel's critique of Spinoza. Hegel posits:

A reality...taken only as a perfection, as an affirmative being which contains no negation. Hence the realities are not opposed to one another and do not contradict one another. Reality as thus conceived is assumed to survive when all negation has been thought away; but this is to do away with all determinateness. Reality is quality, determinate being; consequently, it contains the moment of the negative and is through this alone the determinate being that it is.¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁹ Hegel, pp.299-300.

¹⁸⁰ Gilles Deleuze: *An Apprenticeship in Philosophy*, p.3.

¹⁸¹ Hegel, p.234.

¹⁸² Hegel's *Science of Logic*, p.113.

¹⁸³ Hegel, p.232.

¹⁸⁴ Hegel's *Science of Logic*, p.112.

As Hardt puts it: 'In Hegel's eyes, Spinoza's ontology and any such positive affirmative ontology must remain abstract and indifferent'.¹⁸⁵

Deleuze's complaint is not, therefore, that Hegel does not take 'difference' seriously: far from it, Hegel wants to find where the *real differences* lie. The problem is, rather, that Hegel has harnessed his analysis of the nature of being to a negative concept of the nature of difference. As this claim is implicit, rather than explicit, in the argument of Chapter One of *Difference and Repetition*, I turn first to consider Deleuze's essay 'Bergson's Conception of Difference'. Deleuze's own position is occluded by his arguing in the guise of Bergson. Deleuze goes to the lengths of inventing what Bergson *would have said*, had he engaged in a direct critique of Hegel: 'We can...predict, using certain of Bergson's texts, the objections he would make to a Hegelian-style dialectic'.¹⁸⁶ The objection that emerges is cast in terms of how we should understand the nature of difference:

In Bergson...the thing differs from itself *in the first place, immediately*. According to Hegel, the thing differs from itself because it differs in the first place from all that it is not, such that difference goes to the point of contradiction.

Deleuze's diagnosis that Hegel operates with a flawed idea of difference is, therefore, to be understood as the claim that an authentic idea of difference is allied to a positive account of Being; and that difference, ultimately, is not contradiction. This 'authentic' idea of difference is the one that Deleuze will champion throughout his writings, under various names but, often as 'internal difference' or, as in the foregoing quotation, that which 'differs from itself'.

The notion of 'internal difference' strikes us as an oxymoron. It comes, therefore, as something of a relief to find that Deleuze expects us to react against it, 'The objection will be made that internal difference makes no sense, that such a notion is absurd'.¹⁸⁷ Perhaps the anticipated 'absurdity' of which Deleuze speaks is the assumption that the grammar of 'difference' forbids talk of that which differs from itself; like Aristotle, you need two things to make a difference. Despite Deleuze's antipathy to Hegel, the idea of 'internal difference' is Hegelian. Thus, even when Hegel is not mentioned, one can see that the Hegelian arguments that I have rehearsed above are the context of Deleuze's claim in the early essay on Bergson that,

¹⁸⁵ Gilles Deleuze: *An Apprenticeship in Philosophy*, p.3.

¹⁸⁶ Deleuze, BCD, p.53. Subsequent ref., p.53.

¹⁸⁷ BCD, p.43. Subsequent refs.: pp.42-43.

If philosophy is to have a positive and direct relation with things, it is only to the extent that it claims to grasp the thing itself in what it is, in its difference from all that it is not, which is to say in its *internal difference*.

We seem here to be offered some insight into what we should understand by ‘internal difference’ but the passage poses a problem of interpretation which I shall dwell on a little.

Internal difference, we are here told, expresses ‘the thing itself in what it is, in its difference from all that it is not’. The desire to grasp ‘the thing itself in what it is’ — is entirely consistent with the reading that I have already given by which Deleuze will prefer a positive ontology of Being, to Hegel’s negative ontology. In other words, we do not grasp ‘the thing itself in what it is’ via ‘all that it is not’. Deleuze writes: ‘According to Hegel, the thing differs from itself because it differs in the first place from all that it is not’.¹⁸⁸ But how should we interpret what Deleuze means by distinguishing his position, from the Hegelian position, in terms of: ‘To grasp the thing itself in what it is, in its difference from all that it is not, which is to say in its *internal difference*’? There is still, here, a comparison between the ‘thing’ and ‘all that it is not’. One might object, if this is all that Deleuze means by ‘internal difference’, why is it to be distinguished from Hegel’s concept of difference? The distinction that is being made is that the ‘thing’ which Hegel is comparing to ‘all that it is not’, differs from itself because it differs *in the first place* from all that it is not. For Deleuze, however, the ‘thing’ which is to be compared to ‘all that it is not’, is to be understood via the idea of difference that Deleuze calls ‘internal difference’. Internal difference, for Deleuze, is positive not negative: it is precisely not, *in the first place*, a function of all that it is not. The passage which I am interpreting (‘to grasp the thing itself in what it is, in its difference from all that it is not, which is to say in its *internal difference*’) can then be read to be distinguishing his position from Hegel in the way I am suggesting. Deleuze means, contra Hegel, that the thing’s ‘internal difference’ is, *in the first place*, a positive difference, only then can the thing be compared to all that it is not.

Douglas Donkel claims that Deleuze espouses a ‘Notion of difference irreducible to identity, and prior to the logic of contradiction: a difference that does not reside between things’.¹⁸⁹ Chapter 2 of the thesis (Deleuze’s reading of Aristotle) showed how, for Deleuze, difference is ‘irreducible

¹⁸⁸ BCD, p.53.

¹⁸⁹ Douglas L. Donkel, ‘Deleuze’s Challenge: Thinking Internal Difference’, *Philosophy Today*, 46.3 (Fall 2002), p.323. Subsequent ref., p.323.

to identity'. The current chapter has shown how we are now to understand a difference that is 'prior to the logic of contradiction'. Such a difference does *not* reside between things. That being the case, it is not so paradoxical to call such a difference 'internal difference'. The difference that *does* reside between things is, therefore, 'external difference'. As Donkel puts it, internal difference 'lives in the heart of things themselves, internal to what we labor to call their identity'.

In chapter 2 of the thesis I showed how the nature of difference became entangled with the problem of the nature of Being (univocity versus equivocity). Difference and Being become similarly entangled in Deleuze's critique of Hegel insofar as Hegel adopts the position that Being is determinate. For Deleuze, the idea that Being is determinate undermines the non-contingent status of Being. Hardt tells us that Deleuze defends the position that 'In order for being to be necessary, it must be indeterminate'.¹⁹⁰ It is this that lies behind Deleuze's endorsement of Bergson's critique of Darwin:

Against a certain mechanism, Bergson shows that vital difference is an *internal* difference. But also that internal difference cannot be conceived as a simple *determination*: a determination can be accidental, or at least its being can only be attached to a cause, end or chance, it thus implies a subsisting exteriority.¹⁹¹

'Mechanism' is Bergsonian jargon for Darwinism but Deleuze's target is Hegel. At stake is the nature of Being. Darwinism is thought to undermine the non-contingent status of Being because 'natural selection' is allied to random, accidental, mutation. As Hardt summarises it, one could take the view that evolutionary theory tries to 'theorize an empirical evolution of the differences of being'¹⁹² — and this undermines its substantial necessary nature. Hence, Deleuze finds common cause with Bergson against Darwin and Hegel. For Deleuze, 'determinate Being' is a function of an inauthentic difference that he calls 'external difference'. This is the way to make sense of the reference, in the above passage, to an apparently false 'exteriority'. Hardt explains the above passage: 'The form of difference proposed by the process of determination...always remains external to being and therefore fails to provide it with an essential, necessary foundation'. The 'difference' of indeterminate and necessary being' is the so-called 'internal difference'. Internal difference is the vital difference that powers evolution and for which Darwinism provided only the mechanism. What we get, therefore, from Deleuze's insistence on

¹⁹⁰ Gilles Deleuze: *An Apprenticeship in Philosophy*, p.4.

¹⁹¹ Deleuze, BCD, p.50.

'indeterminate being' is not a 'vagueness' at the heart of reality but the unceasing novelty or newness of which living things are an expression.

A prospectus for *Difference and Repetition*.

In his review of *Logic and Existence*, Deleuze glosses the thesis of his former teacher's book as follows:

Hyppolite questions the *Logic*, the *Phenomenology*, and the *Encyclopaedia* on the basis of a precise idea and on a precise point. *Philosophy must be ontology, it cannot be anything else; but there is no ontology of essence, there is only an ontology of sense.*¹⁹³

Whatever this means, Deleuze entirely approves of it. Kerslake explains that although 'The use of the word "sense" (*Sinn*) does not seem especially central in Hegel's own work...Hyppolite makes clear that he is identifying it with the more familiar "notion", or "concept" (*Begriff*)'.¹⁹⁴ To assert that Hegelianism is an ontology of the *concept* would be unremarkable. But Hyppolite's use of the term 'sense', instead of 'concept', is no mere artefact of translation, it carries a heavy philosophical load and, moreover, a load to which Deleuze gives his enthusiastic endorsement. An endorsement that is carried over into his own mature philosophy. Hyppolite quotes from Hegel's *Lectures on Aesthetics*:

Sense is this wonderful word which is used in two opposite meanings. On the one hand it means the organ of immediate apprehension, but on the other hand we mean by it the sense, the significance, the thought, the universal underlying the thing. And so sense is connected on the one hand with the immediate external aspect of existence, and on the other hand with its inner essence. Now a sensuous consideration does not cut the two sides apart at all; in one direction it contains the opposite one too, and in sensuous immediate perception it at the same time apprehends the essence and the concept. But since it carries these determinations in a still unseparated unity, it does not bring the concept as such into consciousness but stops at foreshadowing it.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹² Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy, p.4. Subsequent ref., p.4.

¹⁹³ 'Review of Jean Hyppolite, *Logique et Existence*', p.191.

¹⁹⁴ 'The Vertigo of Philosophy', p.11.

¹⁹⁵ *Logic and Existence*, p.24; citing *Hegel's Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, 2 vols., trans. by T.M. Knox (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp.128-129.

Kerslake writes:

For Hegel these two opposite meanings signify a common source; they signify that the universal will be generated in the sensible; that the universal concept and the singular intuition are two aspects of the self-differentiation of the absolute. The intelligible articulation of the structure of self-differentiation is what Hyppolite will call sense, while the movement itself can be called expression.¹⁹⁶

For Hegel, thought and Being have a common origin; it is this that provides the philosophical justification for the unfolding process of the dialectic. It also allows an apparently surprising *rapprochement* between Deleuze and Hegel. Kerslake is right to say that 'Both Hegel and Deleuze are against philosophies of representation'. Hegelianism is anti-representational because the Hegelian concept does not 'represent' reality (neither, for that matter, does it 'refer' to reality): there is no gap between thought and Being. I suggest that we also see here the clearest anticipation of what we should understand by Deleuze's application of the concept of 'expression'. A philosophical system based on 'expression', rather than 'representation', is fully 'immanent'. For Deleuze, as we shall later see, the most exemplary system of immanence is Spinozism. But Kerslake, drawing on Hyppolite, complains: 'immanence is complete' in Hegel. The problem becomes, why Deleuze's Spinoza rather than Deleuze's Hegel?

I suggest that Deleuze's choice is informed less by the problem of immanence than by the problem of difference. In other words, Deleuze privileges the positive concept of difference, allied to a positive concept of Being, found in Spinoza — over the negative concept of difference (i.e. contradiction, opposition), allied to a negative concept of Being, found in Hegel. For Deleuze, what this boils down to, is more of an antipathy to the Hegel of the *Phenomenology* than to the Hegel of the *Logic*. The exact status of the *Phenomenology* has always provoked much scholarly debate.¹⁹⁷ J.N. Findlay suggests that 'The *Phenomenology of Spirit*...is a work seen by Hegel as a necessary forepiece to his philosophical system...but it is meant to be a forepiece that can be dropped and discarded once the student, through deep immersion in its contents, has advanced through confusions and misunderstandings to the properly philosophical point of view'.¹⁹⁸ It is clear, as Kerslake explains, that:

¹⁹⁶ 'The Vertigo of Philosophy', p.11. Subsequent refs.: p.11.

¹⁹⁷ Taylor, *Hegel*, p.127.

¹⁹⁸ J.N. Findlay, 'Foreword' in, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. by A.V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p.v-xxx (p.v)

For Hyppolite, the *Logic* is the expression of being itself; it is the high point of Hegel's system in which "the concept, such as it appears in dialectical discourse, is (unlike in the *Phenomenology*) simultaneously truth and certainty, being and sense; it is immanent to this being which says itself".¹⁹⁹

On this view, 'the phenomenological and historical parts of Hegel's system are anthropological entries into the system'.²⁰⁰ In his review Deleuze writes:

In the empirical and in the absolute, it is the same being and the same thought: but the external, empirical difference of thought and being has given way to the difference identical with Being, to the difference internal to the Being which thinks itself... In the *Logic*, there is no longer, therefore, as in the empirical, what I say on the one side and on the other side the sense of what I say – the pursuit of one by the other which is the dialectic of the *Phenomenology*. On the contrary, my discourse is logical or properly philosophical when I say the sense of what I say, and when in this manner Being says itself.²⁰¹

The Being that says itself, is the inhuman voice of the concepts that criticize themselves. Kerlake draws attention to the way in which this theme is evident both in Hyppolite's reading of Hegel and in Deleuze's acceptance of it. Hyppolite writes:

Undoubtedly, the Logos appears in the human knowledge that interprets and says itself, but here man is only the intersection of this knowledge and this sense. Man is consciousness and self-consciousness...but consciousness and self-consciousness are not man. They say being as sense in man. They are the very being that knows itself and says itself. Only in this way can we understand that Hegel's philosophy results at least as much in a speculative logic as in a philosophy of history.²⁰²

In the *Logic* the taint of mere humanism has been removed:

Logic is to be understood as the system of pure reason, as the realm of pure thought. This realm of truth as it is without veil and in its own absolute nature. It can therefore be said that this content is the exposition of God as he is in his eternal essence before the creation of nature and a finite mind.²⁰³

Here, we also see how to make best sense of Deleuze's notion of internal difference. The *too external* 'to and fro' of the dialectic of the *Phenomenology* is rejected in favour of the Being which differs from itself.

¹⁹⁹ 'The Vertigo of Philosophy', p.12: citing Hyppolite, *Logic and Existence*, p.35.

²⁰⁰ Kerlake, 'The Vertigo of Philosophy', p.12.

²⁰¹ 'Review of Jean Hyppolite, *Logique et Existence*', p.194.

²⁰² *Logic and Existence*, p.20.

I have argued that what best explains Deleuze's choice of Spinoza over Hegel is not immanence but the nature of difference. This is further evidenced if we consider the sole, but very significant objection that Deleuze registers against Hyppolite's reading of Hegel. In effect, Deleuze accuses Hyppolite of being *too* Hegelian:

Hyppolite shows himself to be altogether Hegelian: Being can be identical to difference only insofar as difference is carried up to the absolute, that is up to contradiction. Speculative difference is the Being which contradicts itself.²⁰⁴

In the review, Deleuze deploys the same argument that I have already set out in the context of the essay on Bergson (although the essay was published later than the review): 'The thing contradicts itself because, in being distinguished from *all* it is not, it finds its being in this difference itself; it reflects itself only by reflecting itself into the other, since the other is *its* other'. This is the Hegelian explanation for the inherent contradiction in concepts and in things. Both Deleuze's objection against Hyppolite, and Deleuze's own future project, now turn on the nature of difference (not immanence). Deleuze ponders on whether Hyppolite has carried the notion of the self-contradiction of 'things' too far: into the absolute. Deleuze writes that, for Hyppolite 'there are two ways of self-contradiction, phenomenological and logical'. But Deleuze asks, anticipating the programme of *Difference and Repetition*:

Can we not construct an ontology of difference which would not have to go up to contradiction because contradiction would be less than difference and not more? Is not contradiction itself only the phenomenal and anthropological aspect of difference?

In Deleuze's reading, the Hegel of the *Phenomenology* cannot get in touch with authentic difference. If Hegel has forged the shackle of 'opposition' with which to bind difference, it is, therefore, in the notion of 'contradiction' that lies at the heart of the 'movement' of the dialectic in the *Phenomenology* but which *need* not, in Deleuze's view, lie at the heart of Being. As we have seen, opposition or contradiction is 'only the phenomenal and anthropological aspect of difference'.

If Kerslake is right, the project whose kernel lies in Deleuze's review of Hyppolite's *Logic and Existence*, finds its first flowering in Deleuze's monograph on Spinoza: *Expressionism in Philosophy*. I do not address Deleuze's reading of Spinoza until chapter 7 of the thesis but I want

²⁰³ Hegel's *Science of Logic*, p.50.

briefly to anticipate it here. Kerslake argues that ‘At strategic points in [*Expressionism in Philosophy*], Deleuze appears to imply that all aspects of Hegelian immanence are to be found in Spinoza’.²⁰⁵ But how is Deleuze going to justify his own reliance on a realm of immanence in which thought and Being already cohere? He does not, like Hegel, rely on ‘a dynamic genesis of the “logicity of being” in such a way that “it says its own sense “(accounts for itself through the concepts it has generated) through the very movement of thought presented step by step in the book itself’.²⁰⁶ Will Deleuze, instead therefore, embrace Spinozism wholeheartedly and, in some way, rely on Spinoza’s famous demonstration, in the *Ethics*, of the single substance? I will later argue not.

Instead, I follow Kerslake who argues: ‘It is Deleuze’s return to Kant in *Difference and Repetition* that provides the most powerful approach to a new philosophy of immanence’.²⁰⁷ The proximity of thought to Being (pure immanence) is a requirement of the argument of the climax of Deleuze’s project in Chapters Four and Five of *Difference and Repetition* (see chapter 8 of my thesis). Deleuze tries to solve the problem of how to justify pure immanence via a Theory of Ideas based on a radical reading of Kant’s first *Critique*. As Kerslake puts it: ‘Deleuze fuses the noumenal and the teleological in his new notion of “Idea”, in such a way that he can legitimately claim that *thought* has access to noumenal being (while experience, understood in terms of recognition according to the generality of concepts, does not).’

Deleuze’s critique of infinite representation.

Thus far in the thesis I have shown how Deleuze associates Aristotle’s concept of difference with ‘identity’ and Hegel’s with ‘contradiction’. Could the history of difference be written differently? On the face of it, Carlisle associates Aristotle more strongly with contradiction than Hegel:

When Hegel developed his dialectical method, he was attempting to formalize a kind of reasoning more dynamic than the traditional, Aristotelian laws of logic allow... While Aristotle’s logic is based on contradiction (thesis and antithesis), Hegel introduces a triadic form wherein contradiction is mediated by a third, synthetic term.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁴ ‘Review of Jean Hyppolite, *Logique et Existence*’, p.195. And subsequent refs. in this para.

²⁰⁵ ‘The Vertigo of Philosophy’, p.13.

²⁰⁶ ‘The Vertigo of Philosophy’, p.14.

²⁰⁷ ‘The Vertigo of Philosophy’, p.16.

²⁰⁸ *Kierkegaard’s Philosophy of Becoming*, p.15. And subsequent refs.

In other words, for Aristotle there are only 'on' and 'off': 'contradiction is final and irreconcilable'. This seems to fly in the face of Deleuze's critique of Hegel as the champion of contradiction. But in fact Carlisle's analysis ameliorates any such objection: 'Aristotle [and] Hegel...agree that contradiction is a condition of movement. However, they have different interpretations of the significance of contradiction: for Aristotle, it *identifies* the thing that moves...; for Hegel, it leads to a mediation of concepts that propels the process of reasoning'. Hence, Aristotle comes back to the Deleuzian claim of 'identity'. But Deleuze's reading of Hegel would be an aberrant one indeed, if it did not pay due attention, as Carlisle puts it, to the dynamism inherent in the distinctively Hegelian claim that 'any particular thing is at once A and not-A, so that "thinking it through" concretely involves traversing these opposites, and grasping the unity of the object by means of this movement.'²⁰⁹ In now turning to the critique of Hegel that we actually find in chapter One of *Difference and Repetition*, I will show that Deleuze's reading of Hegel does indeed address this dynamism.

Deleuze writes: 'The criticism that Hegel addresses to his predecessors is that they stopped at a purely relative maximum without reaching the absolute maximum of difference, namely contradiction; they stopped before reaching the infinite (as infinitely large) of contradiction' (44). What does this mean? Singer instances a progression of Hegelian triads drawn from the *Philosophy of History*.²¹⁰ Greek society was a 'harmonious society in which citizens identified themselves with the community...This customary community forms the starting point of the dialectical movement, known...as the *thesis*'. As we have seen, the original unity, in Hegel's analysis, exposes some kind of inadequacy which makes it unstable. In this instance, 'The Greeks could not do without independent thought'. This freedom brings the ruin of customary morality: it is the *antithesis* — the opposite or negation of the thesis. But this second stage is also unstable: 'Freedom turns into the Terror of the French Revolution'. Thus customary harmony and abstract freedom must be reconciled in a *synthesis*: 'In the *Philosophy of History*, the synthesis in the overall dialectical movement is the German society of Hegel's time' in which individual freedom is rationally organised. However, Deleuze's point is that, in general, the dialectical movement does *not* stop in the way in which Hegel thought that German society had ended the process of history. It is this endless escalation of the dialectic that forms the explicit target of Deleuze's critique of Hegel in Chapter One of *Difference and Repetition*.

²⁰⁹ Kierkegaard's *Philosophy of Becoming*, p.30.

²¹⁰ Peter Singer, *Hegel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp.77-78.

Deleuze dubs Leibniz and Hegel the philosophers of infinite representation: ‘With the former, representation conquers the infinite because a technique for dealing with the infinitely small captures the smallest difference...With the latter, representation conquers the infinite because a technique for dealing with the infinitely large captures the largest difference’ (262-263).²¹¹

Hegelian ‘representation’ (for Deleuze, always a term of disapprobation) is ‘infinite’ because the *synthesis* reached is always itself unstable and hence generates a fresh opposition, and the process starts again.

Interim conclusion.

Deleuze’s stance *against* ‘infinite representation’ must strike us as counterintuitive. The Hegelian dialectic has been critiqued, by Deleuze, partly because it is associated with *determinate* Being. Hence, to introduce the notion of infinity seems to involve us in an indeterminacy that, one might suppose, would reform the Hegelian position in a direction of which Deleuze might be expected to approve. Hence, Williams makes the point that: ‘Given the way in which the infinite undoes identity and representation in Hegel’s and Leibniz’s philosophies, it seems odd that Deleuze should want to criticize them’.²¹² Indeed, perhaps Deleuze, very obliquely, recognizes this apparent discrepancy when he responds: ‘Even though it is said of opposition or of finite determination, this Hegelian infinite remains the infinitely large of theology’ (45).

In his critique of infinite representation Deleuze provides us with a clue as to how his own philosophy will be ‘grounded’. We must recall that Badiou objects that Deleuze’s philosophy is grounded in the virtual — and the virtual, for Badiou, is to be associated with the One. In the current context, however, Deleuze distinguishes between an ‘organic’ as opposed to an ‘orgiastic’ ground. It seems clear that the ‘organic’ is associated with the earlier critique of Aristotle; Deleuze discusses the ‘organic’, as ground, in terms of measuring and dividing up the average forms according to the requirement of organic representation (42). Hegel, in some sense, goes beyond Aristotle and earns Deleuze’s cautious approbation: ‘When representation discovers the infinite within itself, it no longer appears as organic representation but as orgiastic representation; it discovers within itself the limits of the organised; tumult; restlessness and passion underneath apparent calm’ (42). This turbulence is, apparently, something of which Deleuze approves and which one might therefore suppose to be compatible with his own choice of the philosophical

²¹¹ I have excluded Deleuze’s critique of Leibniz from the scope of the thesis.

²¹² *GD’s D&R*, p.70.

ground of the virtual. It is clearly impossible to associate the orgiastic with the calm of the eternal and immutable realm of the Platonic Forms. But we should note, the orgiastic is, in this context, still 'representation'. Why?

Deleuze writes:

The introduction of the infinite...entails the identity of contraries, or makes the contrary of the Other a contrary of the Self...Such is the movement of contradiction as it constitutes the true pulsation of the infinite...the negative is now at once both the becoming of the positive when the positive is denied, and the return of the positive when it denies or excludes itself. (44-45)

This is a fairer reflection of the ascending 'spiral' of the Hegelian dialectic than the simplistic image of the dialectic as a kind of switch that is either 'on or off' and which maintains some kind of sharp distinction between the polarities. Instead as Taylor summarises the Hegelian position:

Each term in these basic dichotomies...shows itself to be not only opposed to but identical with its opposite...at base the very relations of opposition and identity are inseparably linked to each other. They cannot be utterly distinguished because neither can exist on its own...Rather they are in a kind of circular relation. An opposition arises out of an earlier identity; and this of necessity: the identity could not sustain itself on its own, but had to breed opposition. And from this it follows that the opposition is not simply opposition, the relation of each term to its opposite is a peculiarly intimate one. It is not just related to *an* other but to *its* other, and this hidden identity will necessarily reassert itself in a recovery of unity.²¹³

It is not, therefore, fanciful of Deleuze to claim that, in Hegel, 'identity' returns. Williams advises: 'Identity...returns in the definition of the essence of a thing as its real contradictions and syntheses...This is not a closed finite identity but it is closed in the logic that governs the endless spiral of contradictions and syntheses'.²¹⁴ The Deleuzian multiplicity, the ground of his own philosophy, must therefore be, somehow, open.

²¹³ Hegel, p.80.

²¹⁴ GD's D&R, p.71.

Chapter 4. Overturning Platonism

Introduction to the chapter.

Deleuze's history of difference, in Chapter One of *Difference and Repetition*, starts with Aristotle and ends with Plato, having gone via Hegel. Deleuze plots this erratic course because in Plato there is something worth salvaging. Although Deleuze promises 'to overturn Platonism' (59), in Platonism Deleuze detects a glimmer of pure difference. Although difference is thoroughly constrained by Aristotle and Hegel, 'like an animal in the process of being tamed, whose final resistant movements bear witness...to a nature soon to be lost...With Plato, the issue is still in doubt' (59). For Deleuze, Plato's concept of difference both ruined philosophy and rescued it. That being said, the rescue places no reliance on a notion of the One.

Deleuze's critique of Plato is surprisingly brief, bearing in mind the philosophical weight that the 'overturning of Platonism' is apparently expected to bear. However, I read the latter part of Chapter One of *Difference and Repetition* alongside the more extended treatment given to largely the same issues in 'The Simulacrum and Ancient Philosophy', which appears as an appendix to *The Logic of Sense*.²¹⁵ What is more, some of Chapter Three of *Difference and Repetition* ('The Image of Thought') is an extension of the critique of Plato. Here, in attempting to re-think what it means to think, Deleuze cites a passage from the *Republic*:

Some reports of our perceptions do not provoke thought to reconsideration because the judgement of them by sensation seems adequate, while others always invite the intellect to reflection because the sensation yields nothing that can be trusted. – You obviously mean distant appearances, or things drawn in perspective. – You have quite missed my meaning.²¹⁶

Deleuze gives the following commentary: 'This text distinguishes two kinds of things: those which do not disturb thought and (as Plato will later say) those which *force* us to think' (138). For Deleuze, thinking is, necessarily, an unsettling business, 'Thought is primarily trespass and violence' (139). For Deleuze, Platonism was the ruin of philosophy insofar as it stopped us from 'thinking'. Deleuze remarks, ironically: 'everyone knows...what is meant by...thinking' (129). He alludes to Descartes' *cogito*. But Deleuze aims to show the exact opposite: 'It cannot be

²¹⁵ Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, trans. by Mark Lester (London: Continuum, 2003), pp.253-266.

²¹⁶ Plato, *The Republic*, Book VII, 523b, trans. by Paul Shorey, in *Plato: The Collected Dialogues*, ed. E. Hamilton and H. Cairns (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963) as cited by Deleuze, *D&R*, p.138.

regarded as a *fact* that thinking is the natural exercise of a faculty...“Everybody” knows very well that in fact men think rarely, and more often under the impulse of a shock than in the excitement of a taste for thinking’ (132).

Patton compares Deleuze’s question ‘what is thought?’, to the question, ‘What is art?’²¹⁷ Prior to the twentieth century everybody knew what art was. Aesthetic questions might surround *why* art had the effects that it did, or how art was possible. Nevertheless, ‘everybody knew’ that a painting was a representation of the world. What everybody knew collapsed ‘With the collapse of the representational ideal at the end of the nineteenth century’. After that, ‘painters could no longer continue to refine their means of representing reality’. Or not, at least, without falling prey to the doubt that painting might be something else. In part, Patton’s point is that ‘as in the case of successive styles of modern painting, different approaches to philosophy have tended to define themselves by what they reject’. Thus far, this would only be to say that Platonism was an orthodoxy which was bound to be threatened. Hence Foucault can joke: ‘Overturn Platonism: what philosophy has not tried?’; his point is that the process began with Aristotle, not Deleuze.²¹⁸ But Patton’s analogy between art and philosophy extends further. To recognize this we need only recall that the artistic orthodoxy under threat by an abstract modern art was representational art. For Deleuze, Platonism is ‘the philosophy of representation’ partly because the Platonic image of thought is optical. It follows, as Patton puts it, that ‘The philosophical equivalent of abstract art, or imageless thought, would be a non-representational conception of thought’.²¹⁹ This is what Deleuze seeks in his notion of ‘the virtual’. Badiou argues that Deleuze’s notion of the virtual is incoherent because it is unable to escape from a misplaced optical image.²²⁰ In Deleuze’s critique of Plato we see something of the origin of this alleged inconsistency.

Deleuze writes: ‘*La tâche de la philosophie moderne a été définie: renversement du platonisme.*’²²¹ Which Patton translates: ‘The task of modern philosophy has been defined: to overturn Platonism’ (59). Williams warns us against what he calls a ‘fatal’ misunderstanding’.²²² He thinks the potential for misunderstanding lies in the translation and directs our attention to the

²¹⁷ Paul Patton, ‘Anti-Platonism and Art’, in *Gilles Deleuze and the Theater of Philosophy*, ed. by Constantin V. Boundas and Dorothea Olkowski, (New York: Routledge, 1994), pp.141-56 (p.141). Subsequent references: p.41; p.41;p.41.

²¹⁸ Michel Foucault, ‘Theatrum Philosophicum’ in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, trans. by Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), pp.165-96 (165).

²¹⁹ ‘Anti-Platonism and Art’, p.141.

²²⁰ *CB*, p.52.

²²¹ *Différence et Répétition*, p.82.

word ‘*renversement*’. This can indeed be translated as ‘overturning’ but its primary meaning is ‘reversal’; it is this latter sense, Williams contends, that is more appropriate in this context. Hence, Williams wants us to read ‘The task of modern philosophy [*is*]...to reverse Platonism’. This receives confirmation from the fact that this is precisely how Patton translates the parallel text in *Logique Du Sens*. Indeed, the extent to which *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense* are continuous is evidenced by the fact that Deleuze, in the later book, asks the very question that currently occupies me here: ‘*Que signifie « renversement du platonisme » ? Nietzsche définit ainsi la tâche de sa philosophie, ou plus généralement la tâche de la philosophie de l’avenir.*’²²³ Which Patton translates, ‘What does it mean “to reverse [my emphasis] Platonism”?’ This is how Nietzsche defined the task of his philosophy or, more generally, the task of the philosophy of the future’.²²⁴

According to Williams, between ‘overturning’ and ‘reversing’ lies the potential for a fatal misunderstanding. He claims that to ‘overturn’ Platonism gives the impression that the Deleuzian project is to be understood as a root and branch refutation of ‘Platonism’. For Williams, the philosophical burden of ‘reversal’, is not a rejection of Platonism. Hence, Williams writes that Deleuze aims ‘to tweak the Platonic structure in order to avoid an error with severe consequences with regard to difference’.²²⁵ There is no better guide to *Difference and Repetition* than Williams but, if anything, Williams here creates more potential for misunderstanding than Patton’s translations. To talk of ‘tweaking’ Platonism gives the implication that only a hair’s breadth separates Deleuze from Plato. If that were the case, then it would take us uncomfortably close to validating Badiou’s complaint that Deleuze has produced ‘a Platonism with a different accentuation’.²²⁶

In effect, Williams argues that Deleuze is closer to Plato than one might at first think. Quite apart from any vagaries of translation, we can see that Deleuze clearly wants to show respect for Plato. Immediately following the inflammatory ‘overturning of Platonism’ motto we find Deleuze ‘turning down the heat’ again with: ‘That this overturning should conserve many Platonic characteristics is not only inevitable but desirable’ (59). There is no scope for ambiguity in that remark. According to Deleuze, we are to come to see that Plato was right about something. But

²²² *GD’s D&R*, p.79.

²²³ Gilles Deleuze, *Logique Du Sens* (Paris: Les Édition De Minuit, 1968), p.292.

²²⁴ *Logic of Sense*, p.253.

²²⁵ *GD’s D&R*, p.79.

²²⁶ *CB*, p. 26.

having conceded Deleuze's intention to salvage something from Plato, the virulence of Deleuze's anti-Platonic language is hard to miss. In the final words of Deleuze's critique of Plato in *The Logic of Sense*, Deleuze distinguishes between 'two modes of destruction'. The first mode is 'destroying in order to conserve and perpetuate the established order of representation, models and copies'.²²⁷ Against this brand of destroying, only in order to conserve our ability *not* to think, Deleuze opposes a more radical, second mode of destruction: 'destroying the models and copies in order to institute the chaos which, creates, making the simulacra function...the most innocent of destructions, the destruction of Platonism'. I doubt that anything has been lost in translation here. What is to be destroyed in Platonism is more important to Deleuze's project than what is to be conserved. Indeed, in chapter 8 of the thesis I show that when Deleuze puts forward his own Theory of Ideas, he is not invoking Plato but Kant.

Two definitions of Platonism.

In order to establish what it means to overturn/reverse Platonism, I need to be clear about what Deleuze means by Platonism. In Chapter One of *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze defines Platonism in terms of a four-fold structure: 'The four figures of the Platonic dialectic...:the selection of difference, the installation of a mythic circle, the establishment of a foundation, and the position of a question-problem complex' (66). The first substantive work of this chapter of the thesis is, therefore, structured according to these 'four figures'. I will, in part, follow Williams' analysis of how one can lay the Platonic dialectic (as Deleuze analyses it) alongside the 'Deleuzian dialectic' (as Williams likes to call it) — and see that the basic structures are analogous to one another. I argue that what we get, in effect, in Deleuze's critique of Plato, is a covert expression of Deleuze's own system.

In the concluding Chapter of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze provides what seems to be another definition of Platonism:

It is insufficient to define Platonism by reference to the distinction between essence and appearance. The primary distinction which Plato rigorously establishes is the one between the model and the copy. (264)

On this account, for Plato the sensuous world of our experience is a 'copy' or 'likeness' of the intelligible realm of the Forms. We can see how this notion can be associated with the general

²²⁷ *Logic of Sense*, p. 266. Subsequent ref., p.266.

idea of 'representation'. This definition of Platonism takes pride of place in the treatment of Plato in the *Logic of Sense*. Deleuze writes: 'To the pure identity of the model or original there corresponds an exemplary similitude; to the pure resemblance of the copy there corresponds the similitude called imitative'.²²⁸ Hence, difference is only understood in terms of the relationship between two similitudes. As Patton expresses it, the original or model is 'defined by an exemplary self-identity: only the Forms are nothing other than what they are'.²²⁹ The copy, *more* (if it is genuine) *or less* (if it is false) resembles the original model. This is the crux of Deleuze's thesis that, in Platonism difference is subordinated to resemblance. Such a subordination is emblematic of Deleuze's pejorative use of the term 'representation'. According to Deleuze, the whole history of philosophy is warped by it: 'Platonism thus founds the entire domain that philosophy will later recognize as its own: the domain of representation filled by copies- icons...defined by an intrinsic relation to the model or foundation'.²³⁰

I can resolve the two definitions of Platonism into one. The first answer revealed the four-fold structure: (1) the selection of difference; (2) the installation of a mythic circle; (3) the establishment of a foundation; and (4) the position of a question-problem complex. The second definition (the model versus copy) fits inside the third stage. This accords with Williams' comment that Deleuze, 'will criticise the third of these [elements in the dialectic] and the way it fatally damages the positive role of the others'.²³¹

What does it mean to overturn Platonism?

By the reversal of Platonism we are not being invited to prefer 'the copy' to 'the model'. That would be a coherent position but an intellectual abdication: a retreat back into the Cave. It cannot be what Deleuze intends. Deleuze writes: 'Overturning Platonism...means denying the primacy of the original over copy, of model over image; glorifying the reign of simulacra and reflections' (66). In the parallel passage in *The Logic of Sense*, we find this re-iterated, 'to overturn Platonism': 'means to make the simulacra rise and to affirm their rights'.²³² In this chapter I show how the obscure reference to 'simulacra' is itself derived from Deleuze's critique of Plato. Badiou argues that Deleuze's commitment to the 'rights of simulacra' entails a denial of the

²²⁸ *Logic of Sense*, p.259.

²²⁹ 'Anti-Platonism and Art', p.147.

²³⁰ *Logic of Sense*, p. 259.

²³¹ *GD's D&R*, p. 80.

²³² *Logic of Sense*, p.262.

rights of 'the Many' (the multiple). In the introduction to the thesis I suggested that Badiou's objection is, essentially, that, for Deleuze, only 'the One' that has ontological status. In this chapter I will show that Badiou is wrong. Rather, just as Deleuze's doctrine of 'the multiple' purports to make otiose the distinction between 'the One' and 'the Many', so Deleuze's concept of 'simulacra' purports to make redundant any distinction between model and copy in the first place. In other words, there is no model.

This still leaves room for two misconceptions. First, one might take the view that the dissolution of the Platonic distinction between model and copy results in some kind of naïve realism. Thus, the distinction between model and copy is dissolved because the world *is* exactly how it *seems*. There are no models but there are no copies either. The ordinary identifiable things of this world are what comprise reality. This is coherent but not what Deleuze intends. The apparent incoherence of Deleuze's avowed position is approached only once one recognizes that Deleuze wants to abandon the distinction between model and copy, but he does not want to abandon the idea of 'the copy'. This must strike us as, at best, paradoxical because the idea of a copy must, one might think, entail the idea of an original. But the simulacrum, which emerges from Deleuze's creative reading of *The Sophist* is a copy for which there is no original.

I can edge a little closer to what is at stake, for Deleuze, by setting aside a second possible misconception. Colebrook compares Deleuze's notion of the simulacra to the phenomenology of Husserl and Heidegger. She writes, phenomenology addresses 'the dynamic flux of experience as it becomes through time, and not as it is determined by pre-given and ready-made concepts'.²³³ Thus far, I assume that Colebrook would apply this equally to Deleuze, and would be right to do so. However, I would add, crucially, that in defining 'phenomenology' the most obvious 'ready-made concept' that must not be allowed to pre-determine our philosophical enquiry would be the concept of an 'object'. The general point is, therefore, that 'Phenomenology...was an attention to *phenomena* or appearances'. In other words, how things *seem*. Colebrook goes on, Deleuze 'transformed and radicalised this [*view*]...with his concept of the *simulacra*. Phenomena are appearances of some world, but *simulacra* are appearances in themselves, with no origin or foundation "behind" them'.

The possible misconception, of which I speak, would be *not* to take sufficient account of the extent to which Deleuze *radicalizes* the phenomenological stance. This means that we must

stress that the appearances which are at stake are not appearances of ‘some world; there will be nothing other than a “swarm” of appearances — with no foundation of the experiencing mind or subject’.²³⁴ This latter point, what some might call the iconic poststructuralist ‘denial of the subject’, will become important to Deleuze’s overall philosophical position. However, I would add that, for Deleuze, the appearances do not only lack a foundational unity ‘in the subject’, they also lack a unity or foundation in any other world or realm to which the appearances might be thought to refer. For the purposes of this thesis this will crucially entail that they do not find that unity in the virtual. Deleuzianism is also distinguished from phenomenology on the grounds that Deleuze is not going to be content to settle for an analysis of appearances. As we shall see, Deleuze, goes on to deduce, via a transcendental argument in the style of Kant, the conditions behind experiences. These are the conditions that obtain in the virtual.

The first figure of the Platonic dialectic: the selection of difference.

Deleuze first looks back to his earlier critique of Aristotle. Aristotle sought an answer to the question, ‘What is the greatest difference?’; and found it in the concept of ‘specific difference’. Deleuze recalls this discussion in the new context of the critique of Plato, difference ‘According to Aristotle...is a question of dividing a genus into opposing species’ (59). We are invited to contrast this with the Platonic method of ‘division’. Deleuze contends that this method is best evidenced in *The Statesman*, the *Phaedrus*, and the *Sophist*.²³⁵ Deleuze argues that although ostensibly Aristotle and Plato’s methods are similar, in fact they are to be importantly distinguished.

Deleuze asks an apparently incongruous question: ‘[Plato] divide[s] art into arts of production and arts of acquisition: but then why is fishing among the arts of acquisition? (59) The allusion is to the *Sophist* in which the Eleatic Stranger and Theaetetus, with some help from the Young Socrates, agree to ‘inquire into the nature of the Sophist’.²³⁶ Orientating their discussion relative to Aristotle’s method, one might say that they are setting out to differentiate the species ‘Sophist’ from among all those species that inhabit some larger genus. However, we will see how Deleuze goes on to claim that this is a superficial reading. Be that as it may, in the dialogue, before

²³³ Gilles Deleuze, p.6. Subsequent ref., p.6.

²³⁴ Gilles Deleuze p.6.

²³⁵ *The Dialogues of Plato* ed. and trans. by B. Jowett, Vol. 3 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), *The Statesman*, pp.429-530; *Phaedrus*, pp.107-189; *Sophist*, pp.321-428.

²³⁶ Plato, *Sophist*, p.363 (218^c). Subsequent ref., p.363 (218^d).

tackling that difficult ‘tribe’ (i.e. the Sophists), the parties agree to ‘practise beforehand the method which is to be applied to them on some simple and smaller thing’. It is this method that attracts Deleuze’s attention. Accordingly, the Stranger suggests that they practise on ‘an angler’. Hence, Deleuze’s otherwise incongruous reference to ‘fishing’.

The Platonic ‘divisions’ take their starting position from ‘asking whether he [*the angler*] is a man having art or not having art, but some other power’ (364). It is decided that he is ‘a man of art’. In his summary analysis of the dialogue, B. Jowett writes: ‘There are two kinds of art, — productive art, which includes husbandry, manufactures...; and acquisitive art, which includes learning, trading, fighting, hunting. The angler’s is an acquisitive art’ (339). The progression of the method of division is displayed in Plato’s own final summary, put into the mouth of the Stranger: ‘One half of all art was acquisitive — half of acquisitive art was conquest or taking by force, half of this was hunting, and half of hunting was hunting animals, half of this was hunting water animals’...and so on and so on.²³⁷ Until as Jowett puts it: ‘we have arrived at the definition of the angler’s art’.²³⁸ Deleuze takes his cue from Aristotle’s famous objection to the Platonic method of division: ‘According to Aristotle, it is a question of dividing a genus into opposing species: but then this procedure [i.e. the method of division] not only lacks “reason” by itself, it lacks a reason in terms of which we could decide whether something falls into one species rather than another’ (59). By asking, ‘Why is fishing among the arts of acquisition?’, Deleuze similarly means to imply that Plato has not demonstrated *why* fishing should fall into the acquisitive art. It is simply assumed that it does.

In an endnote, Deleuze refers us to Aristotle’s own critique of Plato’s method of division in *Prior Analytics* and *Posterior Analytics* (312): ‘The path through the divisions does not deduce definitions...For it nowhere becomes necessary for the object to be such-and-such if *these* items are the case...For you must not ask the conclusion, nor must it be the case simply inasmuch as it is granted’.²³⁹ In his commentary on this passage, Barnes confirms Deleuze’s reading: ‘Aristotle...points out that in a division the “conclusion” is not deduced from the “premisses”, but is merely “asked”, i.e. taken as an assumption’.²⁴⁰ Aristotle shows how the above *general* objection works in the context of an actual example of a Platonic division, ‘Is man an animal or

²³⁷ Plato, *Sophist*, p.366, (221^b).

²³⁸ Jowett, p.339.

²³⁹ Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*, trans. by Jonathan Barnes, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), II, ch.5, p.52.

²⁴⁰ Barnes, *Aristotle: Posterior Analytics*, p.211.

inanimate? If you assumed animal, you have not deduced it. Next, every animal is either terrestrial or aquatic: you assumed terrestrial...that man is...a terrestrial animal – is not necessary from what you have said; rather you assume this too'.²⁴¹ The method Aristotle describes is isomorphic to that found in the *Sophist*. It is this method that Deleuze is pointing our attention to, so let us be clear what it is. In his commentary, Barnes explicates it as: 'The divider wants to define man: he assumes that everything is A_1 or A_2 , and then assumes that man is A_1 ; next, he assumes that every A_1 is B_1 or B_2 , and assumes that man is B_1 . Having carried on like this for as long as he pleases (the length makes no odds to the logic) he concludes that man is, by definition, $A_1 B_1 \dots$ '.²⁴²

In *Prior Analytics*, Aristotle makes the same case against the method but also reflects upon the 'divider's' [i.e. Plato's] thought processes: 'Division is a sort of weak deduction; for it postulates what it has to prove...But at first this escaped the notice of all those who made use of it, and they attempted to persuade us on the assumption that it was possible for there to be demonstrations about essences and what something is'.²⁴³ Deleuze wants to rescue Plato's thought processes from this damning conclusion. In Deleuze's reading, Aristotle's mistake is that he has aligned Plato's motive with his own: namely, classification. But according to Deleuze, 'There is [in the Platonic division] nothing in common with the concerns of Aristotle' (60). For Deleuze, Aristotle's objections are well-made but a cause for the celebration not condemnation:

Aristotle...saw what is irreplaceable in Platonism, even though he made it precisely the basis of a criticism of Plato: the dialectic of difference has its own method – division – but this operates without mediation, without middle term or reason; it acts in the immediate and is inspired by Ideas. (59)

For Plato, in Deleuze's reading: 'it is a question not of identifying but of authenticating' (60). The point of the method of division is, we are told, to show a lineage; Plato's aim is that 'of dividing a confused species into pure lines of descent' (59-60). It is far from clear what this means.

In clarifying what Deleuze means by a lineage, I can also show that Deleuze's reading is not extravagant. Jowett, in his analysis of what he too sees as the related cluster of the *Sophist*, *The*

²⁴¹ Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*, p.53.

²⁴² Barnes, *Aristotle: Posterior Analytics*, p. 211.

²⁴³ Aristotle, *Prior Analytics* I, ch.31 – as quoted by Barnes in his commentary on the *Posterior Analytics*, p.210.

Statesman and the *Phaedrus*, gives a commentary not too distant from Deleuze's. Like Deleuze, Jowett takes the method of *The Statesman* to be part of its message

The dialectical interest of the *Statesman* seems to contend in Plato's mind with the political; the dialogue might have been designated by two equally descriptive titles – either the 'Statesman', or 'Concerning method'.²⁴⁴

Jowett distinguishes the dialectic as it appears in this group of dialogues, from earlier versions of the Platonic dialectic. He writes that the earlier Platonic dialectical method 'is a revival of the Socratic question and answer applied to definition'.²⁴⁵ Therefore, Jowett agrees with Deleuze that these dialogues represent a change in direction. That being said, Jowett contends that the method formerly occupied with definition 'is now occupied with classification'. On the face of it, this is at variance with Deleuze who argues that these dialogues are occupied with neither 'definition' nor 'classification' but 'authentication'. However, Jowett gives some succour to Deleuze's reading by pointing out how, in *Philebus*, there occurs some criticism, by Plato, of what it is that we should understand by 'classification'. Jowett argues that in *The Statesman* Plato does not forget a precept first learnt in *Philebus*: 'we are exhorted not to fall into the common error of passing from unity to infinity, but to find the intermediate classes'. This characteristic of the dialogues of 'division' is, I suggest, reminiscent of Deleuze's claim that Plato seeks, not classification, but 'a pure line of descent' (60). Indeed, Jowett settles on exactly the same form of words when describing the pattern of argument in the *Sophist*:

The *Sophist* contains four examples of division, carried on by regular steps, until in *four different lines of descent* [my emphasis] we detect the *Sophist*. In the *Statesman* the king or statesman is discovered by a similar process.²⁴⁶

For Deleuze, the authentic line of descent points to an origin in a realm where 'difference' is internal not external. For Deleuze, the enigmatic nature of the *Sophist* himself is a kind of secret Platonic emblem, a glimmer, of pure difference.

Deleuze evidences his thesis in respect of the method of division (i.e. that it is distinct from Aristotle's) by an analysis of *The Statesman* and the *Phaedrus*. Deleuze writes: 'The statesman is defined as the one who knows "the pastoral care of men" but many introduce themselves by

²⁴⁴ Jowett, commentary on *The Statesman*, p.453

²⁴⁵ Jowett, commentary on *The Statesman*, p.453. Subsequent refs.: p.453; p453.

²⁴⁶ Jowett, commentary on *The Statesman*, p.453.

saying “I am the true shepherd of men”, including merchants, farmers, bakers...and the entire medical profession’ (60). Deleuze is referring to the passage in which the Stranger first arrives at the division (which Jowett translates as) ‘the art of man-herding’.²⁴⁷ But soon after, the Stranger says:

I want to ask, whether any one of the others has a rival, called by the name of a different art, who professes and claims to share with him the management of the herd?...I mean to say that merchants, husbandmen, providers of food...will all contend with the herdsman of humanity, whom we call Statesmen, declaring that they themselves have the care of rearing or managing mankind.

Hence we can see that Deleuze has a mandate for reading Plato as being engaged in the process of somehow evaluating ‘rivals’. In order to demonstrate that this feature of the method of division is not peculiar to *The Statesman*, Deleuze goes on to find a parallel process at work in the *Phaedrus*. I will not rehearse that here. How are the pretenders to be distinguished from that which is genuine? Deleuze’s answer moves us on to the next phase of the Platonic dialectic.

Figure two: the installation of a mythic circle.

Deleuze writes: ‘The search for gold provides the model for this [Platonic] process of division’ (60). Deleuze provides an endnote which makes clear that he is thinking, in this image of gold, of a passage from *The Statesman*.²⁴⁸ The Stranger is reflecting on the problem of how to distinguish:

Natures still more troublesome because they are more nearly akin to the royal race and more difficult to discern; the examination of them may be compared to the process of refining gold. The workmen begin by sifting away the earth and stones...there remain in a confused mass the valuable elements akin to gold, which can only separated by fire...these are at last refined away...until the gold is left quite pure.²⁴⁹

The process is not neutral with regard to the expected outcomes. The ‘workmen’ are only interested in the gold, the other material is discarded as waste. Deleuze, similarly, reads Plato to have a partisan attitude to the outcomes of each division:

²⁴⁷ Plato, *The Statesman*, p.478, (267^r). Subsequent ref., pp.478-479 (267^r).

²⁴⁸ Deleuze, *D&R*, p.61 and p.312; endnote no.21.

²⁴⁹ Plato, *The Statesman*, p.520 (303^c)

Difference is not between species...but entirely on one side, within the chosen line of descent: there are no longer contraries within a single genus but pure and impure, good and bad...in a mixture which gives rise to a large species (60).

It is not, as in Aristotle, a matter of taxonomy: of coolly determining differentia between species. According to Deleuze's reading, Plato discards one side of the outcome of the division because the 'gold' is not present in it. It is as if what is given to us in experience is a mixture, what Plato calls, above, 'a confused mass'. The Platonic method of division is read as a process of gradually refining that mixture. At the final stage, it becomes a 'selection among rivals, the testing of claimants' (60).

Plato puts into the Stranger's mouth the words:

Had we not reason...to apprehend, that although we may have described a sort of royal form, we have not as yet accurately worked out the true image of the Statesman? And that we cannot reveal him...until we have disengaged...him from those who hang about him...?²⁵⁰

These 'hangers-on' are what Deleuze calls the rivals. It is as if the method of division, seen thus far, produces only a rough cut, one which must be further refined. How are we to proceed? Deleuze reflects 'the reader's great surprise' at the fact that Plato's answer comes in the form of a fiction, a myth (60). Plato introduces it in the guise of a diversion away from the trajectory of the argument thus far, but still heading in the same direction: 'let us make a new beginning, and travel by a different road'.²⁵¹ Dressing it up as harmless fun, the Stranger says: 'I think we may have a little amusement; there is a famous tale, of which a good portion may with advantage be interwoven, and then we may resume our series of division, and proceed in the old path'. Despite Plato's ostensible attempts to persuade us otherwise, Deleuze treats the mythical content as an integral part of the general method: 'Division... integrates myth into the dialectic; it makes myth an element of the dialectic itself' (61). If this is indeed the case then it will seem 'to confirm all Aristotle's objections...in the absence of any mediation, division...has to be relayed by myth which provides an imaginary equivalent of mediation' (61).

Deleuze tells us that 'The structure of this myth is clear: it is a circle, with two dynamic functions – namely, turning and returning, distributing and allocation' (61). The details of the myth are

²⁵⁰ Plato, *The Statesman*, p.479, (268^r).

²⁵¹ Plato, *The Statesman*, p.479, (268^r). Subsequent ref., p.480, (268^{d-e}).

intricate and confusing but perhaps this is why Deleuze privileges the clarity of the ‘structure’ over those details. In the myth at the centre of the *Statesman*, there are indeed two cycles (or circles). In Jowett’s summary analysis: ‘There was a time when God directed the revolutions of the world, but at the completion of a certain cycle he let go; and the world...turned back, and went round the other way’.²⁵² Hence of the myth, Deleuze can justifiably say that there is a ‘turning and returning’. It bears remarking, that although the notion of ‘eternal return’ will become important to Deleuze’s project, this is not what is at stake here: ‘Plato is certainly not a protagonist of eternal return’ (61). In the first cycle, when God (Cronos) spun the world, life is described as ‘blessed’. Jowett explains that God was ‘the governor of the whole world, and other gods subject to him ruled over parts of the world’.²⁵³ These demi-gods were ‘shepherds of men...each of them sufficing for those of whom he had the care. And there was no violence...or war’. In that blessed time, God was, to man, what man is now to the animals. This matches Deleuze’s reading, who writes: ‘The Statesman invokes the image of an ancient God who ruled the world and men’ (61).

But when God released his hold and ‘all the inferior deities gave up their hold’, the world, spontaneously, started to spin the other way – and things started to change.²⁵⁴ Jowett summarises it: ‘in the beginning of the new cycle all was well enough, but as time went on, discord entered in; at length the good was minimized and the evil everywhere diffused’. At this point, God intervenes again to set matters straight ‘bringing back the elements which have fallen into dissolution’.²⁵⁵ But in the myth, God does not resume his former role of ‘shepherd-king’ but so arranges it that ‘the world...be the lord of his own progress...the parts were ordained to grow and generate and give nourishment’. Man has, as it were, to make his own way. At first this is difficult: ‘Deprived of the care of God, who had possessed and tended them, they were left helpless...in the first ages they were still without skill or resource’. With education, however, the condition of man improves. What is the role of this story in the context of the method of division?

²⁵² Jowett, p.435, (summarising *Statesman* 269).

²⁵³ Jowett, p.436, (summarising *Statesman* 271). Subsequent ref., pp.436-437, (271)

²⁵⁴ Jowett, p.437, (summarising *Statesman* 273). Subsequent ref., p.437, (273).

²⁵⁵ Plato, *The Statesman*, p.485, (273^a). Subsequent refs.: p.485, (274^a); p.486, (274^b).

Figure three: the establishment of a foundation.

Jowett summarises Plato's reply as being that the myth reveals an 'error' in the divisions.²⁵⁶ That error was 'in choosing for our king a god, who belongs to the other cycle, instead of a man from our own'. I take this to be the same as the burden of Deleuze's gloss: '*The Statesman* invokes the image of an ancient God who ruled the world and men: strictly speaking, only this God deserves the name of shepherd-King of mankind' (60-61). Whereas in *our* world, as Jowett puts it, 'the statesman and kings...very much resemble their subjects in education and breeding'.²⁵⁷ Hence, the true statesman, as Deleuze puts it, is 'closest to the model of the archaic shepherd-God' (61). He must be disentangled from the rivals. But how? Williams advises: 'The connection between the myth and the pretenders is through what Deleuze calls the circle of myth — that is, the myth tells of how things were originally divided and it allows that division to return'.²⁵⁸ We arrive, therefore, at the familiar Platonic notion of 'participation' in an original and perfect Form or Idea. As Williams explains, by participation we must understand that 'Though actual things cannot be equal to the idea, they participate in it to greater or lesser degrees'. Hence, actual things (the rivals) allow the original idea (the shepherd-king) to return, although some actual things allow it better than others.

I rehearsed above, Aristotle's objection to the method of division: namely that Plato provided no basis on which to decide which half of the division to keep and which to discard. In Deleuze's reading, 'the myth as the principle of a test or selection...imparts meaning to the method of the division by fixing the degrees of an elective participation' (62). Deleuze writes:

The claimants find themselves in a sense measured according to an order of elective participation, and among the statesman's rivals we can distinguish (according to the ontological measure afforded by the myth) parents, servants...and finally, charlatans and counterfeits. (61)

We can now make better sense of Deleuze's claim that the aim of the method of division is not 'the broad distinction among species but the establishment of a serial dialectic' or what Deleuze calls 'lines of descent' (62). In other words, the method of division sorts not horizontally (as is the case for species in a genus) but vertically. There are instances of actual things in the world which are close to the ground or foundation state but other instances that are far from it.

²⁵⁶ Jowett, p.438, (summarising *Statesman* 275). Subsequent refs.: p.438, (275).

²⁵⁷ Jowett, p.438, (summarising *Statesman* 275).

Ultimately, we reach the outer limits which are so distant from the ground as to fail to participate entirely: these are, in Deleuze's reading: 'simulacra or counterfeits who would be exposed by the test' (63).

Badiou accuses Deleuze of involuntary Platonism.²⁵⁹ The charge is made because Badiou claims that the virtual is the ground, or foundation, of the actual; and this ground is a One-ness, a unity. With this in mind, we should pay particular attention to the manner in which Deleuze critiques the third stage of the Platonic dialectic. Deleuze writes: 'The role of the ground appears in all clarity in the Platonic conception of participation...(no doubt it is this foundation which provides division with the mediation it seems to lack and, at the same time, relates difference to the One)' (62). What does Deleuze mean by relating difference to the One? He invokes the familiar Platonic structure that, for example, 'Justice alone is just'. The Form or Idea of Justice possesses justice in 'first place': 'What possesses in first place is the ground itself (62)'. I take this to equate to the One. In contrast, the actual diverse ('different') instances of justice, in the world (i.e. the things we call "just") possess justice only in 'second, third or fourth place' – or, in what Deleuze goes on to call 'a simulacral fashion' (62). The notion of a ranking (2nd, 3rd, etc.) comes about because the things we call "just" will participate 'in varying degrees' in the Idea of Justice. Were this to be the structure that Deleuze claims as his own it would indeed pose the kind of threat of which Badiou complains. But Deleuze's critique of Plato does *not* end there and it is the 'fourth figure' in which we find an anticipation of where Deleuze's own project in *Difference and Repetition* will end.

Figure four: the question-problem complex.

Deleuze asks, 'in what, exactly, does the grounding test consist? (63)' At this point Deleuze's critique of Plato departs from close analysis of the dialogues and climbs to a lofty and very general assertion that 'Myth tells us that it always involves a further task to be performed, an enigma to be resolved. The oracle is questioned, but the oracle's response is itself a problem' (63). This is recognizable, for example, as the Oedipus myth. But there is no evidence of such a further dimension in the *Statesman*, for example. Deleuze's claim of 'always' is an exaggeration. But for all that, this step has peculiar significance insofar as what we will later come to recognize as Deleuze's *own* method is brought into alignment with the method which he wishes to attribute

²⁵⁸ *GD's D&R*, p.81. Subsequent ref., p.81.

²⁵⁹ *CB*, p.61.

to Plato. Deleuze writes: 'We must recall that Plato defined the dialectic as proceeding by "problems" '(63). Deleuze gives no reference to what he means by Platonic 'problems'. I suggest that the sort of dialectical argument that he has in mind is akin to that which begins the *Logic of Sense* ('First Series of Paradoxes of Pure Becoming'). Here the first allusion is to Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass* but is worth mentioning because it shows what Deleuze means by inherent 'problematicity'; what is more, Deleuze goes on to establish an explicit link between his reading of Carroll and his reading of Plato.

Deleuze alludes to the famous 'drink me' episode in which Alice changes size: 'When I say "Alice becomes larger," I mean she becomes larger than she was. By the same token...she becomes smaller than she is now'.²⁶⁰ One might say that this is, in fact, entirely unproblematic because as Deleuze admits: 'Certainly, she is not bigger and smaller at the same time'. So, what is the point? It is that 'it is at the same moment that one becomes larger than one was and smaller than one becomes'. The emphasis here is on the notion of 'becoming'. According to Deleuze, in the Alice episode we see the 'simultaneity of a becoming whose characteristic is to elude the present'. The point is that it is the *same moment* that 'one becomes larger than one was and smaller than one becomes'. Some philosophers would be disposed to see only a linguistic barrier being tested here, but Deleuze argues it has an ontological significance: 'It pertains to the essence of becoming to move and to pull in both directions at once'.

The same general scheme occurs in Deleuze's reading of Plato. Deleuze proposes that Plato distinguishes between 'measured things...fixed qualities' and 'a pure becoming without measure'.²⁶¹ In this regard, Deleuze cites a passage from *Philebus*, which he renders: ' "Hotter" never stops where it is but is always going a point further...whereas definite quality is something that has stopped going on and is fixed'. Jowett translates the relevant passage:

Socrates. Such an expression as "exceedingly"...and also the term "slightly", have the same significance as more or less; for wherever they occur they do not allow of the existence of quantity...When definite quantity is once admitted, there can be no longer a "hotter" or a "colder" (for these are always progressing, and are never in one stay); but definite quantity is at rest, and has ceased to progress.²⁶²

²⁶⁰ Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, p.1. And subsequent refs.

²⁶¹ Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, p.1. Subsequent ref., p.2

²⁶² *The Dialogues of Plato* Vol. 3, *Philebus*, pp.561- 630, (p.576).

We can now see what Deleuze means by the claim that the Platonic dialectic proceeds by 'problems'. For Plato, 'indeterminacy' is inevitable: it is a region which the dialectical method must visit, although it cannot rest there: 'Pure becoming, the unlimited, is the matter of the simulacrum insofar as it eludes the action of the Idea and insofar as it contests *both* model and *copy* at once.'²⁶³ The point is that this kind of problem/question will admit of no resting place: it has no 'solution', if by a solution one means a fixed and final outcome. But far from being a bar to 'thinking', it is a spur to it. Hence, to return to *Difference and Repetition*, we now see the background to Deleuze's observation that 'Neither the problem nor the question is a subjective determination marking a moment of insufficiency of knowledge. Problematic structure is part of objects in themselves, allowing them to be grasped as signs, just as the questioning or problematising instance is a part of knowledge' (63-64).

Williams comments: 'Actual things allow the idea to return and do so well or poorly. That is how the idea allows for a double selection: the selection of ideas that return and the selection of the actual things that allow those ideas to return well'.²⁶⁴ It is clear that at this point Deleuze wants to claim that the Platonic dialectic has a further ingredient. Although his *detailed* analysis of the Platonic dialogues breaks down, Deleuze purports that, 'Plato defined the dialectic as proceeding by 'problems', by means of which one attains the pure grounding principle' (63). It is the existence of a 'problem' that prompts 'solutions' in the shape of actual things. The critique of Plato at the end of Chapter One of *Difference and Repetition*, is interrupted by an interpolation concerning Heidegger's *Philosophy of Difference* (64-66). The relevance of this interruption seems to be to emphasise that Heidegger, in common with Plato, shows us that 'difference' has a nature: it is problematic, it poses a question. Hence we find: 'Ontological Difference corresponds to questioning. It is the being of questions which become problems' (65). For Deleuze, difference *is* something: 'We regard as fundamental this "'correspondence"' between difference and questioning, between ontological difference and the being of the question' (66).

The *Sophist*: the exception that subverts the rule.

As we have seen, Deleuze claims to detect in the Platonic dialogues of 'division' a repeated four-fold pattern which defines the Platonic dialectic. The third figure is the invocation of a myth. This pattern appears in both *The Statesman* and in the *Phaedrus*. However, any inherent

²⁶³ *Logic of Sense*, p.2.

²⁶⁴ *GD's D&R*, p.81.

plausibility that this scheme might have had is threatened by the fact that the *Sophist* breaks the pattern: 'It will be objected that the third important text concerning division, the *Sophist*, presents no such myth'(61). Deleuze's initially puzzling reply to this objection is that 'in this text, by a paradoxical utilization of the method, a counter-utilisation, Plato proposes to isolate the false claimant *par excellence*, the one who lays claim to everything, without any right: the "sophist" '(61). The parallel argument in the *Logic of Sense* expresses the point more clearly: 'In the *Sophist*, the method of division is employed paradoxically not in order to evaluate just [i.e. true] pretenders, but, on the contrary, in order to track down the false pretender as such.'²⁶⁵ In other words, in *The Statesman* and the *Phaedrus* we see the Platonic dialectic at work in instances where the ambition is to isolate the 'gold' and discard the waste. In the *Sophist*, the reverse is true: Plato aims, ostensibly, to sift out the quintessential nature of 'fools gold'. Hence, the progress of the method might legitimately differ without breaking the rule. The reason that I claim that the *Sophist* is the exception that *subverts* the rule, rather than the exception that proves it, is because, ultimately, Deleuze argues that the charlatan that Plato affects to despise (the Sophist) is emblematic of the subversion, the overturning, of Platonism. But when I say, 'affects to despise', I mean that part of Deleuze's critique of Plato involves the complicated claim that what Plato finds in the *Sophist* is not 'fools gold' after all, and that Plato knows it. According to Deleuze, Plato himself equips us with the tools to destroy Platonism and rescue modern philosophy. The concept which is 'poison' to Platonism but 'meat' for anti-Platonism is the 'simulacrum'. This concept is directly relevant to the controversy between Deleuze and Badiou.

As we have seen, for Deleuze, the defining distinction of Platonism is that between the model and the copy. However, Deleuze argues that, within Platonism, the concept of the 'copy' is subject to a further critical distinction. In the *Sophist*, this distinction is presaged in an exchange during which the Eleatic Stranger and Theaetetus discuss what Jowett translates as, 'the art of likeness-making'.²⁶⁶ The Stranger initially makes the conventional point that to be 'a likeness' the copy must, generally speaking, resemble the original in certain key respects: 'a likeness of anything is made by producing a copy which is executed according to the proportions of the original, similar in length and breadth and depth, each thing...its appropriate colour'. Theaetetus posits that any imitation, in order to be a likeness, must invariably resemble the original. But the Stranger does not concur:

²⁶⁵ Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, p.256.

²⁶⁶ Plato, the *Sophist*, p.384, (235^c). Subsequent refs.: p.384, (235^c); pp.384-385, (235^c-236)

Not always; in works either of sculpture or of painting, which are of any magnitude, there is a certain degree of deception; for if artists were to give the true proportions of their...models, the upper part, which is farther off, would appear to be out of proportion in comparison with the lower, which is nearer; and so they give up the truth in their images and make only the proportions which appear to be beautiful, disregarding the real one.

Patton summarises the point: ‘the appearance of correct proportion [to the eye of the observer] is only produced by the departure from parallel proportions, by the difference between the internal relations of the illusory copy and those of the figure it resembles’.²⁶⁷ The burden of this new category of ‘images’ becomes of central significance to Deleuze’s reading of Plato and to his own concept of the simulacrum.

Deleuze writes: ‘Plato divides in two the domain of images-idols: on the one hand there are the *copies-icons*, on the other there are *simulacra-phantasms*’.²⁶⁸ In an endnote Deleuze cites a reference within the *Sophist* that occurs immediately after the exchange that I have introduced above. Here, the Stranger concludes as follows (albeit in the dialectical disguise of a series of questions):

What shall we call those resemblances of the beautiful, which appear such owing to the unfavourable position of the spectator...[i.e. as in the case of the sculptures]? May we not call these “appearances”, since they appear only and are not really like?...May we not fairly call the sort of art, which produces an appearance and not an image, phantastic art?...These then are the two kinds of image-making — the art of making likenesses, and phantastic or the art of making appearances?²⁶⁹

In his reading of Plato, this is the justification for the distinction that Deleuze makes between ‘good and bad copies or, rather, copies (always well-founded) and simulacra (always engulfed in dissimilarity)’.²⁷⁰ That Plato *makes* a distinction of this general sort is clear but what are we supposed to conclude from it?

We might first note the relevance in this context of Plato’s famous hostility to art, as a copy of a copy, in the *Republic*. For example, a painter might make a picture of a bed. Alison Ross writes: ‘The Idea of “a bed” is a model untrammelled by sensibility and contains only those features that are the necessary conditions for any bed (that it is a structure able to support the weight of a

²⁶⁷ ‘Anti-Platonism and Art’, p.150.

²⁶⁸ Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, p.256.

²⁶⁹ Plato, the *Sophist*, p.385, (236^{b-c}).

person)'.²⁷¹ Plato recognizes that the instantiation of the Idea of a bed, in an actual bed: 'necessarily places certain limitations on this form by making it a certain height and colour'. The painter who produces an image of that actual bed, 'copies all the things about the bed that are inessential to its use (that it is a particular colour, a particular height, in a particular setting) but is unable to copy any of those features of the bed that relate to its function (that it has a structure able to support the weight of a person).' For Plato, this makes such an image of a bed futile but, nevertheless, harmless. However, in dramatic poetry 'the spectators...are inducted into the world...where an actor playing the role of statesman...'is" this role'. In other words, their disbelief is suspended. For Plato, such 'images' are malevolent because they themselves become a model. We see now the justification for Deleuze's claim that Plato's motivation and Aristotle's are quite distinct. Plato, fearing the rise of the simulacrum, seeks a method to 'authenticate' the good copies: 'It is a question of assuring the triumph of the copies over simulacra, of repressing simulacra, keeping them completely submerged, preventing them from climbing to the surface, and "insinuating themselves" everywhere'.²⁷²

Deleuze argues that the simulacrum is intended, by Plato, to differ 'in kind' from the good copy. If so, then it is Plato who first sowed the seed for a philosophy of difference: 'Was it not inevitable that Plato should be the first to overturn Platonism, or at least to show the direction such an overturning should take? (68). Plato is held to anticipate the potential force and giddy consequences of the simulacrum. If an image can itself become a model, then perhaps there may be no way of distinguishing the good copy from the bad copy? As Deleuze puts it: 'Plato discovers, in the flash of an instant, that the simulacrum is not simply a false copy, but that it places in question the very notations of copy and model'.²⁷³ This is played out in the final pages of the *Sophist*.

After a discussion on the existence of non-being, the Stranger and Theaetetus return to the question of the division of 'imitation'. They again rehearse how men 'make one house by the art of building, and another by the art of drawing' — and this is generalized into: 'there are realities and a creation of a kind of similitudes'.²⁷⁴ The Stranger recalls from their earlier discussion: 'that of the image-making class the one part was to have been likeness-making, and the other

²⁷⁰ Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, p.257.

²⁷¹ Alison Ross, 'Plato', in *The Deleuze Dictionary*, pp.208-209, (p.208). And subsequent refs.

²⁷² Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, p.257.

²⁷³ Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, p.256.

²⁷⁴ Plato, the *Sophist*, p.425, (266^{c-d}). Subsequent refs.: p.425, (266^c); p.425, (267^c)

phantastic'. But now a new series of divisions is introduced: 'let us proceed to divide the phantastic art into two'. These are the divisions that lead to the final identification of the Sophist himself and of which Deleuze writes excitedly:

It may be that the end of the *Sophist* contains the most extraordinary adventure of Platonism: as a consequence of searching in the direction of the simulacrum and of leaning over its abyss.²⁷⁵

How is this reading possible? It flies in the face of the fact that we have already seen how Plato has distinguished between realities and mere similitudes. Deleuze's point is that 'The final definition of the Sophist leads us to the point where we can no longer distinguish him from Socrates himself'.²⁷⁶

The Stranger distinguishes between the kind of phantasm that is 'produced by an instrument, and another in which the creator of the appearances in himself the instrument'.²⁷⁷ The latter category is the one that interests Plato; it is clarified as that in which 'anyone, by the use of his own body, makes his figure or his voice appear to resemble yours'. Of this category, 'there are some who imitate, knowing what they imitate, and some who do not know'. Hence, a mimic, someone who uses their body to imitate Theaetetus, falls into the former category: they must 'know you and your figure'. But this is designed, by Plato, to get us to consider the tribe that mimic 'the figure or the form of justice or of virtue in general'. Of these, 'many, having no knowledge of either, but only a sort of opinion, try hard to make it seem that they *have* the thing about which they hold this opinion'. What is more, 'they do..[not] always fail in their attempt to be thought just, when they are not'. Plato expects to find the Sophist in this group because 'the Sophist was classed with imitators...but not among those who have knowledge'.

This group is divided again into 'a simple creature, who thinks that he knows that which he only fancies; the other sort has knocked about among arguments, until he suspects and fears that he is ignorant of that which to others he pretends to know'.²⁷⁸ It is the latter category, dubbed 'the dissembling or ironical imitator', that interests Plato and Deleuze because, at this point, the persona of the Sophist converges with that of Socrates. Plato divides again to find: 'the dissembler who harangues a multitude in public in a long speech, and the dissembler who in private and in

²⁷⁵ Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, p.256.

²⁷⁶ *Logic of Sense*, p.256.

²⁷⁷ Plato, the *Sophist*, p.425, (267'). Subsequent refs.: p.425 (267'); p.426, (267' and 267); p.427, (267')

short speeches compels the person who is conversing with him to contradict himself'. Plainly, Plato cannot mean to imply that his hero, Socrates, is a Sophist. But Deleuze suggests:

The final description of the Sophist leads us to the point where we can no longer distinguish him from Socrates himself — the ironist working in private by means of brief arguments. Was it not necessary to push irony to that extreme? Was it not Plato himself who pointed out the direction for the reversal of Platonism?²⁷⁹

It is as if, for a moment, Plato looks into the abyss: there is no model, there are only images.

Everything is a simulacrum.

Deleuze writes: 'the simulacrum is built upon a disparity or difference, it internalises a dissimilarity'.²⁸⁰ Patton explains that in the case of the example of the colossal statue, 'the appearance of correct proportion is only produced by the departure from parallel proportions, by the difference between the internal relations of the illusory copy and those of the figure it resembles' (150). Within the context of the Platonic dialogue one could still object that even though this is the case there is, nevertheless, still the figure that the statue resembles i.e. the model or original. In other words, for Plato, there is still 'correct proportion' — and if there were no correct proportions there could be no aberrant proportions that mimic correct proportions. However, Deleuze's point is that Plato gives away more than he can afford. It is resemblance that is the illusion: what we think of as the primary fact of 'resemblance' is, for Deleuze, only ever a secondary effect of deeper primary differences. If this is the case then what Plato takes to be the exception (the simulacrum) is the rule. Patton writes:

To assert the primacy of the simulacra is to affirm a world in which difference rather than sameness is the primary relation: everything assumes the status of a simulacrum. Things are constituted by virtue of the differential relations they enter into, both internally and in relation to other things.²⁸¹

In other words, if the Sophist and Socrates look the same to us, how could we ever tell them apart? Which is the original and which is the fake? Which came first: resemblance or difference? Plato can only resolve this via a mythical intervention. We must resolve it by

²⁷⁸ Plato, *the Sophist*, p.427. (268^a). Subsequent refs.: p.427. (268^a and 268^b)

²⁷⁹ Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, p.256.

²⁸⁰ Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, p.258

²⁸¹ 'Anti-Platonism and Art', p.152.

accepting that there are only images. On this view, everything is a simulacrum, difference came first. Hence at the conclusion of Deleuze's critique of Plato, Deleuze substitutes his revised version of the dialectic: 'selection, repetition, ungrounding, the question-problem complex' (68).

Interim conclusions.

Badiou claims that there is a 'price [that Deleuze] must pay for inflexibly maintaining the thesis of [the] univocity [of Being]'.²⁸² The price is that 'the multiple can only be of the order of simulacra'. That being the case, we are further told, 'if one classes — as one should — every difference without a real status, every multiplicity whose ontological status is that of the One, as a simulacrum, then the world of beings is the theater of the simulacra of Being'. We saw from my earlier treatment of Deleuze's reading of Aristotle that Deleuze indeed maintains, inflexibly, the thesis of the univocity of Being. In this chapter, we have further seen that Deleuze indeed holds that everything in the world (i.e. actual things) are 'simulacra'. But Badiou is entirely wrong in the price that he believes that Deleuze must pay for this, because he misunderstands what Deleuze means by a simulacrum. Although Badiou makes his points in a confusing way we should note that he is claiming that the simulacra are 'difference[s] without a real status'. In other words, Badiou is of the view that Deleuze is committed to forsaking the reality of the multiple (of individual actual things) in favour of the reality of the One. This is, supposedly, because the multiple are simulacra, and simulacra have no ontological status: they are not real.

Accordingly, Badiou is puzzled by Deleuze's avowed anti-Platonism. For Badiou, Deleuze's position:

Strangely, has a Platonic...air to it. It is though the...supereminent One immanently engenders a procession of beings whose univocal sense it distributes, while they...have only a semblance of being. But, in this case, what meaning is to be given to the Nietzschean program that Deleuze constantly validates: the overturning of Platonism?

May, like me, believes that, on this point, Badiou can readily be answered because 'Badiou misreads Deleuze's project of overturning Platonism'.²⁸³ Badiou's objection falls to pieces once one recognizes that, for Deleuze, the simulacra *do* have ontological status. Badiou has no justification for his assumption that, for Deleuze, 'every object, or every being, is a mere

²⁸² *CB*, p.26. And subsequent refs.

²⁸³ 'Badiou and Deleuze on the One and the Many', p.69.

127simulacrum'; the accent being on 'mere'.²⁸⁴ May writes, 'The goal of overturning Platonism is not to deny the simulacrum, but rather to deny the distinction between simulacrum and copy'.²⁸⁵ For Plato, a distinction can be made between the good copy, which resembles the original model or Idea, and the bad copy, the simulacrum, which stands in a less than veridical relation to the model. But the whole point of Deleuze's critique of Plato is to show that this distinction must be collapsed: everything is a simulacrum. The world is made of images (simulacra) which do not stand in a relationship of resemblance to anything.

What exactly is reversed in the reversal of Platonism? It is the order of priority of 'resemblance' and 'difference'. The Forms do not resemble anything: they are identical to themselves. For Plato, actual things resemble, to a greater or lesser extent, the eternal and self-identical Forms: it seems fair to say, therefore, that difference, is measured by the extent of resemblance. To reverse Platonism is to reverse this priority. It is to try to think not in terms of a self-identical original but instead of an original and 'internal difference'. In the previous chapter on Hegel I have shown how we should understand internal difference. In summary, an internal difference does not rely on an external relationship between terms. Original difference is instead like time itself: pure change. I shall develop this idea further in the following two chapters dealing with Deleuze's reading of Bergson. When Platonism is reversed, resemblance becomes a surface effect of a deeper originating realm of difference.

²⁸⁴ *CB*, p.52.

²⁸⁵ 'Badiou and Deleuze on the One and the Many', p.69.

Chapter 5. The continuous multiplicity: Bergson.

Introduction to the chapter.

This chapter acts as a propaedeutic to Deleuze's reading of Bergson in Chapter Two of *Difference and Repetition*, 'Repetition for Itself'. I argue that just as Deleuze's reading of Spinoza is at the heart of his commitment to the univocity of Being, so Deleuze's reading of Bergson is at the heart of his commitment to the philosophy of multiplicity. This chapter of the thesis provides, therefore, the necessary background information on four Bergsonian concepts which are active in the argument of Chapter Two of *Difference and Repetition*:

(1) *Duration*. Bergson writes: In my opinion every summary of my views will distort their general nature...if it does not set out from in the first place, and constantly return to, what I regard as the core of the doctrine: the intuition of duration (*durée*).²⁸⁶ Accordingly, I provide an initial survey of Bergson's concept of duration and Deleuze's appropriation of it.

(2) *The actual and the virtual*. I later argue that this distinction is the key to the controversy between Deleuze and Badiou. Hence, I introduce it here.

(3) *The continuous multiplicity*. Badiou's claim that Deleuze is a philosopher of the One lies at the opposite pole to my thesis. Looking ahead to Chapter Four of *Difference and Repetition* ('Ideas and the Synthesis of Difference') we find Deleuze's reply to Badiou's objection: "Multiplicity", which replaces the one no less than the multiple, is the true substantive, substance itself...Everything is a multiplicity...Even the many is a multiplicity; even the one is a multiplicity...Instead of the enormous opposition between the one and the many, there is only the variety of multiplicity — in other words, difference' (182). Deleuze explicitly connects this manifesto for a philosophy of multiplicity with Bergson: it is Bergson who has shown 'That the one is a multiplicity' (182). I argue that Deleuze is a philosopher of the multiple because his ontology is derived from Bergson's, and Bergson's is an ontology of the multiple. However, I need to be clear as to precisely what type of multiple is at stake. Hence, I introduce Bergson's distinction between 'continuous' and 'discrete' multiplicities.

²⁸⁶ *Mélanges*, as quoted by A.R. Lacy. *Bergson* (London: Routledge, 1989), p.26.

(4) *Memory and perception.* Bergson's theory of memory feeds directly into the paradoxes of Time which are at the heart of the argument of Chapter Two of *Difference and Repetition*. This theory is highly counter-intuitive and, therefore, I provide some brief but necessary background. The theory of perception is not only a corollary of the theory of memory but is also relevant to the concept of the 'virtual image' which features in the controversy between Deleuze and Badiou.

The substantive argument of the chapter then circulates around two broad themes:

(5) *Bergson's radical dualism: the difference of nature:*

To defend Deleuze's philosophy of the multiple is not only to defend it against the One. If according to Deleuze, there is, *literally*, 'only the variety of the multiplicity', then a philosophy of the multiple must replace the philosophy of 'the Two' as well as 'the One'. 'The Two' clearly includes the dialectical difference of Hegel. Indeed, in chapter 3 of the thesis I have shown how, in Hardt's words, Deleuze's essay, 'Bergson's Conception of Difference' fires the first shots in a career-long 'antagonistic project against Hegel'.²⁸⁷ I do not, therefore, rehearse those arguments again here. However, if the philosophy of the multiple is to replace the philosophy of 'the Two', one might also expect it to eschew dualisms; Cartesian dualism being only the most notorious example. What are we to make, therefore, of the fact that Bergson, the putative champion of the philosophy of multiplicity, is much more obviously committed to a kind of radical dualism? Bergson's *Matter and Memory* is a key source for Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition*. Bergson writes that the subject of *Matter and Memory* is 'the problem of the relation between soul and body'.²⁸⁸ In the very opening words of *Matter and Memory* Bergson writes brazenly: 'This book affirms the reality of spirit and the reality of matter'; and he goes on to describe the book as, 'frankly dualistic'.

(6) *A new monism: the virtual multiplicity*

There is, perhaps, a hint of disapproval in what Deleuze calls Bergson's 'taste for dualisms':

²⁸⁷ Gilles Deleuze: *An Apprenticeship in Philosophy*, p.9.

²⁸⁸ Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. by Nancy Margaret Paul and W. Scott Palmer (New York: Zone Books, 1991), p.11. Subsequent ref., p.9.

The Bergsonian dualisms are famous: duration-space, quality-quantity, heterogeneous-homogeneous, continuous-discontinuous, memory-matter, recollection-perception, contraction-relaxation...instinct-intelligence, the two sources, etc.²⁸⁹

We should note, however, that Deleuze immediately qualifies this list with the telling comment that dualisms ‘do not...have the last word in...[Bergson’s] philosophy’. I argue that this ‘last word’ comes to entail an underlying monism. However, this threatens only to return us to the problem of ‘the One’, and Badiou’s objection, from which we sought to escape, on Deleuze’s behalf, in the first place. I must show, therefore, how Deleuze’s reading of Bergson allows for a monism that is compatible with Deleuze’s philosophy of multiplicity.

Sources.

Deleuze’s treatment of Bergson in Chapter Two of *Difference and Repetition* (1968) is dense and understated. That being the case, I support it in this preparatory chapter with two other sources. First, Deleuze’s early essay ‘Bergson’s Conception of Difference’ (1956). The second extra source is peculiarly relevant insofar as I find cause to agree with Hardt who observes: ‘When Deleuze returns to Bergson in the mid-1960s to write *Bergsonism*, he takes up again many of his early arguments but his polemical foundation changes slightly...the central critical focus is directed toward the problem of the One and the Multiple’.²⁹⁰

Bergson’s concept of duration (*durée*).

I suspect that what Deleuze so admires about Bergson’s concept of duration is that, like ‘difference’, it eludes definition. In ‘*What is Philosophy?*’ Deleuze (and his co-author Guattari) define philosophy as ‘the discipline that involves creating concepts’.²⁹¹ When seen in these terms, duration is a *philosophical* concept precisely because it does *not* map out some easily recognizable aspect of mundane life. As Colebrook puts it, ‘The creation of a concept does not label a generality — marking out all occurrences of x as “x”.’²⁹² Instead, it provides an opportunity for thinking and living differently. A philosophical concept is designed to resonate: ‘Concepts are centres of vibration, each in itself and every one in relation to all others.’²⁹³

²⁸⁹ *Bergsonism*, p.21. Subsequent ref., p.22.

²⁹⁰ *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy*, p.10.

²⁹¹ *What Is Philosophy?*, p.5.

²⁹² *Deleuze: A Guide for the Perplexed*, p.27.

²⁹³ Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?* p.23.

Most commentators read 'duration' as the doctrine that Time contains no 'instants'. Bergson gives a large number of different illustrations by which he seeks to demonstrate this truth. One such example (that, as we shall later see, Deleuze bends to his own purposes) arises from Bergson reflecting on hearing a neighbouring clock striking the hour. Bergson imagines that he comes to attend to the strokes of the clock only after some of the strokes have already sounded. How does he know how many strokes to add to the ones that he actively counts after he is paying attention?

I only have to turn my attention backwards to count up the four strokes which have already sounded and add them to those which I hear...the first four sounds had struck my ear and even affected my consciousness, but...the sensations produced by each one of them...had melted into one another in such a way as to give the whole a peculiar quality, to make a kind of musical phrase out of it. In order...to estimate retrospectively the number of strokes sounded, I tried to reconstruct the phrase in thought: my imagination made one stroke, then two, then three, and as long as it did not reach the exact number four, my feeling, when consulted, answered that the total effect was qualitatively different.²⁹⁴

He counted until it 'felt' right. This kind of thought experiment re-sensitises us to the way in which Time is an organic whole: there are no breaks in it. But whilst this unceasing flow is the ultimate reality of our mental lives, it is, Bergson claims, a reality that humankind cannot live in for long. It is in our nature to dam the flow of time in order to render it liveable, and this explains Bergson's related theory of perception. Our perceptions freeze duration for the purposes of utility. In other words, in order that we, as bodies in the world, can carry out necessary actions in the world.

The range of Bergson's concept of duration increases further when one recognizes how it merges with his general account of the nature of 'movement'. Just as we tend to think of time as being composed out of a series of instants, we also tend to think of a moving thing as being engaged in a series of temporary 'halts'. This is, of course, the way of thinking that characterises Zeno's famous paradox of Achilles and the tortoise. Bergson rejects this view by challenging its assumption that we should argue 'about movement as though it were made of immobilities'.²⁹⁵ Movement, for Bergson, is a qualitative change not a quantitative change. For Bergson, there is

²⁹⁴ Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, trans. by F. L. Pogson (London: George Allen, 1913), pp.127-128.

²⁹⁵ Henri Bergson, *The Creative Mind*, trans. by Mabelle L. Andison (Connecticut: Greenwood, 1968), p.171.

movement but there is no-thing that moves. Movement is a kind of change in the qualitative state of the universe as a whole. Paradoxical though it is, Bergson states his doctrine very clearly:

There are changes, but there are underneath the change no things which change: change has no need of a support. There are movements, but there is no inert or invariable object which moves: movement does not imply a mobile.²⁹⁶

Bergson's is thus a 'process philosophy' by which change itself becomes a *substance*: 'The difficulties raised by the ancients around the question of movement and by the moderns around the question of substance disappear, the former because movement and change are substantial, the latter because substance is movement and change'. Hence the significance of Bergson's reference to Zeno's paradoxes of movement: 'The essence of all...movements, even that of pure transference like Achilles' race, is alteration'.

Deleuze would largely accept Bergson's account of the seamless nature of time, the non-veridical nature of perception, and the qualitative nature of movement. And yet we have not reached an adequate understanding of why Bergson's concept of duration is of seminal importance to Deleuze. Robin Durie points out that although duration is 'Without doubt, the decisive concept in Bergson's philosophy', it is notable that, 'in his Bergson interpretation, Deleuze spends comparatively little time discussing' it.²⁹⁷ When Deleuze *does* discuss it, he demurs from the popular view: 'Bergsonian duration is, in the final analysis, defined less by succession than by coexistence'.²⁹⁸ What Deleuze is alluding to here is that mere succession is not duration at all. The only reason that anything 'endures' is if the seamless moments are somehow retained or gathered-up. In Bergson's theory this 'gathering-up' is a function of memory. Hence, Bergson often equates duration and memory. Without a memory that presides over the seamless passing of time, the universe starts afresh at every moment. This is what Bergson means by 'our duration is not merely one instant replacing another; if it were, there would never be anything but the present'.²⁹⁹ When, therefore, Deleuze speaks of duration as being defined by 'co-existence' he means that the past exists alongside the present in memory. As Bergson expresses it, 'Duration is the continuous progress of the past which gnaws into the future and which swells as it advances. And as the past grows without ceasing so also there is no limit to its preservation'.

²⁹⁶ *The Creative Mind*, p.173. Subsequent ref., p.184.

²⁹⁷ Robin Durie, 'Splitting Time: Bergson's Philosophical Legacy', *Philosophy Today* 44 (Summer 2000), 152-168 (p.154).

²⁹⁸ *Bergsonism*, p.60.

I began this sketch of Bergson's concept of duration with the idea of 'succession'. I went on to counterpoise, against duration as 'succession', the element of 'co-existence' implicit in Bergson's concept of duration. Having done so, I now need to return to the notion of succession in order to show how the overall concept of duration is complicated by the interaction between succession and co-existence. The notion of 'succession' might seem to allow one to define duration, quite simply, as temporal 'continuity'; and in a sense this is true. But before moving on it is vital to recognize that it is equally true that duration can be defined in terms of *discontinuity*. What I mean by this is that as the seamless flow of time is gathered up by memory (co-existence), no previous state of things can ever return. Hence Bergson, in the context of our psychological duration, can write: 'From [the]...survival of the past it follows that consciousness cannot go through the same state twice. The circumstances may still be the same, but they will act no longer on the same person, since they find him at a new moment in history...That is why our duration is irreversible'.³⁰⁰ If some event (A) happens to me at T^1 , and then (A) happens to me again at T^2 , it cannot be said that the overall state of the universe has returned to the state of (A) because there are now, two co-existing states: (A) at T^2 and the memory of (A) at T^1 . Durational time is *discontinuous* in the sense that, for me, each 'instant' (accepting that Bergson has no real right to that term) is newly christened: every moment is a new moment. There is no going back. This much may be accepted but, as it stands, it would be a fact about human psychology or about the mental life of any conscious being. But Bergson takes a further much more ambitious step, which is to claim that the discontinuity (i.e. the novelty) of the duration of our mental lives is mirrored in the universe as a whole. On this view, there is not only 'no going back' for us, there is no simple brute repetition of anything. Everything is always new. Why?

Bergson writes, the 'universe *endures*'.³⁰¹ This means that dead or inanimate things also exist in a way that 'gathers up' their past. This is the burden of Bergson's puzzling thought-experiment which attends the banal process of dissolving sugar in water:

Succession is an undeniable fact, even in the material world. Though our reasoning on isolated systems may imply that their history, past, present, and future, might be instantaneously unfurled like a fan, this history...unfolds itself gradually, as if it occupied a duration like our own. If I want to mix a glass of sugar and water, I must...wait until

²⁹⁹ Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, trans. by Arthur Mitchell (New York: Dover Publications, 1998), p.4. And subsequent ref.

³⁰⁰ *Matter and Memory*, pp.5-6. (Henceforth, *MM*.)

³⁰¹ *Creative Evolution*, p.11. (Henceforth, *CE*.)

the sugar melts. This little fact is big with meaning. For here the time I have to wait is not that mathematical time which would apply equally well to the entire history of the material world, even if that history were spread out instantaneously in space. It coincides with my impatience...with a certain portion of my own duration, which I cannot protract or contract as I like. It is no longer something *thought*, it is something *lived*...What else can this mean than that the glass of water, the sugar, and the process of the sugar's melting in the water are abstractions, and that the Whole within which they have been cut out by my senses and understanding progresses, it may be in the manner of a consciousness?³⁰²

Bergson's analysis relies on the extent to which it is true to say that the sugar, the water and the glass properly represent an 'isolated system': 'All our belief in objects, all our operations on the systems that science isolates, rest in fact on the idea that time does not bite into them'. In an isolated system 'abstract time' (as distinct from durational time) is said to measure only 'a certain number of simultaneities or...correspondences'. On this view, Time measures whether event (A) occurs simultaneously with event (B). What this abstract time of isolated systems is *not* concerned with is 'the nature of the intervals between these correspondences'. This explains, the import, in the instance of the sugar water experiment, of the implied claim that for science (i.e. that which studies isolated systems) the process of the sugar dissolving in the water might just as well occur instantaneously 'like a fan'. From the scientific point of view, nothing of importance would have changed in the characteristics of the system. The *only* significance of our psychology in Bergson's thought-experiment is that it *discloses* something about the nature of the universe at large. I cannot make my Time run faster or slower. But my endurance 'contains' the melting of the sugar; in other words, the two (my time and the sugar's time) exist in a relationship that is disclosed by my impatience. My life, which runs alongside the melting of the sugar, validates as real, the rhythm by which the sugar melts; this rhythm cannot just be thought away, as if nothing in the universe would have changed if the melting of the sugar had, instead, 'unfolded like a fan', instantaneously, without any succession in time. Hence, the sugar, the water and the glass are not an isolated system because "I" (the one who waits) am part of it.

Even though it may 'for convenience of study' be reasonable for science to act (i.e. in creating experimental set-ups) as if there was such a thing as an 'isolated system', Bergson's point is clearly to deny it. He expands the argument to a cosmic scale:

Our sun radiates heat and light beyond the farthest planet. And, on the other hand, it moves in a certain fixed direction, drawing with it the planets and their satellites. The

³⁰² CE, pp.9-10. Subsequent refs.: p.8;

thread attaching it to the rest of the universe is doubtless very tenuous. Nevertheless, it is along this thread that is transmitted down to the smallest particle of the world in which we live the duration immanent to the whole of the universe. The universe endures.³⁰³

Everything is connected to everything else. The system of sugar-water is thus an 'abstraction' insofar as it has been cut-out from the Whole. In order to be seen to endure it needs, therefore, to be 'reintegrated into the Whole'. But, we are told, that Whole 'progresses...in the manner of a consciousness'. Thus the proof of the endurance of things rests not on my psychology but because we can think of the universe as having a kind of consciousness.

Keith Ansell Pearson raises an obvious worry: 'Bergson appreciates that using the word "consciousness" to account for the endurance of things is likely to induce an aversion in many readers simply because of its anthropomorphic attachments'.³⁰⁴ Ansell Pearson tries to cure our 'aversion' by suggesting that: 'In thinking the impersonal character of the consciousness that belongs to duration we are not to preserve the personal 'human' character of memory, but rather pursue the opposite course'. Those with an aversion to anthropomorphism must seek to understand the human in terms of the universe, not the universe in terms of the human. To understand just how the universe is 'akin' to a consciousness, we need to adjust some of the peculiar grandeur which we attach to the notion of human consciousness. Ansell Pearson describes Deleuze's whole philosophical project as 'the complex and paradoxical one of thinking "beyond" the human condition'. Thus, the relationship between psychological and ontological duration is to be understood via the de-personalisation of human duration, not by the personalisation of the universe. Deleuze wholly accepts Bergson's enlargement of the concept of duration. He reads Bergson as having gone through a development in his thinking that culminates in an ontological revelation: 'Bergson evolved...from the beginning to the end of his work...Duration seemed to him to be less and less reducible to a psychological experience and became instead the variable essence of things, providing the theme of a complex ontology'.³⁰⁵

³⁰³ CE, pp.10-11. Subsequent ref., p.11.

³⁰⁴ Keith Ansell Pearson, *Germinal Life: the Difference and Repetition of Deleuze* (London: Routledge, 1999), p.35. Subsequent refs.: p.35 and p.2.

³⁰⁵ *Bergsonism*, p.34.

The actual and the virtual.

Bergson's invocation of the virtual provokes Deleuze, as much as Deleuze's appropriation of it provokes Badiou. Thus we find Deleuze asking, on our behalf, a 'pressing question', as he calls it:

What is the nature of this one and simple Virtual? How is it that, as early as *Time and Free Will*, then in *Matter and Memory*, Bergson's philosophy should have attributed such importance to the idea of virtuality at the very moment when it was challenging the category of possibility?³⁰⁶

Deleuze thinks he can distinguish the 'possible' and the 'virtual' from what he calls 'two points of view'. These points of view both emerge from constructing the following oppositions: The possible is the opposite of the real...but, in a quite different opposition, the virtual is opposed to the actual. Firstly, from the fact that possible and the real are opposites, we can deduce that the 'Possible has no reality'; conversely, although the virtual is not actual, it is nonetheless, real. The second point of view involves seeing the implications of the fact that the possible is 'That which is "realized" (or not realized)'. The process of realization is described as having two rules. The first rule is that the real is the image (i.e. it resembles) that which was possible. For Bergson, the sole difference between the possible and the real is that existence is added to the possible in order to make it real. The second rule is described as one of limitation, namely, 'every possible is not realized'. We should note, therefore, that the virtual, when it is actualized, does not follow the rules of resemblance and limitation. Instead, and crucially for Deleuze's project, the rules by which the virtual becomes actual are said to be 'those of difference or divergence and of creation'. He claims that the virtual cannot be subject to the rule of 'limitation' because to be actualised it must always *create*. The 'actualization out of the virtual' is distinct from 'realisation out of the possible' because in the virtual there is no range of possibilities which, as it were, jostle for position. In the realm of the possible there are winners and losers, 'some...are supposed to be repulsed or thwarted, while others "pass" into the real'. But in the realm of the virtual there is no blueprint. As we have seen, 'the actual...does not resemble the virtual that it embodies'. In the virtual realm there are no contenders from which to choose - everything, as Bergson would require it, is a process of continuous unforeseeable novelty or creation. Deleuze thinks he can claim that in the virtual:

³⁰⁶ *Bergsonism*, p.96. Subsequent refs.: pp.96-97.

It is difference that is primary...the difference between the virtual from which we begin and the actuals at which we arrive...the characteristic of virtuality is to exist in such a way that it is actualized by being differentiated and is forced to differentiate itself.

The continuous multiplicity.

Bergson's special notion of 'the multiplicity' was inspired by the theoretical work of the German mathematician Bernhard Riemann. Deleuze provides the link with Bergson when he tells us that 'Bergson, as a philosopher, was well aware of Riemann's general problems'.³⁰⁷ Deleuze later explicitly links the ideas of the 'multiplicity' and the 'virtual' to his reading of how to interpret Bergson: 'the theory of virtual multiplicities that inspired Bergsonism from the start'. Riemann had sought to theorise different kinds of magnitude. In his *Habilitationsschrift*, Riemann refers to what he calls 'multidimensional magnitudes, including as a particular case the extended magnitudes'.³⁰⁸ By 'extended magnitude' we are to understand a magnitude that can be quantified i.e. counted or measured. But calling extended magnitudes a 'particular case', implies that other cases are theoretically possible. Riemann goes on to make a critical distinction between either a 'continuous or discrete multiplicity'. Can it make any sense to speak of a 'multiplicity' that cannot be counted? Durie replies:

The notion of magnitude would appear inevitably to imply quantity. Yet it is a notable feature of Bergson's appropriation of [Riemann's] concept that he employs it to conceive of a reality that in itself remains unquantifiable. In Bergson's thought...the continuous multiplicity consists of a diversity of elements that cannot be separated, on account of the interpenetration of the elements, and that cannot therefore be counted.

Bergson equates the continuous multiplicity to 'duration' (*durée*). Bergson's concept of duration has, as we have seen, two main components: succession and co-existence. If, like the strokes of the clock, of which I spoke earlier, the elements of our mental lives interpenetrate one another, we see why Bergson should associate duration with Riemann's idea of the continuous multiplicity. Bergson follows Riemann, therefore, in distinguishing between: 'Two very different kinds of multiplicity': (1) the discrete multiplicity of juxtaposition; and (2) the continuous multiplicity of interpenetration.³⁰⁹

³⁰⁷ *Bergsonism*, p.39. Subsequent ref., p.100

³⁰⁸ 'Splitting Time', p.154. Subsequent refs.: p.154.

³⁰⁹ Bergson, *Time and Free Will*, p.85.

How does Deleuze interpret the distinction between discrete and continuous multiplicities?

Boundas explains that, for Deleuze:

Continuous multiplicities are essentially related to duration or, at least, conceived according to an analogy to it...What defines them essentially is this: discrete multiplicities are extended magnitudes whose nature remains the same after they have been divided, whereas continuous multiplicities are intensive magnitudes whose nature changes each time they are divided.³¹⁰

A basket of potatoes is a discrete multiplicity: if we take a potato out of it neither the potato that was removed, nor those which remain, have changed their nature. The component parts of the discrete multiplicity remain the same but are divided up in a different way. A multiplicity of this type falls within the realm of that which can be measured and counted. But what will interest Deleuze, and what will indeed come to be diagnostic of the 'virtual', is the multiplicity whose nature changes when it is divided:

Bergson defines duration as a...type of multiplicity...(deriving from Riemann). Bergson moves to a distinction between two major types of multiplicities, the one discrete or discontinuous, the other continuous, the one spatial and the other temporal, the one actual, and the other virtual.³¹¹

If the virtual is understood as a continuous multiplicity one can, without contradiction, speak of it as a multiplicity, a diversity or heterogeneity in which, as Deleuze puts it, 'there is *other* without being *several*'.³¹² The crux of the distinction that Deleuze makes between the 'discrete multiplicity' and the 'continuous multiplicity' is that the former, when it divides, creates parts that, after they have divided, maintain their identity. The continuous multiplicity, by contrast, does not divide but 'differentiates' itself. By this Deleuze means that, unlike in the former case, there are no resulting 'parts' which have retained their nature, rather there is a change to the nature of the whole. As Durie puts it: 'The productivity of that which differs from itself [i.e. the continuous multiplicity] consists...in the movement of differentiation, a movement that, precisely, "makes a difference", as opposed to the movement of division that maintains identity'.³¹³

³¹⁰ 'Deleuze-Bergson: an Ontology of the Virtual', p.83.

³¹¹ *Bergsonism*, p.117

³¹² *Bergsonism*, p.42.

³¹³ 'Splitting Time', p.157.

Bergson's concepts of memory and perception.

'Pure memory' is very unlike any common conception of memory. In the common view, we would perhaps think that we retain only *some* of the memories of our past; and as we get older those memories become sparser still. If this is the common view, then Bergson's rejects it entirely. On Bergson's account, no memories are ever lost: 'pure memory...retains in all its details the picture of our past life'.³¹⁴ This might seem patently false but Bergson argues that the fact that we can only recall fragments of our early life is explained by the exigencies of action: 'almost the whole of our past is hidden from us because it is inhibited by the necessities of present action'. When we are asleep, for example, Bergson thinks that experience is possible of 'memories which are believed abolished, then reappear with striking completeness: we live over again, in all their detail, forgotten scenes of childhood'. Hence, the theory is not that the whole of our past is always wholly *available* to us but that all our memories are, in a sense, waiting for us.

But they are not waiting in our minds. Bergson denies that memory (or more particularly what he calls 'pure memory') is psychological. Deleuze sees this quite plainly: 'What Bergson calls "pure recollection" has no psychological existence'.³¹⁵ On this point, Deleuze makes a helpful comparison with Bergson's theory of perception. For just as, 'we do not perceive things in ourselves but at the place where they are, we only grasp the past at the place where it is in itself, and not in ourselves, in our present'. There is a region of the past, the pure past, upon which we have no subjective claim: it is not part of us, rather we are part of it. This is what Bergson means by the 'past in general'. This 'general' past is what Deleuze describes as 'like an ontological element'. When we have a memory we must first '*leap into ontology...leaving psychology altogether*'. This is the realm of the virtual.

The ontological theory of memory has, as its corollary, a distinctive theory of perception. If memory is ontological rather than psychological, it follows that memories are *not* faded perceptions. So, what is the role of perception? For Bergson, in stark contrast to the Western philosophical tradition, perception is about action not knowledge: 'Perception as a whole has its true and final explanation in the tendency of the body to movement'.³¹⁶ Our perceptions are non-

³¹⁴ *MM*, p.241. Subsequent ref., p.154.

³¹⁵ *Bergsonism*, p.55. Subsequent refs: pp.56-57.

³¹⁶ *MM*, p.45. Subsequent ref., p.40.

veridical in that they are a reduction of what there is in the world: their sole purpose is to facilitate our actions in the world. In one of Bergson's leitmotifs, traditional philosophy has confused 'less with more'. Our perceptions do not fashion 'representations' of the world around us out of sensory data, instead they 'lessen' the 'more' that there really is in the world, in order that we can act upon it: 'What you have to explain...is not how perception arises, but how it is limited, since it should be the image of the whole, and is in fact reduced to the image of that which interests you'.

Bergson's radical dualism: the difference of nature.

Having introduced the key background concepts, I now turn to the substantive argument of this chapter of the thesis. In chapters 2 – 4 of this thesis I followed Deleuze's attempt to excavate concepts of difference from Aristotle, Hegel and Plato. For Deleuze, Bergson gets something fundamentally *right* about how we should think of differences, something which Hegel, Aristotle and Plato apparently get *wrong*. Bergson has an obvious preoccupation with establishing differences: throughout his writings, he returns, again and again, to a distinction between 'differences of nature' (or 'of kind') and 'differences of degree'. In the opening arguments of the early essay, Deleuze identifies his own project with Bergson's search for the differences of nature: 'Differences of nature are...the key to everything: we must start from them, we must in the first place find them again'.³¹⁷ (However, we should already note the caveat: 'in the first place'.) One might suppose that what Deleuze is going to take from Bergson is a method; finding the differences of nature sounds like a way of *doing* philosophy. In fact Deleuze's interest is more ontological than methodological: 'a philosophy of difference [namely both his own and Bergson's] always plays on two levels, methodological and ontological'.³¹⁸ He goes on:

These two problems, methodological and ontological, perpetually refer to each other: the one of differences of nature, the other of the nature of difference. In Bergson, we encounter them in their bond, we discover the passage from one to the other.

When the 'difference of nature' ceases to be methodological and becomes ontological it reveals not so much the 'difference of nature' as 'the nature of difference'. Deleuze argues that 'difference' is not a method by which we parse reality into its component parts: difference *is* something.

³¹⁷ BCD, p.43.

³¹⁸ BCD, p.42. Subsequent refs.: p.42.

May distinguishes Deleuze's notion of difference from Derrida's. Whereas Deleuze privileges difference over identity, 'Derrida surely does not. His concept of *differance* involves a play of identity and difference, a play he characterizes as between presence and absence'.³¹⁹ For Deleuze, difference is not just an absence, it has an ontological status of its own. May writes: 'While Foucault and Derrida seek to unravel the pretensions of ontology as a study of what there is, Deleuze revels in ontological creation and analysis.'³²⁰ I suggest that Deleuze, in his early work, equates difference with Bergson's ontology of 'process' or 'change' or 'movement' — or, simply, Time as conceived in Bergson's central concept of duration (*durée*). It is far from obvious how it can make any sense to speak of 'difference in itself', of a difference that floats free from distinct things, or terms, that differ. But that Deleuze intends to *make* sense of such an idea of difference is evident right from the start of the early essay 'if the being of things is, in a certain way, in their differences of nature, we can hope that difference itself is something, that it has a nature'.³²¹ I suggest that what Deleuze takes from Bergson is of an ontology of Being as difference: 'What differs has become itself a thing, a substance'. Deleuze identifies difference with Bergson's philosophy of time as pure heterogeneity: 'Bergson's thesis could be expressed in this way: real time is alteration, and alteration is substance'. This treatment of philosophical 'substance' remains active in Deleuze's later reading of Spinoza (see chapter 7 of the thesis).

Of course, there is nothing original to Bergson about making a distinction between differences of nature as opposed to other more superficial differences. When Deleuze quotes Bergson invoking the difference of nature, Bergson is, in turn, already citing Plato. Deleuze writes: 'Reality must be divided according to its articulations, and Bergson cites Plato's famous text on carving and the good cook'.³²² We are, then, to understand that the philosopher must search out those articulations in reality that are the differences of nature because these are the marks of 'real' distinction as opposed to apparent or superficial distinction. Bergson and Deleuze's motivation for a philosophy that privileges differences of nature is consistent with the philosophical tradition. Yet armed with this distinction, Bergson purports to create a firebreak between his philosophy and all that has preceded it. Deleuze tells us that Bergson reproaches his predecessors (and by

³¹⁹ *Reconsidering Difference*, p.10.

³²⁰ *Gilles Deleuze: An Introduction*, p.15.

³²¹ BCD, p.42. Subsequent ref., p.48.

³²² BCD, p.43.

‘predecessors’ he means the whole of Western philosophy) for ‘*not having seen the true differences of nature*’.³²³

The novelty of Bergson’s position comes about *both* from those differences which he chooses to elevate to the status of true differences of nature and those differences that he chooses to relegate to differences of degree. As an example of counter-intuitive ‘elevation’, Bergson claims:

Philosophers insist on regarding the difference between actual sensations and pure memory as a mere difference in degree, and not in kind. In our view the difference is radical.³²⁴

This *is* a radical position to adopt because it is in conflict with the Western philosophical tradition. Marie Cariou characterises this tradition as follows:

To the extent that we imagine that in perception it is the states of the body which engender a representation, it becomes in a way logical to deduce from this that a memory is only a weakening and fading of perception and thus itself the distant echo of cerebral phenomena.³²⁵

Sometimes ‘the boot is on the other foot’, what *were* (in the traditional view) differences of nature are relegated, by Bergson, to differences of degree. According to Deleuze, ‘This second aspect of the same critique has neither the frequency nor the importance of the first’.³²⁶ This is quite wrong at least insofar as it bears upon ‘importance’ as opposed to ‘frequency’. One would entirely fail to understand Bergson’s philosophy if one failed to distinguish the extreme novelty of his claim that: ‘Between...[the] perception of matter and matter itself there is but a difference of degree and not of kind’.³²⁷ Bergson is contending that our perceptions are, literally, part of matter: ‘Pure perception standing toward matter in the relation of part to the whole’.³²⁸

³²³ BCD, p.42. Subsequent refs.: p.42.

³²⁴ *MM*, p.139. Subsequent refs.: p.137 and p.71.

³²⁵ Marie Cariou, ‘Bergson: The Keyboards of Forgetting’, in *The New Bergson*, ed. by John Mullarkey, pp.99-117 (p.102).

³²⁶ BCD, p.42.

³²⁷ *MM*, p71.

³²⁸ *ibid.*

The past and the present.

The difference of nature that will most inform my analysis of Chapter Two of *Difference and Repetition* derives from Bergson's claim that: 'There is much more between past and present than a mere difference of degree'.³²⁹ In the next chapter of the thesis, I will show that in *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze derives four paradoxes of Time. These paradoxes are, however, anticipated in *Bergsonism*, alongside two others which although not explicit in *Difference and Repetition* remain, nevertheless, implicit in it. First: 'There is a difference in kind between the present and the past (paradox of Being)'.³³⁰ It is a paradox because it goes against the Western philosophical tradition. Alia Al-Saji notes that:

The view of time that will be challenged [by Bergson and Deleuze] is what may loosely be termed the "standard" theory of time: time as the chronological succession of instants in consciousness, as an irreversible and linear progression of psychological states. This describes a longitudinal or flat temporality, one composed of threads that run horizontally between its successive points — time becomes line.³³¹

Second: 'We place ourselves at once, in a leap, in the ontological element of the past (paradox of the leap)'.³³² In other words, there is no simple linear transition between the present and the past. Al-Saji comments that these two paradoxes: 'Open up a new way to conceive the relation of past and present; for the past and present are no longer located on the same line, but constitute different planes of being, related and articulated in coexistence'.³³³ It is important further to note that this does not mean that there is *no* continuity between the past and the present, only that 'This coexistence offers a continuity of a different sort than that found in linear succession — a continuity that holds within itself the seeds of its own discontinuity and differentiation'. I argue that this also holds the seeds of what Badiou calls Deleuze's 'analytic of the indiscernible'.³³⁴ In other words, that the past and the present are both radically distinct and yet intimately connected, presages the way in which, for Deleuze, the virtual and the actual are both radically distinct and yet intimately connected.

³²⁹ *MM*, p.137.

³³⁰ *Bergsonism*, p.61.

³³¹ Alia Al-Saji, 'The memory of another past: Bergson, Deleuze and a new theory of time', *Continental Philosophy Review*, 37 (2004), 203-239 (p.204).

³³² *Bergsonism*, p.61.

³³³ 'The memory of another past', p.208; and subsequent ref.

³³⁴ *CB*, p.52.

Recollection and perception, mind and body, past and present, are all, on this view, radically distinct pairs. But although distinct, each one of the individual terms of these pairs, must interact with the other element of the pair in some way. Even Descartes concedes that our experience is not like that of a 'pilot' occupying a body. A similar principle obtains for the past and the present. As Al-Saji puts it:

A relation of transmission or exchange must be established between these dimensions [past and present] if we are to be temporal beings — that is, beings who do not merely act in the punctual and self-contained instant, but for whom the past bears on the present, and for whom the present passes, making a difference in the past.³³⁵

Bergson must therefore, have an argument for how it is that the past and the present are related. Deleuze tells us: '[the] Bergsonian idea [is] that each [actual] present is only the entire past in its most contracted state' (82). We reach a position in which the past and the present are radically distinct and yet the present is, somehow, a 'contraction' of the past. One might suppose this to be a contradiction.

Indeed, Deleuze sees the potential contradiction quite clearly: 'Bergson says in turn that the past and the present differ in kind and that the present is only the most contracted level or degree of the past: How can these two propositions be reconciled?'³³⁶ The answer that Deleuze goes on to provide is that 'There is no contradiction between this monism [i.e. that the present is the most contracted degree of the past] and dualism [i.e. that the past and the present differ in kind]...For the duality was valid between actual tendencies...but the unity occurs at a second turn'. What this comes to mean is that the dualism is 'actual' but the monism is 'virtual'.

The theory of tendencies.

In the foregoing I have shown how Bergson largely frustrates our expectations with regard to both those particular pairs that *do* form a difference of nature and those that do not. I have not explained how Bergson seeks to defend his conclusions in respect of each of these pairings; neither do I plan to do so. What I wish to draw attention to instead, is the way in which Deleuze lifts Bergson's *particular* arguments about differences of nature to a higher level of abstraction. In Chapter Five of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze remarks: 'Let us take seriously the famous

³³⁵ 'The memory of another past', p. 207.

³³⁶ *Bergsonism*, p.91. Subsequent ref., p.93.

question: is there a difference in kind, or of degree, between differences of degree and differences in kind? (239)' In fact, Deleuze again anticipates the same 'famous' question in the early essay.

Here, Deleuze offers a theoretical basis by which we might discern the *essence* of the distinction between 'differences of nature' and 'differences of degree'. The answer, again, does not, I suspect, conform to any of our intuitions. Differences of nature are temporal whereas differences of degree are spatial: 'What space presents to the understanding, and what the understanding finds in space, are things, products, results and nothing else'.³³⁷ We are told: 'Between things (in the sense of results), there are never and can never be anything but differences of proportion'. In Deleuze's reading of Bergson, the differences of nature are defined as the differences between 'tendencies': 'It is not things nor states of things which differ in nature, it is not characters, but tendencies'. Giovanna Borradori strives hardest to interpret Deleuze's early essay but has to acknowledge 'That while the notion of tendency occupies a central role... it is not easy to unpack'.³³⁸ (It is also difficult to discern in what guise the concept of 'tendency' remains active in *Difference and Repetition*.)

The only attempt that Deleuze offers in the early essay to define the concept of 'tendency' is by contrasting it with 'character':

It is not to the presence of characters that we must pay attention, but to their tendency to develop themselves. The group must not be defined by the possession of certain characters, but by its tendency to emphasise them.³³⁹

What does this mean? A clue is provided in Deleuze's observation that: 'The conception of specific difference is not satisfactory'. This reference to 'specific difference' is perhaps an anticipation of Deleuze's later critique of Aristotle's concept of difference in *Difference and Repetition* (see chapter 2 of the thesis). There, the species 'birds', for example, contained those individuals who possessed the defining 'character' of wings.

In the essay, Deleuze refers us without further explanation to a passage from Bergson's *Creative Evolution* which deals with the supposed difference of nature between plant and animal life.

Bergson claims that:

³³⁷ BCD, p.44. And subsequent refs. in this para.

³³⁸ Giovanna Borradori, 'The Temporalisation of Difference: Reflections on Deleuze's Interpretation of Bergson', *Continental Philosophy Review*, 34 (2001), 1-20 (p.4).

The cardinal error which, from Aristotle onwards, has vitiated most of the philosophies of nature, is to see in vegetative, instinctive and rational life, three successive degrees of...development...The difference between them is not a difference of intensity, nor, more generally of degree, but of kind.³⁴⁰

We are to understand that the difference between plant life (vegetative) and animal life (instinctive), for example, is not a difference of degree but a difference of nature.

I will dwell a little on Bergson's particular arguments for this distinction, *not* because the distinction between plants and animals has any bearing on Badiou and Deleuze's controversy, but because of the way in which it informs our understanding of the concept of 'tendency'. From a modern perspective, to claim a radical distinction between plant life and animal life might sound like an embarrassing error but Bergson's position is subtler than it might appear. Bergson admits the empirical facts as they would be seen today:

There is not a single property of vegetable life that is not found, in some degree, in certain animals; not a single characteristic feature of the animal that has not been seen in certain species or at certain moments in the vegetable world.³⁴¹

But for Bergson, biologists have failed to adopt the proper the perspective from which the true 'difference of nature' can be seen. Biologists aspire to what Bergson thinks of as the 'geometric ideal' of being able to give perfect definitions at all times.³⁴² But this aspiration rests on the assumption that 'A perfect definition applies only to a completed reality; ...vital properties are never entirely realised, though always on the way to become so; they are not so much states as tendencies'. Bergson draws attention to the way in which living things cannot be defined according to 'Certain statical attributes which belong to the object defined and are not found in any other'.³⁴³ The 'tendency of Life' is never static. Hence, while plants share certain static characters with animals, the direction in which plants are evolving is one in which the characters they emphasise are radically different from the characters which animals emphasise in their development. This is what Bergson calls a 'dynamic definition...that ...marks the two divergent directions which vegetables and animals have taken their course'. Borradori writes: 'Authentic difference, or difference in kind, as contrasted to unauthentic difference, or difference of degree,

³³⁹ BCD, p.45. Subsequent ref., p.44.

³⁴⁰ CE, p.135.

³⁴¹ CE, p.106.

³⁴² CE, p.13. And subsequent ref.

³⁴³ CE, p.106. Subsequent ref., p.107.

occurs between two distinct temporal modalities that Bergson names “tendencies” .³⁴⁴ Borradori argues that Bergson’s idea of ‘tendency’ is a reaction against the notion of substance, which we have inherited from the Greek tradition: a notion that pays scant attention to the true nature of ‘time’. Cats and mats, understood as ‘substances’, are frozen in time and as such, they can never form a difference of nature.

What I wish to point out is that the theory of tendencies is dualistic and hence Deleuze’s endorsement of it is at variance with my thesis. This dualism is visible (literally) in *Bergsonism*: Deleuze draws a diagram, a sort of genealogy of the tendencies, but in this family tree there are only bifurcations, never family groups.³⁴⁵ At the root is memory, equated to Bergson’s concept of Time as duration (*durée*). Duration as memory bifurcates to form ‘Matter’ and Life’. ‘Life’ splits into plants and animals. Deleuze advises us that: ‘Things, products, results are always mixtures.’³⁴⁶ It is only when viewed from a dynamic perspective that we will realise that ‘the mixture is a blend of tendencies which differ in nature’. The Bergsonian method of intuition is the separation of mixed reality into the real differences:

A being...is not the subject, but the expression of the tendency in so far as this is contrasted with another tendency. It is in this way that intuition presents itself as a method of difference or division: that of dividing the mixture into two tendencies.

For Bergson, perception and memory also differ in kind. If on Deleuze’s reading of Bergson (and lifted to a higher level of abstraction) it is *only* tendencies that differ in kind, then perception and memory must also be tendencies. This seems harder to accept than the above argument for viewing plants and animals as tendencies.

In Borradori’s analysis it is, again, a matter of stasis versus movement. As Borradori glosses it (and as I discussed earlier) Bergson’s concept of perception ‘represents the mind’s tendency to organise data according to “spatialised time”’.³⁴⁷ Spatialised time is a sort of corruption of time as duration. On this view, the theory of tendencies matches the fundamental Bergsonian division between space and time. Perception is a function of the spatial tendency. Under the regime of perception, objects, things, are ‘frozen’ so as to deactivate their continuous becoming in time. Part and parcel of the tendential model is that the tendencies always come in pairs. Perception is,

³⁴⁴ ‘The Temporalisation of Difference’, p.4. Subsequent refs.: p.3 and p.4.

³⁴⁵ *Bergsonism*, p.102. Subsequent ref., p.107.

³⁴⁶ BCD, p.45. Subsequent refs.: p.45; p.46.

therefore, paired with its alternate ‘tendency’: that of memory. As Borradori reads it, if perception is tainted by a kind of ‘bastard’ time, then the temporal modality of memory is time in its pure state: duration. Having matched memory with duration, Borradori goes on to give a familiar account of the characteristics of Bergson’s concept of duration:

Duration is the purely qualitative sequence of states of consciousness...Unlike spatialized time, duration can be neither quantified – divided into periods of equal length – nor analyzed as an infinity of instants with no length...If duration, rather than spatialized time, is the predominant temporality of a given experience, individual events will appear inextricably continuous, in a state of constant internal differentiation’.

Hence by this account, the difference of nature between the tendencies of perception and memory seems to be based on the more primitive asymmetry, found constantly in Bergson’s philosophy, between space and time. The tendential model thus comes down to understanding Bergson’s concept of ‘perception’ as a kind of temporal stasis that is a function of spatiality, whereas Bergson’s idea of ‘memory’, in Borradori’s account, is equivalent to the constant temporal flux that is duration. While there is clearly some truth to this, I suggest that Borradori’s account is incomplete and, in fact, fails to capture the key point. If I am right about this, it promises the chance of still escaping the conclusion that Deleuze is committed to the dualism of the tendential model in a way that is at variance with his status as a philosopher of multiplicity.

Borradori completely ignores the step in the early essay in which Deleuze performs what appears to be a *volte face*. Reviewing the theory of tendencies, Deleuze writes:

Bergson shows that abstract time is a mixture of space and duration, and that, more profoundly, space itself is a mixture of matter and duration, of matter and memory. Thus there is the mixture which divides itself into two tendencies: matter is in effect a tendency, because it is defined as a relaxation...; duration is a tendency, being a contraction.³⁴⁸

But, Deleuze goes on: ‘The difference of nature, in the end, is not *between* these two tendencies. Finally, difference of nature is itself *one* of these tendencies, and is opposed to the other.’ Ten years lie between the composition of the early essay and the book *Bergsonism*, but in the later work Deleuze still describes the trajectory of Bergson’s argument in more or less the same terms. He goes through the account of the dualistic tendential model only then to claim: ‘It is not enough

³⁴⁷ ‘The Temporalisation of Difference’, p.5. And subsequent refs.

³⁴⁸ BCD, p.47. Subsequent refs.: pp.47-48; and p.43, quoting Bergson, *Creative Mind*, p.207; pp.42-43.

to say that the difference in kind is *between* two tendencies'.³⁴⁹ The *volte face* (if that is what it is) of the early essay is repeated in the later work as: 'For one of these two directions takes all the differences of kind on itself and all the differences of degree fall away into the other direction.'

In the later work, *Bergsonism*, Deleuze describes this as a second 'moment': 'This is the moment of neutralized, balanced dualism'.³⁵⁰ In 'balanced dualism', the difference in kind does not lie, after all, between tendencies, like perception and memory, but between 'the differences in kind that correspond to one tendency and the differences of degree that refer back to the other tendency'. I understand this to mean that the particular instances of paired tendencies that we have seen are each expressions of two, more fundamental sources: the difference of nature generates the temporal differences of duration; and the difference of degree generates the differences of space and matter. Going back to the 'famous question', if these two sources themselves 'differ in nature', then it follows that the most fundamental difference of nature is that which exists between these two sources. But this position is inherently unstable. How can the difference of nature be *both* the difference between two terms *and* one of those terms?

A new monism: the virtual multiplicity.

I suggest that Deleuze accepts that this cannot hold and hence, in the third 'moment', the difference of degree is collapsed into the difference of nature. In other words, the difference of nature is the source of the difference of the degree. Hardt notes that, 'At times it seems as if Deleuze and Bergson are using these terms [difference of degree and difference of nature] to distinguish between qualitative and quantitative differences'.³⁵¹ But Hardt is right to argue that 'given the sweeping claim about the originality of [Bergson-Deleuze's] conception [of the difference of nature] in the history of philosophy, this interpretation proves inadequate'. In fact, Bergson and Deleuze collapse quantity and quality into a single principle. Deleuze asks, 'What, in fact, is a sensation?'³⁵² The point of the question in this context is that a 'sensation' is the arbiter of 'quality'. But in his reply to this question, quality meets quantity; a sensation is only:

The operation of contracting trillions of vibrations onto a receptive surface. Quality emerges from this, quality is nothing other than contracted quantity...the notion of

³⁴⁹ *Bergsonism*, p.92. And subsequent ref.

³⁵⁰ *Bergsonism*, p.93. And subsequent ref.

³⁵¹ *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy*, p.6. And subsequent ref.

³⁵² *Bergsonism*, p.74. Subsequent refs.: pp.74-75.

contraction (or tension) allows us to go beyond the duality of homogeneous quantity and heterogeneous quality, and to pass from one to the other in a continuous movement.

This is 'the moment of monism'. For we are now told:

There is no longer any dualism between nature and degrees. All the degrees coexist in a single Nature that is expressed, on the one hand, in differences in kind, and on the other, in differences in degree.³⁵³

Deleuze seeks to invoke a single principle which explains matter and spirit:

Matter itself will be like an infinitely dilated or relaxed (*detendu*) past... This is how the idea of relaxation (*détente*) —or of extension — will overcome the duality of the unextended and the extended and give us the means of passing from one to the other.³⁵⁴74

Hence, to his own question: 'Can we speak of a rediscovered monism?' Deleuze replies, 'Yes, insofar as everything is duration'.³⁵⁵ The lines of the tendencies, that crossed in our experience, and diverge in evolution, can be traced back to a 'point of convergence' and at this point we shall find 'the rights of a new monism restored'.

Colebrook tries to clarify this single principle as follows: 'Matter is life at its most "relaxed", whereas spirit is a contraction: spirit connects one moment to another, allowing for the perception of change... This degree of contraction comes to the fore in genuine memory'.³⁵⁶ We might feel fairly comfortable with Colebrook's claim, on Deleuze's behalf, that 'All Life is the exertion or spending of energy... Life... strives to further or maintain itself'. But the novelty of Bergson's and Deleuze's position starts to emerge with the idea that, as Colebrook puts it, that 'This... force of life also bears a contrary tendency of non-exertion, conservation or reduction of expenditure'. Bergson's theory of consciousness springs from this latter idea. Any mystery in consciousness is exploded by Bergson insofar as he argues that consciousness is the product of the central nervous system's capacity to interpose an interval, a delay, between a given stimulus (the product of a perception) and our action. As a by-product of this idea one can also see the curious way in which Deleuze's concept of 'Life' spreads beyond its normal bounds. For Bergson and Deleuze, inanimate things also have perceptions: it is just that, for non-conscious

³⁵³ *Bergsonism*, p.93. And subsequent ref.

³⁵⁴ *Bergsonism*, p.74.

³⁵⁵ *Bergsonism*, p.76. Subsequent ref., p.73.

Life (the life of things) there is no delay (no interval during which a choice might be made) between the stimulus and the action. Colebrook writes:

Consciousness is a slowing down or delay, rendering us different from matter — such as rocks — which is affected immediately by the light that warms it or the fluid that erodes it. This slowing down or duration of mind is enabled by contraction — which allows the past to be carried over into the present.

Now we can also better understand the monism of contraction-relaxation. Colebrook explains:

The energy of saving perceptions from the past (contraction) allows the mind to act more efficiently, with less thought (relaxation). But if this contraction of memory becomes habitual, requiring less and less effort, we also find that the mind comes closer to matter, becoming extended or relaxed to the point of inertia.

In Deleuze's own words: 'At the limit of expansion (*détente*), we have matter...A duration that is infinitely slackened and relaxed places its moments outside one another; one must have disappeared when the other appears'.³⁵⁷ In other words, elements which co-exist in the multi-dimensional state of the virtual become juxtaposed into binary oppositions in the actual.

Up until this moment we have operated within a dualistic scheme but now we are presented with what Deleuze describes as a monism. This is at once both a relief and a fresh problem. It is a relief because the rampant dualism of the theory of tendencies, and its threat to my thesis, has indeed been overtaken. It is a fresh problem because the philosophy of the multiple is threatened just as much by a philosophy of the One as by a philosophy of the Two. We must recall that a monism of the virtual will be the target of Badiou's objection that Deleuze, far from overturning Platonism, has simply given a new variation of it. In the current context, this charge is made even more urgent by the fact that Deleuze indeed nods in the direction of Platonism:

The point of unification is virtual. This point is not without similarity to the One-Whole of the Platonists. All the levels of expansion...and contraction coexist in a single Time and form a totality: but this Whole, this One, are pure virtuality.

This lies at the heart of Badiou's objection. I have shown that Deleuze's embrace of Bergsonian dualism is only a moment along the road to a kind of monism. I must now show that this monism is itself compatible with a philosophy of the multiple. That Deleuze intends to do just that, is

³⁵⁶ *Deleuze: A Guide for the Perplexed*, p.22. Subsequent refs., pp.23-24.

evident from the fact that he immediately qualifies the above statement: ‘This Whole has parts, this One has a number – but only potentially’.³⁵⁸ I suggest that we need to read this in terms of Bergson’s notion of the continuous multiplicity.

The early essay contains no mention of the notion of multiplicity but it does contain an anticipation of it. Deleuze describes Bergson’s account of the concept of colour, as ‘some essential pages’.³⁵⁹ Faced with this claim, Borradori can hardly justify ignoring it; and indeed thinks it important enough to quote Deleuze’s reconstruction of Bergson’s thought-experiment at length. I claim the same justification:

There are two ways of determining what colours have in common. *Either* one extracts the abstract and general idea of colour, extracted by taking away from red what makes it red, and from blue what makes it blue...one then ends up with a concept which is a genre, with several objects that have the same concept. There is a duality of object and concept, and the relation of the objects to the concept is that of subsumption. One thus stops at spatial distinctions, *at a state of difference exterior to the thing* [my emphasis]. *Or*, one passes the colours through a converging lens which directs them onto a single point: what we obtain, in this case, is “pure white light”, which brought out the differences between tints. In this case the different colours are no longer under a concept, *but the nuances or degrees of the concept itself, degrees of difference itself and not differences of degree* [my emphasis]. The relation is no longer one of subsumption, but participation. White light is still a universal, but a concrete universal, which enables us to understand the particular because it is itself at the extreme of the particular.³⁶⁰

Borradori claims that the example of the problem of colour shows us how to understand Deleuze’s notion of ‘internal difference’: ‘If the difference between the tendencies could be predicated on something other than pure heterogeneity, difference would be not be conceived “internally” to itself but rather from some external point of view’.³⁶¹ This is true, and as we have already seen, the notion of ‘internal difference’ is important to Deleuze’s project. But I do not find Borradori’s account of its supposed implications for the thought-experiment on colour, intelligible. By this account, the white light experiment ‘Is only meant to illustrate the nature of the relation between two nomologically irreducible tendencies, which Bergson believes shape our being in the world at both the phenomenological and ontological levels’. Although it is not made clear, I assume from all that Borradori has said so far that the two tendencies are memory and

³⁵⁷ *Bergsonism*, p.86.

³⁵⁸ *Bergsonism*, p.93.

³⁵⁹ BCD, p.54.

³⁶⁰ BCD, p.54; citing Bergson, *The Creative Mind*, pp.267-268.

³⁶¹ ‘The Temporalisation of Difference’, p.8. Subsequent ref., p.9.

perception in the case of the phenomenological aspect of duration; and matter and Life, in the case of the ontological aspect of duration. However, I fail to see how these dual tendencies (or other pairs somehow derived from them) are to be interpreted as operating in the instance of the colour problem. The white light is a unity which contains all the colours: it is a question of 'a One' and 'a Many' or a multiple, not a question of 'a Two', as is the case with the tendencies.

The reason why the colour experiment is 'essential' to Deleuze's reading is, therefore, because it points, however confusedly, to the theory of multiplicities:

The decomposition of the composite reveals to us two types of multiplicity. One is represented by space... It is a multiplicity of exteriority, of simultaneity, of juxtaposition, of order, of quantitative differentiation of *difference in degree*; it is a numerical multiplicity, *discontinuous and actual*. The other type of multiplicity appears in pure duration: It is an internal multiplicity of succession, of fusion, of organization, of heterogeneity, of qualitative discrimination, or of *difference in kind*; it is a *virtual and continuous multiplicity* that cannot be reduced to numbers.³⁶²

It is this notion of the 'continuous multiplicity' that feeds into *Difference and Repetition*. The colours of the rainbow are fused together within the white light: they exist, they are real, but they inhabit a kind of potential state that Bergson and Deleuze will describe as virtual. Durie argues that Deleuze's reading of Bergson's thought-experiment 'Provides an initial point of access for elucidating the possibility of a multiplicity that differs from itself'.³⁶³ We can recognize that a multiplicity that 'differed from itself' would, somehow, differ 'internally'.

Interim conclusion.

If Badiou's objection is to be sustained, the distinction that must remain active is the distinction between the One and the Many. If Deleuze can render this distinction otiose then Badiou's objection must fail. In the introduction to this chapter I undertook to show how Deleuze can claim: 'The notion of multiplicity saves us from thinking in terms of "One and Multiple"...'.³⁶⁴ Deleuze goes on: 'There are many theories in philosophy that combine the one and the multiple'. He then condemns a Hegelian-style dialectic:

³⁶² *Bergsonism*, p.38. Subsequent ref., p.38.

³⁶³ 'Splitting Time: Bergson's Philosophical Legacy', p.158.

³⁶⁴ *Bergsonism*, p.43. Subsequent refs.: pp.43-47.

We are told that the Self is one (thesis) and it is multiple (antithesis), then it is the unity of the multiple (synthesis). Or else we are told that the One is already multiple, that Being passes into nonbeing and produces becoming.

To understand what is *wrong* about this dialectic is, evidently, to discover what is *right* about Bergson's theory. We are told: 'To Bergson, it seems that in this type of dialectical method, one begins with concepts that, like baggy clothes, are much too big. The One in general, the multiple in general, nonbeing in general...' Deleuze sees in Plato an anticipation of Bergson's objection to this kind of argument:

Plato was the first to deride those who said "the One is multiple and the multiple one...In each case he asked, *how, how many, when and where*. "What" unity of the multiple and "what multiple of the one?"

I understand this to mean that 'ready-made concepts' like the One and the Many only serve to fool us: 'The concrete will never be attained by combining the inadequacy of one concept with the inadequacy of its opposite. The singular will never be attained by correcting a generality with another generality.' In contrast, therefore:

What Bergson calls for...— is an acute perception of the "what" and the "how many"...Duration is...a multiplicity, a type of multiplicity that is not reducible to an overly broad combination...This multiplicity that is duration is not at all the same thing as the multiple.

Bergson dissolves the distinction between the One and the Many because there can be no such simple opposition. There is no such thing in the world as just 'Many'. You have to say *which* 'Many' you mean.

This still leaves us with the question: is there such a thing as 'the One' in the world? It seems to me that Deleuze would reply that there is not: all that there are, are multiplicities. This is the burden of his final observation, in this section of *Bergsonism*:

Thus a general idea of the One is created and is combined with its opposite, the Multiple in general...In fact, it is the category of multiplicity, with the difference in kind between the two types that it involves, which enables us to condemn the mystification of a thought that operates in terms of the One and the Multiple.

This seems to imply that there can be no 'general idea of the One' anymore than there can be 'the Multiple in general'.

Chapter 6: An ontology of Time: Bergson and Nietzsche.

Introduction to the chapter.

As anticipated in the foregoing chapter of the thesis, I now take up Deleuze's reading of Bergson as it appears in Chapter Two of *Difference and Repetition* ('Repetition for Itself'). Here, Deleuze seeks to answer a familiar question within the philosophy of Time: how does the present pass? His answer is consistent with the reading of Bergson which I gave in the foregoing chapter: the present passes because it is already also the past. Nevertheless, there is a difference in the style of argument. Chapter Two of *Difference and Repetition* mimics the methodology of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Deleuze here establishes certain 'given' experiences which serve as the platform for a transcendental deduction of the 'conditions' that explain each of the said 'givens'. The given experiences are each placed within the overall category of 'repetition' (see chapter 1). Deleuze distinguishes between: a conscious, 'active' synthesis, or repetition (in the manner of the human choices of Kierkegaard); and a subterranean ontological, 'passive' repetition. The transcendental conditions for active repetition are conceptualised in terms of three passive syntheses of Time: habit, memory and the eternal return. The substantive argument of this chapter of the thesis is organised relative to these three syntheses. I will show that the first two syntheses are plainly dependent on Deleuze's reading of Bergson. Deleuze's presentation of 'the paradoxes of time' (part of the second synthesis) contains resources that I will later draw on to refute Badiou's objection that Deleuze's notion of the 'virtual image' is incoherent. I argue that Deleuze is a philosopher of the multiple because his ontology is derived from Bergson's.

In the previous chapter I explained how it is that, for Deleuze, the concept of duration is less a matter of temporal continuity than of the co-existence of the present and the past. However, even without further exposition, a question must arise: given that Bergson has supplied Deleuze with a theory of the present and the past, what of the future? In this chapter I show how Deleuze finds such a theory in Nietzsche's doctrine of the eternal return: a doctrine which I have, again, already prepared some of the ground for in chapter 1 of this thesis. This doctrine is significant for my thesis because I will later show how Deleuze uses it to 'invert Spinozism'.

In an apparently telling, but obscure passage at the conclusion of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze writes: 'The only realised Ontology — in other words, the univocity of Being — is

repetition. (303)' In Chapter Two of *Difference and Repetition*, repetition is associated with Time but this is not the final destination of the book. In the closing Chapters of *Difference and Repetition* the ontology of Time is overtaken by an ontology of Ideas (see chapter 8). Both Time and Ideas are a product of difference, but I suggest that the Bergsonian ontology is only fully 'realised' (i.e. shown to be instantiated) in the ontology of Ideas.

The first synthesis of Time: habit.

I have invoked Bergson and Nietzsche, and yet Chapter Two of *Difference and Repetition* begins with an allusion to Hume: '*Repetition changes nothing in the object repeated, but does change something in the mind which contemplates it*' (70). Hence, given the repetition 'of cases of the type, AB, AB, AB, A...When A appears, we expect B' (70). Hume argues that this sense of expectation is the root of our concept of causation. But despite the allusion to Hume, the Bergsonian context of Deleuze's discourse is quickly established: 'It is not surprising that Bergson rediscovers Hume's analyses once he encounters an analogous problem' (71-72). The Bergsonian 'problem' that Deleuze rehearses is the same one that I introduced in my earlier account of the theory of duration: the clock striking four times. Why is this analogous to Hume's problem? Deleuze writes:

No doubt Bergson's example is not the same as Hume's. One refers to a closed repetition, the other to an open one...One refers to a repetition of elements of the type A A A A...(tick, tick, tick...), the other to a repetition of cases such as AB AB AB A...(tick-tock, tick-tock, tick-tock...). (72)

Williams helpfully points out that what is really going on here is an extension of Hume's analysis.³⁶⁵ For Deleuze, it is not only a matter of the contraction of our experiences of the cases AB AB AB into A and then the expectation of B; it is also a matter of contracting our experiences of A and B into AB in the first place. More than that, our experiences of A or B are themselves only possible by virtue of what Deleuze considers to be deeper repetitions. As Williams puts it: 'Expectation is not only a matter of expecting a particular thing to follow another because they have done so in the past' [which is very much Hume's point] it is also 'A matter of expecting a particular conjunction of independent things to make one...it is to expect a great number of perhaps unidentified unconscious things to come together to form a unit'. In other words, our capacity to identify things, and even to identify ourselves, is based on repetition. This is what

³⁶⁵ GD's *D&R*, p.88. Subsequent ref., p.88.

Deleuze calls 'passive synthesis'. It is a habit: 'We contract [the strokes of the clock] into an internal qualitative impression within this living present or passive synthesis which is duration' (72). By 'passive', rather than 'active', we are to understand that this synthesis of time is *not* the product of some conscious act on our part as human subjects. Deleuze's point is that we cannot have habits unless, independently of our conscious attention, there is a gathering-up of Time.

Deleuze writes: 'Passive synthesis or contraction is essentially asymmetrical: it goes from the past to the future in the present...thereby imparting direction to the arrow of time' (71). This is obscure, Williams advises: 'When we repeat an act in the past...the series of repetitions becomes synthesised in the present...as a forward looking movement'.³⁶⁶ What is intended is the same as Colebrook intends by taking over one of Deleuze's own favourite examples:

If I can swim through this water now it is because of all the waves I have encountered before. I experience this water now with the movements, orientation and ideas I have developed over my years of swimming. My body is composed both of actual matter and these potential movements. Most memory takes this form of habit memory, where the past — which is virtual, for it remains real even when not recalled or presented — is vaguely intertwined with the present of newness.³⁶⁷

But the significance of such an example to Deleuze's argument is better explained by Williams:

According to Deleuze, the passive synthesis of time is not the cause of expectation...It is, rather, that any case of expectation is only possible because there is a passive synthesis of time — the past is projected into the future through the present.³⁶⁸

The shape of the transcendental deduction becomes clear: given that we experience expectation in processes involving repetition (e.g. "This is how this goes on"), then a synthesis (a gathering-up) of Time is the condition of that experience.

Let us also note that in a manner analogous to Hume, Deleuze demotes the self to an armature of habits. Deleuze writes: 'These thousands of habits of which we are composed — these contractions, contemplations...satisfactions, fatigues; these variable presents make — thus form the basic domain of passive syntheses (78).' To flatter my thesis, the self is revealed as multiple:

³⁶⁶ GD's D&R, p.87. Williams quotes the same passage (D&R, p. 71) but mistranslates '*asymétrique*' (*Différence et Répétition*, p.97) as 'symmetrical'.

³⁶⁷ Deleuze: A Guide for the Perplexed, pp. 80-81.

³⁶⁸ GD's D&R, p.87.

‘There is a self wherever a furtive contemplation has been established, whenever a contracting machine capable of drawing a difference from repetition functions somewhere (78-79)’.

The first paradox of the second synthesis of Time (memory): the split in Time.

Not all memory takes the form of embodied habits: ‘The first synthesis, that of habit, is truly the foundation of time; but we must distinguish the foundation from the ground’ (79). This ‘ground’ is associated, by Deleuze, with Bergson’s theory of pure memory. Williams interprets the second synthesis in terms of a further transcendental deduction. The ‘given’, in this case, is the sense of the passing present: what Williams calls ‘the sense of passing into archive’.³⁶⁹ The ‘conditions’ for this sense of the passing present are explained by Deleuze in terms of four so-called paradoxes. Deleuze writes: ‘Although it is ordinary, the first synthesis of time is no less intratemporal’ (79). In other words, the contraction of habits somehow occurs ‘in’ another Time:

[The first synthesis of habit] constitutes time as present, but a present which passes... This is the paradox of the present: to constitute time while passing in the time constituted. We cannot avoid the necessary conclusion — *that there must be another time in which the first synthesis can occur*. This refers us to a second synthesis. (79)

In the preparatory chapter of the thesis I showed how, for Bergson, the difference between the past and the present is a radical difference: a difference of nature and not a mere difference of degree. By this account, the past is not a faded copy of the present that it once was. But this left us with the problem of how the past and the present interact. The distinction between the past and present and the problem it leaves are both at stake in Deleuze’s attempt to theorise the status of the past in the second chapter of *Difference and Repetition*. Deleuze writes: ‘It is as if the past were trapped between two presents: the one which it has been and the one in relation to which it is past’ (80). This repeats a remark in *Bergsonism*: ‘The past...seems to be caught between two presents: the old present that it once was and the actual present in relation to which it is now past’.³⁷⁰ But the earlier work gives a more intelligible account of what we are supposed to understand by the past and why it is held to be paradoxical: ‘On the one hand, we believe that the past as such is only constituted after having been the present; on the other hand, that it is in some way reconstituted by the new present whose past it now is’. In other words, we seek to insist that the instant which is now the past (let us call it past¹) could only come into being after it had been

³⁶⁹ *GD’s D&R*, p.94.

³⁷⁰ *Bergsonism*, p.58. Subsequent ref., p.68.

a present (let us call it present¹): that it was *made* by, was a unique product of. that present¹. But against that, we also insist that that past¹ stands in a relation of past-ness to each new present: present², present³ etc. Hence, apparently the past instant is configured once as the present it once was, but then reconfigured again in relation to a succeeding (new) present. Reverting back to *Difference and Repetition*, this is why the past is 'trapped': 'If a new present were required for the past to be constituted as past, then the former present would never pass and the new one would never arrive' (81). On this view, the concepts of the 'passing' of the old present and of the 'arrival' of the new present are being given no genuine content. The conventional account begs the question, *why* does the present pass? Deleuze writes: 'The claim of the present is precisely that it passes. However, it is what causes the present to pass, that to which the present and habit belong, which must be considered the ground of time' (79). Deleuze's solution is Bergson's solution, derived in part, from what Deleuze calls Bergson's 'great book', *Matter and Memory* (81); and also from the essay, 'Memory of the Present and False Recognition'.³⁷¹

The virtual image.

As we have seen, Bergson's solution is that the present can only become the past if it is already contemporaneous with the past. Here we meet the notion of the 'virtual image' which is exploited by Badiou in his controversy with Deleuze. However, as Al-Saji explains, the position is complicated by the fact that in *Matter and Memory* Bergson uses the concept of 'image' in more than one sense.³⁷² The first sense is closely allied to the way in which we might conventionally use the term 'material object'. Hence, Bergson can claim that, 'Matter...is an aggregate of "images"'.³⁷³ Hence, 'image', for Bergson, does *not* imply the representation of some material object which is distinct from the image of that object: 'image' just *is* the object. The first sense of 'image', therefore, is that of 'material image'. For Bergson, the world is made of images.

But there is another sense in which Bergson uses the term 'image'. Whereas the first sense of image has to do with objects, the second sense has to do with memories. The notion of a kind of a 'shadow' or 'mirror image' is introduced, in *Matter and Memory*, in terms which are initially

³⁷¹ Bergson, 'Memory of the Present and False Recognition', in *Time & the Instant: Essays in the Physics and Philosophy of Time*, ed. by Robin Durie, revised version of trans. by H. Wildon Carr (Manchester: Clinamen Press, 2000), pp.36-63.

³⁷² Al-Saji, 'The memory of another past', p.206.

³⁷³ *MM*, p.9.

unexceptionable: 'If, after having gazed at any object, we turn our eyes abruptly away, we obtain an "afterimage" of it: must we not suppose that this image existed already while we were looking?'.³⁷⁴ In other words, a present perception can have a kind of 'reflection'. We might already begin to see why one might choose to call this image a 'virtual image'. Bergson poses a rhetorical question: 'must we not suppose that this image existed already?' In other words, Bergson is immediately tempted to take a further more ambitious step. He is implying that the doubling of reality that we see, in the transient and curious case of the afterimage, is not aberrant but normal. He is claiming that although we actually see the doubled image only in rare cases, it is always present whenever we look at anything.

In the 1908 essay, 'Memory of the Present and False Recognition', Bergson takes an even more ambitious step. In a manner parallel to that of the visual 'afterimage', he begins with an experience which although curious (indeed some would say bizarre) is nonetheless, familiar to us all:

Some one may be attending to what is going on or taking part in a conversation, when suddenly the conviction will come over them that he has already seen what he is now seeing, heard what he is now hearing, uttered the sentence he is uttering...that he is living again, down to the minutest details, some moments of his past life.³⁷⁵

We import into English the French term *déjà vu* to describe this phenomenon, although Bergson's terminology is better translated as 'false recognition'. What we have, then, is a lived present, which *feels* like a memory. The earlier case of the visual afterimage and the case of *déjà vu* hold in common, a kind of 'doubling' of experience. Bergson elevates the status of these apparently transient and marginal phenomena into constants of seminal significance: there is an 'image' of the present which, largely unbeknown to us, attends every moment of our lives. For Bergson these moments give us a rare, but nevertheless veridical insight, into how time itself is doubled or split. On this view the formation of memory occurs simultaneously with the formation of the perception. What we are aware of in *déjà vu*, according to Bergson, is both the actual and the virtual image. Hence, paradoxical though it may sound, Bergson writes that what we are experiencing: 'Is a memory of the present'.³⁷⁶

³⁷⁴ *MM*, pp.102-103.

³⁷⁵ 'Memory of the Present and False Recognition', p.36

³⁷⁶ 'Memory of the Present and False Recognition', p.52.

Deleuze injects the theory of a split in time into the argument of *Difference and Repetition* in the first paradox of the second synthesis of time: 'The first paradox: the contemporaneity of the past with the present that it *was*...[It is this that] gives us the reason for the passing of the present. Every present passes, in favour of a new present, because the past is contemporaneous with itself as present' (81). Deleuze writes: 'No present would ever pass were it not past 'at the same time' as it is present; no past would ever be constituted unless it were first constituted "at the same time" as it was present' (81). In Bergson's account, the past is not created *after* the present but at the same instant as the present:

Either the present leaves no trace in memory, or it splits at every instant [*se dedouble à tout instant*], its very upsurge [*jaillissement*] being in two jets, symmetrical, one of which falls back [*retombe*] towards the past whilst the other springs forward [*s'élançe*] towards the future.³⁷⁷

As Al-Saji puts it: 'It is on this ground that past and present can be understood as both intertwined and different in kind'.³⁷⁸

The argument of *Difference and Repetition* is a development, rather than a break, with Bergson. And yet Deleuze takes a further step that is more palpably Deleuzian than Bergsonian. Al-Saji draws attention to a passage, in Deleuze's second book on *Cinema*, which, at first blush, simply seems to ape the passage from Bergson's essay 'Memory of the Present and False Recognition' already quoted above:

Time has to split at the same time as it sets itself out or unrolls itself: it splits into two dissymmetrical jets, one of which makes all the present pass on, while the other preserves all the past.

But in Deleuze's version, the two jets are *dissymmetrical*. In other words, for Deleuze, there can be no question of the past resembling the present, of the virtual resembling the actual. To do otherwise, would prejudice the coherence of Deleuze's overall position relative to his account, which I have already reviewed, of Plato's allegedly flawed concept of 'difference' as lack of resemblance.

³⁷⁷ 'Memory of the Present and False Recognition', p.48.

³⁷⁸ 'The memory of another past'. p.209. Subsequent ref., p.217 citing Deleuze, *Cinema 2*, p.81.

The above, in principle, explanation of the interaction between the past and the present must have an, in practice, equivalent in the interaction between memory and perception. Hence Al-Saji writes: ‘In the second chapter of *Matière et mémoire*, Bergson reveals how past and present *in fact* interact in acts of attentive recognition (or concrete perception)’.³⁷⁹ Bergson invites us to visualise the convergence of perception and memory in terms of a series of circuits ‘in which all the elements, including the perceived object itself, hold each other in a state of mutual tension.’³⁸⁰ Bergson writes:

Of these different circles of memory...the smallest, A, is the nearest to immediate perception. It contains only the object O, with the afterimage which comes back and overlies it. Behind it, the larger and larger circles B, C, D, correspond to growing efforts at intellectual expansion...;...memory...expanding more and more, reflects upon the object a growing number of suggested images.³⁸¹

This process rebuilds the ‘object perceived, as an independent whole’. Bergson writes of two reciprocal processes: ‘an afferent process which carries impressions to the centre [and another] process of contrary direction, which brings back the image to the periphery’. Bergson then goes on to further complicate the structure by a series of circuits which associate the independent object with ‘the ever widening systems with which it may be bound up’. This is an iterative process: ‘our distinct perception is really comparable to a closed circle, in which the perception-image, going towards the mind, and the memory-image, launched into space, careen the one behind the other.’ Al-Saji observes that if all we are to understand by the ‘virtual image’ is *that* reflection of the perception which lies on the perimeter of the innermost circuit of this series of circuits — then, the virtual image seems to have no function: ‘It is not a memory-image that can contribute any useful content to the present perception, that can be inserted into perception and determine a future course of action. This is because the virtual image appears limited to doubling the present perception’.³⁸² This understanding of the virtual image again presents a threat to the coherence of Deleuze’s position.

Bergson’s account of the nature of the relation between perception and memory is, on the face of it, straightforward:

³⁷⁹ ‘The memory of another past’, p.207.

³⁸⁰ *MM*, pp.104-105 and figure 1.

³⁸¹ *MM*, p.105. Subsequent refs. in this para.: p.103 and p.105.

³⁸² ‘The memory of another past’, p.212.

The memory is to the perception as the image reflected in the mirror is to the object in front of it. The object can be touched and seen; it acts on us as well as we on it; it is pregnant with possible actions, it is *actual*. The image is virtual, and though it resembles the object, it is incapable of doing what the object does. Our actual existence, then, while it is unrolled [*déroule*] in time, doubles itself in this way with a virtual existence, a mirror image. Each moment of our life offers two aspects: it is actual and virtual, perception on one side and memory on the other. It splits [*Il se scinde*].³⁸³

Deleuze could not, without contradiction, accept an account in which the ‘virtual’ image *resembles* the ‘actual’ in the way in which an object’s reflection in a mirror is said to resemble the object: this would take us back to Plato. However, the threat to the coherence of Deleuze’s position is immediately relaxed, somewhat, by the manner in which Bergson himself, qualifies his own position, in respect of the above account:

What then is memory? Every clear description of a psychological state is made up of images, and we are saying that the memory of an image is not an image. The pure memory, then, can only be described in a vague manner and in metaphorical terms.

We should note here that Bergson is saying, most particularly, that the memory of an image is *not* an image. Instead, we are to understand is that the virtual image is only *like* the image of an object reflected in a mirror insofar as it has no efficacy: it can make nothing happen.

The second paradox of the second synthesis of Time: the co-existence of all of the past and the present.

Al-Saji writes that the picture we seem to be given is of ‘the present...[as] a sequence of discrete points, of natural divisions, each of which carries within itself its own past. In this sense, each present is pregnant with a “virtual image” or, to use Bergson’s term in *Matière et mémoire* with its “afterimage” (“*image consécutive*”), the image of itself as past.³⁸⁴ From the account of duration which I gave in the foregoing chapter it is plain that Bergson could not endorse a picture of durational time in terms of ‘discrete points’ or time as having ‘natural divisions’. More than this, one could object that, far from solving the question of how the present passes it seems only to add a different kind of obstacle to it. Hence, Al-Saji writes:

If each present contains only this image and is closed to the rest of the past, then it becomes difficult once again to understand its passing. Once the present is cut off from

³⁸³ ‘Memory of the Present and False Recognition’, p.51. And subsequent ref.

³⁸⁴ Al-Saji, ‘The memory of another past’, p.210. Also citing, Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, p.104.

any internal connection to the rest of the flux, then the possibility of transition or movement is removed.³⁸⁵

It is perhaps for this reason that the first paradox provokes what Deleuze calls a second paradox; and this both deepens the account of the nature of durational time and promises to resolve the apparent conflicts: 'If each past is contemporaneous with the present that it was, then *all* of the past coexists with the new present in relation to which it is now past' (81-82). Al-Saji offers the necessary Bergsonian-like commentary that:

In order for the present to pass, the past must form, not at punctual points that count off a series of presents, but along the whole flow of duration. For there is no point [*check*] at which one present stops and another commences...memory must be a virtual whole (and not merely a single image) that accompanies the present.

We must not suppose that 'The past is..."in" this second present' [i.e. in the 'new present' in relation to which *all* of the past co-exists] any more than 'that it is "after" the first' present (82). This is consistent with *Bergsonism* where we find: 'The past and the present do not denote two successive moments, but two elements which coexist: One is the present, which does not cease to pass, and the other is the past, which does not cease to be but through which all presents pass'.³⁸⁶

Williams summarises the argument:

Since the present could not become the past if there was not something past in the present and since every present is related to every other as something that passes away, the passing into archive of the present presupposes the synthesis of all the past as the time of past elements of each present past or future.³⁸⁷

The third paradox of the second synthesis of Time: a past which was never present.

Given the above, Deleuze now argues that we arrive at a third paradox: 'Each past is contemporaneous with the present it was [the first paradox], the whole past coexists with the present in relation to which it is past [the second paradox], but the pure element of the past in general pre-exists the passing present [the third paradox]' (82). This is further explained as follows: 'When we say that it [i.e. the pure, general, a priori, element of all time] is contemporaneous with the present that it *was*, we necessarily speak of a past which never *was*

³⁸⁵ 'The memory of another past', p.210. And subsequent ref.

³⁸⁶ *Bergsonism*, p.59. Subsequent ref., p.59.

present, since it was not formed “after” ’ (82). Williams explains this as a kind of past which is ‘an a priori condition for the present passing away’.³⁸⁸ The ‘a priori’ here conveying the burden of Deleuze’s claim that we must ‘necessarily’ speak of a past which never was present. As Williams puts it: ‘It does not depend on the experience of the past but is a condition for there being any such experience: the pure past, as opposed to the past of memories and records, “pre-exists” the present’. Williams cites, as an imagined instance of this a priori condition: ‘The past of her future, of any future, accompanies my present’. We here see the extreme novelty of what Deleuze wants us to understand by Bergson’s notion of the past. We tend to think of the past as one of the three dimensions of time: past, present and future. But this is not how we are to understand Bergson’s idea of a pure past: ‘The past, far from being a dimension of time, is the synthesis of all time of which the present and the future are only dimensions’ (82). It is this notion that allows Deleuze to claim that ‘The present present [is] only the maximal contraction of all [the] past which coexists with *it*.’ (82). As Durie puts it, the past and present ‘belong to the same multiplicity’.³⁸⁹ ‘The past in general’, as Bergson calls it, is not ‘what has happened’ to me or anybody else, it is not ‘dateable’; it is duration made ‘substance’. Hence Deleuze can claim:

There is...a past in general that is not the particular past of a particular present but that is like an ontological element, a past that is eternal and for all time, the condition of the “passage” of every particular present. It is the past in general that makes possible all pasts. According to Bergson, we first put ourselves back into the past in general: He describes in this way the *leap into ontology*.³⁹⁰

I will pursue the implications of this idea further in the context of the fourth paradox (see below).

But before doing I can show that Deleuze does indeed make an adjustment to the theory of recollection and perception to match the adjustment to the theory of the twin jets of time. Al-Saji writes: ‘The virtual image that accompanies the present...is not even properly an *image*’.³⁹¹ Al-Saji clarifies that by ‘*not an image*’ he means in the narrow sense of ‘not a representation’. The rationale for this claim is that ‘To be an image, in the narrow sense, is to be a representation...and this applies only to what is actualized or participates in the present’. In Deleuze’s own words: ‘There is...a substantial temporal element (the Past which was never present) playing the role of

³⁸⁷ *GD’s D&R*, p.95.

³⁸⁸ *GD’s D&R*, p.95. Subsequent refs. p.95.

³⁸⁹ ‘Splitting Time’, p.161.

³⁹⁰ *Bergsonism*, pp.56-57.

³⁹¹ ‘The memory of another past’, p.210. Subsequent ref., p.210.

ground. This is not itself represented. It is always the former or present [actual] present which is represented' (82).

The fourth paradox of the second synthesis of Time: the inverted cone.

The 'fourth paradox' provides, in effect, a 'diagram' of durational time as a continuous virtual multiplicity. Deleuze's account is, again, dependent on Bergson:

The present can be the most contracted degree of the past which coexists with it only if the past coexists with itself in an infinity of diverse degrees of relaxation and contraction at an infinity of levels (this is the meaning of the famous Bergsonian metaphor of the cone, the fourth paradox in relation to the past). (83)

Bergson asks us to imagine pure memory as an inverted cone: [its apex] 'indicates at all times my present, moves forward unceasingly, and unceasingly also touches the moving plane...of my actual representations of the universe'.³⁹² Above the apex of the present, stretches up the 'cone', which represents 'the totality of the recollections accumulated in my memory'. Bergson writes: 'That recollection should reappear in consciousness, it is necessary that it should descend from the heights of pure memory down to the precise point where *action* is taking place'. That 'point' being at the apex of the cone, i.e. the present. Later in *Matter and Memory*, a re-drawn version, of the cone shows cross-sections as it recedes from the tip, culminating in the broad base of the cone.³⁹³ Bergson reflects on the difference between life at the tip of the cone, life at its base, and at all the infinite 'slices of life' in between: 'We tend to scatter ourselves over [the broad base of the cone] in the measure we detach ourselves from our sensory and motor state to live in the life of dreams; we tend to concentrate ourselves in...[the apex of the cone] in the measure that we attach ourselves more firmly to the present reality'.

Deleuze notes that each level of the past from the narrowest, at the tip, to the broadest at the base, 'contains the whole of the past, but in a more or less contracted state, around certain variable dominant recollections'.³⁹⁴ These dominant recollections are what Bergson also calls 'shining points round which the others form a vague nebulosity. These shining points are multiplied in the degree to which our memory expands'.³⁹⁵ But what sense are we to make of this metaphor of

³⁹² *MM*, p.152. Subsequent refs.: p.152 and p.153.

³⁹³ *MM* p.162 (fig.5). Subsequent refs.: pp.162-163.

³⁹⁴ *Bergsonism*, p.64.

³⁹⁵ *MM*, p.171. Subsequent refs.: pp.170-171.

'contraction'? We can see that as the cone narrows towards the tip of the present, the 'shining points' get fewer and fewer, and thus the whole of the past is more densely packed around them. The reason for this is that 'at the point in space where our action is concentrated, contiguity brings back, in the form of movement, only the reaction which immediately followed a former similar perception'. It seems, therefore, that the recollections cluster together (contract) on the basis of similarity, 'The nearer we come to action...the more contiguity tends to approximate to similarity'. In contrast, in the more 'expanded' levels of memory, the memories cluster around more numerous 'shining points' on the basis of 'mere...chronological succession...the consecutive images of our past life'. The circuitry of actualization perhaps also allows us to shed more light on how to interpret the infinite levels of the cone of the past 'in general'. At the tip of the cone is the present: that which is. At the base of the cone is a realm of dreams, that can have no effects (i.e. can prompt no action) and, therefore, will never be.

Let us recall that Deleuze has claimed that 'The present can only be the most contracted degree of the past which coexists with it if the past first exists with itself in an infinity of diverse degrees of relaxation and contraction at an infinity of levels'. Why? Al-Saji notes that the fourth paradox can be derived from the preceding second and third paradoxes, in this sense: 'If the whole of the past coexists with every present, but also pre-exists the present in general, then the past is not dependent on the present for its existence.'³⁹⁶ Williams argues that the justification for Deleuze's claim:

Lies in the view that the pure past must be all the past but must also be amenable to change through the occurrence of any new present...in order to accompany the passing away of any present, the past includes the way any present contracts with other passed presents. In other words, because each present passes away in relation to all other presents in different ways, this aspect of passing away must be reflected in the pure past...So, although the pure past is independent of the present, it still has a particular relation to each present.³⁹⁷

What is the connection between (1) the diagram of the relation between the past (memory) and the present (perception) offered in the context of the first paradox (i.e. the nested circuits)³⁹⁸; and (2) the diagram of the relation between the past and the present offered in the context of the fourth paradox (the inverted cone)? We know that the diagram of the circuits is offered in the context of an account of perception. It might seem, then, that a possible reply to the question I

³⁹⁶ 'The memory of another past', p.211.

³⁹⁷ *GD's D&R*, p.96. Subsequent ref., p.97.

posed above is that the circuits show the 'wiring', as it were, of an individual consciousness whereas the inverted cone is cosmic in scale. But although this is broadly correct, it requires further explanation. In Bergson's account of the cone, we should note the apparently personal emphasis: [the cone's] apex 'indicates at all times *my* present, moves forward unceasingly, and unceasingly also touches the moving plane...of *my* actual representations of the universe'. Above the apex of the present, stretches up the 'cone', which represents 'the totality of the recollections accumulated in *my* memory'. It might seem, therefore, that the cone is person-specific, as if we all have our own individual inverted cones of Time stretching above our individual presents. But I suggest that the apparently personal emphasis is only a function of the particular context in which this diagram of durational Time is offered; this context being Bergson's avowed intention, in *Matter and Memory*, to address the mind-body problem. There is only one cone of Time and the reason that it can also be 'mine' or 'yours' is because we are all in it together. This reading is given general support by Deleuze's 'philosophy of connection'; which one might equally describe as a 'philosophy of difference' insofar as difference, for Deleuze, entails a connection between the differing terms. As Williams puts it, 'Each present, each life, is connected to all others but to greater and lesser degrees of contraction'. I read this to mean that we (indeed all things) have a common 'past'. It is this that explains Deleuze's exotic claim that 'Since each is a passing present, one life may replay another at a different level, as if the philosopher and the pig, the criminal and the saint, played out the same past at different levels of a gigantic cone. This is what we call metempsychosis' (83).

I distinguished between two senses of the term 'image' in Bergson's work. Most of the substantive work of the chapter I have been following the notion of image insofar as it applies to memory. But in the fourth paradox, and given the further explanation I have just offered, we come to an analysis of the notion of image that, I suggest, must lead us back to the other sense of Bergson's use of the term 'image': material image. I said above that neither Bergson nor Deleuze offers any guidance on how the diagram of the circuits of perception and memory is related to the diagram of the inverted cone. But Deleuze offers a clue in the follow-up to a remark which I already quoted earlier. Deleuze claims that the explanation of how 'the One' has the power to be differentiated, 'is already contained in *Matter and Memory*'.³⁹⁹ Deleuze then goes on: 'the linkage between *Creative Evolution* and *Matter and Memory* is perfectly rigorous'. I suggest that what this elliptical remark implies is that the general principle of the inverted cone, although

³⁹⁸ *MM*, p.105, fig.1. Subsequent ref., p.152, fig.4.

³⁹⁹ *Bergsonism*, p.100.

introduced within the context of the mind-body problem in *Matter and Memory*, is given its proper cosmic scope and ontological application when seen as continuous with the philosophical project that culminates in *Creative Evolution*. Duration, in *Creative Evolution*, is a matter of ontology not psychology. Deleuze writes: 'Only the present is "psychological"; but the past is pure ontology; pure recollection has only ontological significance.'⁴⁰⁰ Time, as duration, is not in us, we akin to all other things (alive, dead and inanimate) are in it: 'The only subjectivity is time, non-chronological time grasped in its foundation, and it is we who are internal to time, not the other way round'.⁴⁰¹

As we have seen, Bergson describes the universe as a system of images. On this view, the world is made of images, irrespective of whether we perceive them or not: 'Here I am in the presence of images, in the vaguest sense of the word, images perceived when my senses are opened to them, unperceived when they are closed.'⁴⁰² Drawing closer still to an account of images which we would, more naturally, associate with an account of material objects, Bergson describes how these images interact: 'All these images act and react upon one another in all their elementary parts according to constant laws which I call laws of nature'. This universe of images has no centre, no single perspective but is, instead, to be understood from all of perspectives, of all of the mutually interacting images. In the midst of all these images, my body is only another special kind of image:

All seems to take place as if, in this aggregate of images which I call the universe, nothing really new could happen except through the medium of certain particular images, the type of which is furnished me by my body.⁴⁰³

As explained in the foregoing chapter, Bergson's theory of perception is one in which the original richness of the world of images is filtered, or reduced, with reference to our interests:

If living beings are, within the universe, just "centers of indetermination"...we can conceive that their mere presence is equivalent to the suppression of all those parts of objects in which their functions find no interest...The images which surround us will appear to turn toward our body the side...which interests our body.

⁴⁰⁰ *Bergsonism*, p.56.

⁴⁰¹ Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (London: Athlone Press, 1986), p.82.

⁴⁰² *MM*, p.17.

⁴⁰³ *MM*, p18. Subsequent ref., p.36.

The brain adds nothing to what it receives. As Al-Saji puts it: ‘Perception is not a picture of the world, but the world made picture’.⁴⁰⁴ But given the foregoing account of material images, what sense can we make of the notion of a *virtual* material image, in addition to the virtual image that mirrors present perception?

Bergson accords to inanimate, unconscious things, a kind of perception and, what is more, a perception that, in some ways, exceeds our own:

In one sense we might say that the perception of any unconscious material point whatever...is infinitely greater and more complete than ours, since this point gathers and transmits the influences of all the points of the material universe, whereas our consciousness only attains to certain parts.⁴⁰⁵

This is a radical notion which Colebrook tries to render more credible:

One could imagine molecular life as having something close to...unmediated perception; one molecule does not decide or imagine its relation to another. But insofar as each molecule responds to its outside and encounters, it is perceptive. A hydrogen atom behaves in a certain way — or *is* — when it connects with oxygen, and the connections in turn behave or perceive according to their connections. We could refer to this as “molecular perception” insofar as the relation produced is determined by the way each term’s potential is realized in specific relation to another power or potential. Ideally, “pure perception” would be a relation without delay.⁴⁰⁶

And as we have seen, this is just how unconscious perception differs from conscious perception: ‘Human perception exists in a “zone of indetermination”’. If human perception does not perceive everything there is, then it follows that there is an unperceived universe. If we think of a particular point within that unperceived, unconscious, but in a peculiar sense ‘perceiving’ universe: ‘We can regard the action of all matter as passing through it without resistance and without loss, and the photograph of the whole as translucent’.⁴⁰⁷ Everything passes through an unconscious point because, as Al-Saji puts it, ‘its vision is a non-selective and indifferent kind, which registers everything but discerns nothing’.⁴⁰⁸ But all that we would mean by such discernment was that the ‘zone of indetermination’, which we call the brain, is like a ‘screen’ that reflects back some of that which passes through it. What is virtual and non-representational only

⁴⁰⁴ ‘The memory of another past’, p.220.

⁴⁰⁵ *MM*, p.38.

⁴⁰⁶ *Deleuze, A Guide for the Perplexed*, p.6. Subsequent ref., p.6.

⁴⁰⁷ *MM*, pp.38-39.

⁴⁰⁸ ‘The memory of another past’, p.220.

becomes actual and representational when it is discerned by the conscious perceiving subject. Outside of consciousness, therefore, there is a universe of virtual material images.

What is the relation between the realm of virtual *material* images and the virtual *mirror* images of present perception? We must recall that in the earlier account of present perception, the virtual image which careened behind the actual object of perception seemed to be useless. It was, on the face of it, just a double. Al-Saji first offers the conjecture that the virtual double, far from being vacuous, is, in fact, wonderfully dense: 'It records the implicit and unconscious images, the whole interpenetrating nexus of material images, that constitute the universe for Bergson.'⁴⁰⁹ Were this the case, it would mean that the virtual image would exceed the limits of our perception. In other words, this would equate the memory of the present to 'the indifferent vision of matter' or the virtual material image. Tempting though such a conjecture might be, it cannot be this straightforward because we already know that Bergson makes a sharp distinction 'between the material image (or object) and the virtual image (or memory of the present). Matter...has its own rhythm of duration. Infinitely more relaxed than my own, its moments lose their tension and spread out all at once, taking on extension.' As Colebrook puts it: 'Extended space is "relaxed" because its points do not bear a relation to each other; the points are spread out and indifferent to each other'.⁴¹⁰ In other words, there is still, for Bergson, a radical difference between the material and the spiritual.

The memory of the present (the virtual memory image) is not, therefore, the same as the indifferent vision of matter; neither is it 'an already actualized and fully determinate representation perceived in the light of my actions and interests.'⁴¹¹ But Al-Saji argues, the virtual memory image *is* related to the virtual material image. In particular: 'The body's affectivity constitutes the difference between memory of the present and the indifferent vision of matter'. Bergson's notion of an 'affect' has to do with states of the body that belongs to a perceiving conscious subject. I have said that our body is an image among other images but, nonetheless, the image that is my body has special features that have to be explained in Bergson's overall system. For example, what is it to feel a pain or an emotion? Hence, Bergson writes: 'Between images and ideas — the former extended and the latter unextended — a series of

⁴⁰⁹ 'The memory of another past', p.220. Subsequent refs.: p.220.

⁴¹⁰ *Deleuze, A Guide for the Perplexed*, p.46.

⁴¹¹ 'The memory of another past', p.221. Subsequent ref., p.221.

intermediate states, more or less vaguely localized, which are the *affective* states.’⁴¹² We have seen how, for Bergson, perceptions, metaphorically speaking, ‘measure the reflecting power of the body’ but now, we are further told, ‘affection measures its power to absorb’. If perception is, for Bergson, located outside the body, affection is inside the body. Al-Saji writes: ‘Instead of an excitation causing an action in a predictable sequence, the future action is interrupted or delayed, and replaced by an affective state within the body. Affects *prefigure* or *symbolize* possible future actions which are no longer merely automatic outcomes.’⁴¹³ In Bergson’s own words:

There is one [image] ...which is distinct from all the others, in that I do not only know it from without by perceptions, but from within by affections: it is my body. I examine the conditions in which these affections are produced: I find that they always interpose themselves between the excitations that I receive from without and the movements which I am about to execute, as though they had some undefined influence on the final issue.⁴¹⁴

This is different, therefore, from the bodily memory that is a habit. In the earlier example that Colebrook gave of swimming, although the past is active, its effect on the present is automatic.

One must have an explanation, within the terms of reference of Bergson’s system, of what it is that gives my body an inside as well as an outside. In other words, Bergson accepts that my body is, somehow, a special image among a world of images. But it must stand in some theoretical relation to that world of images. As a material image it is, like all things, an expression of duration. But what exactly singularises it? Al-Saji replies: ‘My bodily affectivity incarnates a particular rhythm of duration...Here, a plane or level of tension in the cone of pure memory is seen to take material form as a particular sensor-motor schema, a singular body’.⁴¹⁵ We saw earlier how the virtual material image cannot be *identical* with the virtual memory image of present perception because there is a radical difference between matter and memory.

Nevertheless, Al-Saji suggests that the virtual image may still ‘participate’ in ‘the unconscious vision of matter’. What stops this from turning the virtual memory image *into* matter is the fact that it does not participate ‘indifferently’ as matter does. The doubled memory image is part of the unconscious world of virtual material images but, importantly, it is, as Al-Saji puts it: ‘configured according to the body’s affectivity’.

⁴¹² *MM*, p.53. Subsequent ref., p.56.

⁴¹³ ‘The memory of another past’, p.221.

⁴¹⁴ *MM*, p.17.

⁴¹⁵ ‘The memory of another past’, p.221. Subsequent refs. in this para: p222.

The third synthesis of Time: eternal return.

In the second chapter of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze alludes, with an initial obscurity deliberately designed to enhance the dramatic tension, to the requirement for ‘a third synthesis of time...’ (85); as the chapter unwinds, this third synthesis turns out to be provided by Nietzsche’s doctrine of the eternal return. For Deleuze, there is a lacuna in Bergson’s philosophy of Time. As May puts it: ‘Duration is a unity, but it is not merely a unity of past and present, as it might have seemed with Bergson. It is a unity of past, present and future.’⁴¹⁶ Nietzsche is to provide the concept of the future that Bergson lacked. In chapter 1 of the thesis I introduced Deleuze’s radical reading of Nietzsche’s idea of recurrence in the context of Deleuze’s own introductory chapter to *Difference and Repetition*. As we have seen, for Deleuze: ‘It is not some one thing which returns but...returning itself is the one thing...identity in the eternal return does not describe the nature of that which returns but, on the contrary, the fact of returning for that which differs’.⁴¹⁷

To understand the eternal return we must stop thinking in a particular way about being and becoming. May writes:

In traditional philosophy, being is contrasted with becoming. Being is that which endures, that which underlies...remains constant. Being is the source and the foundation, fixed and unchanging...On the other hand, becoming is ephemeral, changing, inconstant, and therefore less substantial than being. Being is real, becoming is a passing illusion.⁴¹⁸

The platform for the eternal return is built on the rejection of this traditional way of thinking. Nietzsche’s critique of any notion of a final state of the universe implies that we must, instead, embrace the idea that only becoming is real: in other words, a universe comprised only of fluidity and change. This is consistent with Deleuze’s reading of Bergson.

The first synthesis of time had, as its given, our sense of expectancy, which had, as its condition, habit, albeit ‘habit’ conceived in such a way as to place no reliance on conscious activity or on natural physical laws. The second synthesis of time had, as its given, our sense of a falling away into the past, which has, as its condition, memory – albeit memory conceived in terms of an

⁴¹⁶ Gilles Deleuze: *An Introduction*, p.61.

⁴¹⁷ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p.48

⁴¹⁸ Gilles Deleuze: *An Introduction*, p.59.

ontological state in which all things are connected. The third synthesis of time has, as its given, what Williams calls our sense of ‘the drive forward to the future...chancing...openness...risk’.⁴¹⁹ Deleuze gives three conditions for this given. The first, ‘a pure *order* of time’ (88), is obscure in Deleuze’s formulation. I follow Williams who advises that ‘the drive toward the new presupposes a cut in time...that is, from the point of view of a sensation of moving towards the new, the present cuts us off from the past and projects us into a completely different future’. Hence, Deleuze’s reference to a ‘caesura’ and to time being ‘torn into two unequal parts’ (89). Having cut time, the second condition of the drive towards the future, confusingly, depends on an ordering of the *whole* of time, Deleuze refers to: ‘the totality of time...that draws together the caesura, the before and after’ (89). Williams advises that ‘Deleuze does not mean...that everything is put on the same basis. On the contrary, the whole or group...is divided into two incommensurable subgroups’. But for all that, we are left with an apparent contradiction: ‘How can time be cut in the present and yet also be a whole in terms of the relation of past to future? Deleuze reply depends on his concept of the eternal return of difference. In other words, the same is lost, cut off from the present — identities do not return — but the past, the present and the future are united in the special category of repetition. For Deleuze, repetition is the return of difference. As Williams puts it: ‘the parts of acts and identities that are differential or in movement return eternally whether they are in the past or the future’.

One might object, why is it the *return* of anything? In other words, why is it not just an infinite variety of something, more of a kind of eternal open future? May provides an answer rather more clearly, as far as I am aware, than Deleuze ever does himself. The crucial point, on this Bergsonian model, is that ‘we move from past to present rather than from present to past’.⁴²⁰ This we must recall is the paradoxical outcome of the Bergsonian account of the ‘past in general’ (the virtual) and of the nature of memory and perception. One might then further object, why is it the return of *difference*? To answer we must further associate the past, as an ontological element, with difference, then it follows that ‘if the past that actualizes itself in the present is difference, then *what recurs eternally is difference itself*’.

⁴¹⁹ GD’s *D&R*, p.102. Subsequent refs.: pp.102-103.

⁴²⁰ Gilles Deleuze: *An Introduction*, p.60. And subsequent ref.

Interim conclusion.

What is the role of Chapter Two of *Difference and Repetition* in the argument of the book as a whole? Furthermore, what contribution does it make to sustaining the argument of my thesis? In chapter 1 of my thesis I argued that, in the Introductory Chapter of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze rather toyed with the concept of repetition — at least insofar as he makes no attempt clearly to distinguish his own position from those of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. It was evident, however, that, for Deleuze, repetition was part and parcel of the project of difference, rather than a dull rehearsal of the same. In other words, that difference would always come before identity. Chapter Two seems to promise Deleuze's own detailed statement of what should count as an authentic repetition: 'Repetition for Itself'. And yet it is wholly devoted to the philosophy of Time? What is the relationship between the philosophy of Time and the philosophy of difference? I, like May, conclude that Time is a function of difference:

The past is duration; the present is actualization; the future is eternal return. But within all these, constitutive of them, is difference. Difference in kind constitutes duration. Actualized difference constitutes the present. The return of difference constitutes the future.⁴²¹

As we have seen, Badiou describes Deleuze's philosophy as 'systematic'.⁴²² I agree. Badiou also, and without any intended insult, describes Deleuze's philosophy as '*monotonous*, composing a very particular regime of emphasis or almost infinite repetition of a limited repertoire of concepts, as well as a virtuosic variation of names, under which what it thought remains essentially identical'.⁴²³ I also agree. And yet, as May points out: 'Badiou separates his discussion of time from his discussion of the virtual and the actual'.⁴²⁴ In fact, the relationship between the actual and virtual, which is Badiou's central complaint against Deleuze, depends on the treatment I have given in this chapter to Deleuze's reading of Bergson and Nietzsche. Deleuze's philosophy of Time describes the inner workings of the relationship between the actual and the virtual.

⁴²¹ Gilles Deleuze: *An Introduction*, p.62.

⁴²² *CB*, p.17.

⁴²³ *CB*, p.15.

⁴²⁴ 'Badiou and Deleuze On the One and the Many', p.74.

Chapter 7: A logic of multiplicity: Deleuze's Spinoza.

Introduction to the chapter.

In this thesis I am tracing the themes of 'the One' and the Multiple through the phases of Deleuze's argument in *Difference and Repetition*. I have reached Chapter Three, 'The Image of Thought'. I associate Chapter Three of *Difference and Repetition* with Deleuze's reading of Spinoza; this is audacious because, barring one name-check (50), Spinoza is not even mentioned. How do I justify it? Partly because Chapter Three is concerned with the 'starting points' of philosophical systems. Indeed, the chapter's opening words are: 'Where to begin in philosophy has always — rightly — been regarded as a very delicate problem, for beginning means eliminating all presuppositions' (129). To achieve a point of contact between this problem and Spinoza it is only necessary to pose the question: does Deleuze begin where Spinoza begins? To achieve a point of contact with this question and my themes, one only needs to reflect that if Deleuze *does* begin in the same place as Spinoza, then the problem of Deleuze's allegiance to the philosophy of the One resurfaces. To rebut this, I argue that Deleuze does *not* begin where Spinoza begins.

If it is not immediately obvious why 'starting points' should have anything to do with 'The Image of Thought', Deleuze quickly brings the two into close registration: the connection is the *cogito*. Deleuze mocks the *cogito* because, for him, it represents the abrogation of 'thought'; it is *doxa*, 'what everybody knows':

It is presumed that everyone knows, independently of concepts, what is meant by self, thinking, and being. The pure self of "I think" thus appears to be a beginning. (129).

It is because the *cogito* is 'what everybody knows', that it gives Descartes the resources to halt the corrosive progress of the method of doubt and to start his philosophy. In Deleuze's view it is a false start. Chapter Three of *Difference and Repetition* is concerned, then, with what 'thought' *really* is. But it is largely a negative critique and, therefore, works by separating what thought *is*, from what it is not. Deleuze mocks the model of thought that is based on simple acts of recognition:

This is a table, this an apple, this the piece of wax, Good morning Theaetetus... who can believe that the destiny of thought is at stake in these acts, and that when we recognize, we are thinking? (135)

The substantive work of the chapter is organized around three broad themes: (1) Substance; (2) Formal distinction; and (3) Univocity, immanence and expression. Each of which I will first briefly introduce.

Substance.

If Descartes is condemned by Deleuze, then, elsewhere at least, Spinoza is lauded. In the introduction and summary of the thesis I alluded to Deleuze's identifications of Spinoza as 'the prince' and 'the Christ' of philosophers.⁴²⁵ In more prosaic mood, Deleuze gives a familiar summary of what he calls: 'The great theoretical thesis of Spinozism: a single substance having an infinity of attributes...all "creatures" being only modes of these attributes or modifications of this substance'.⁴²⁶ Spinoza defines 'substance' as 'what is in itself and is conceived through itself, that is, that whose concept does not require the concept of another thing'.⁴²⁷ For Deleuze, Spinoza is the locus of an equation between 'substance' and 'univocity': 'Univocal being becomes identical [*in Spinoza*] with unique, universal and infinite substance' (40).

We know that Deleuze endorses the doctrine of univocal Being. Spinozism is a philosophy of 'the One' to the extent that it relies on the demonstration that there is only one substance.

In the Preface to the English Edition of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze writes: 'There is a great difference between writing history of philosophy and writing philosophy'; he goes on, '*Difference and Repetition* was the first book in which I tried to "do philosophy"(xv).'

Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza appeared in 1968, at more or less the same time as *Difference and Repetition*. Hence, I justify reading it alongside the brief treatment of Spinoza in *Difference and Repetition* itself. But if *Difference and Repetition* is Deleuze's 'first philosophy', is *Expressionism in Philosophy* a history of philosophy? It is noticeable that despite the effusiveness of Deleuze's praise for Spinoza in other writings, the style, or tone, of *Expressionism in Philosophy* is oddly neutral or guarded. Deleuze seems, quite deliberately, to strike a pose that

⁴²⁵ *What is Philosophy?*, p.48 and p.60.

⁴²⁶ Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, trans. by Robert Hurley (San Francisco: City Light, 1988), p.17.

⁴²⁷ Spinoza, *The Ethics* in, Edwin Curley, ed. and trans., *A Spinoza Reader: the Ethics and Other Works* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), D3. p.85.

conceals his own position. This assessment is supported by Hardt's comment that 'There is a certain modesty and caution before Spinoza that we do not find elsewhere.'⁴²⁸ A workable distinction between the 'history of philosophy' and 'doing philosophy' is clearly possible but when Deleuze purports to make it he is being disingenuous. *Expressionism in Philosophy*, like all of Deleuze's monographs, is skewed in the direction of his own emerging position.

One might wonder whether it is, in part, the neutral 'mood' of *Expressionism in Philosophy* that leads Howie to paint Deleuze as an unreconstructed (my term) Spinozist.⁴²⁹ In other words, she confuses Deleuze's 'modesty...before Spinoza' with complete identification. On this view, Deleuze takes too much from Spinoza. Over three hundred years of analysis have armed scholars with enough ammunition to knock down Spinoza's 'great theoretical thesis'; for Howie, Deleuze's project is killed with the same stone. I rebut this conclusion by agreeing with Hardt that Deleuze 'Presents [Spinoza's] proofs of the existence of God and the singularity of substance as an extended meditation on the positive nature of difference and the real foundation of being'.⁴³⁰ Deleuze's reading of Spinoza is eccentric but not *so* eccentric as to amount to a modern attempt to establish an apodictic foundation for philosophy. The substantive work of this chapter of the thesis begins by following Deleuze's analysis, in *Expressionism in Philosophy*, of the celebrated opening arguments of Spinoza's *Ethics*. I argue that although there is a clear sympathy between Deleuze's reading of Bergson's concept of difference and his reading of Spinoza's concept of substance, it does not amount to an identity. Deleuze's ontology is derived from Bergson not Spinoza.

Formal distinction: a logic.

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, published in 1980, and written in conjunction with Guattari, we find in the concept of the 'rhizome' an elaboration of Deleuze's concept of multiplicity: 'The rhizome is the conjunction, "and...and...and"...'; Deleuze and Guattari go on to endorse a literature that has established what they describe as 'a logic of the AND' — such a logic, we are told, can 'overthrow ontology, do away with foundations, nullify endings and beginnings'.⁴³¹ Why should Deleuze want to overthrow ontology? He is thinking of the ontology that springs from the

⁴²⁸ Gilles Deleuze: *An Apprenticeship in Philosophy*, p. 56.

⁴²⁹ Howie, *Deleuze and Spinoza: the Aura of Expression*. (Henceforth, *D&S: Aura of Expression*.)

⁴³⁰ Gilles Deleuze: *An Apprenticeship in Philosophy*, p. 60. Subsequent ref., p.17.

⁴³¹ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (London: Continuum, 2002), p.25.

copula: 'is'. Deleuze's own ontology is a dynamic ontology of becoming that denies 'is'. We can now see why Rajchman argues that Deleuze seeks to establish a new logic: 'A logic of "multiplicity," a logic of sense.'⁴³² Rajchman explains that Deleuzian logic has got nothing to do with 'a sentential calculus of truth' or a 'method of inference for the sciences' or 'deriving propositions from others taken as premises'.⁴³³ It is, instead, a logic that privileges dynamism and connections. Deleuze takes this logic from Spinoza.

The only explicit analysis of Spinoza in *Difference and Repetition* is in Chapter One. It is part of Deleuze's attempt to counter Aristotle's claim that Being is equivocal. But even here Spinoza is yoked, somewhat uneasily as we will see, to Duns Scotus. Duns Scotus is the first champion of univocal Being:

There has only ever been one ontological proposition: Being is univocal. There has only ever been one ontology, that of Duns Scotus, which gave being a single voice...A single voice raises the clamour of being' (35).

But Duns Scotus is also, it seems, a philosopher of multiplicity in the special sense that Deleuze wants to give to that term. In chapters 5 and 6 of the thesis I argued that Deleuze's *ontological* credentials as a philosopher of multiplicity are derived from his appropriation of Bergson's notion of the continuous multiplicity. In this chapter we see how the influence of Bergson is developed by Deleuze's appropriation of the notion of 'formal distinction' from Duns Scotus. This is where Spinoza is yoked to Duns Scotus. As Hardt explains: 'Deleuze traces Spinoza's theory of the attributes back to Duns Scotus...The positive theology of Duns Scotus is characterised by the theory of formal distinction.'⁴³⁴ Deleuze argues that the 'attributes' are formally distinct but ontologically identical. The chapter answers the question, how is Deleuze entitled to use the concept of formal distinction which has its origins in theology?

Univocity, immanence and expression.

A further question arises. Why does Deleuze *need* the notion of formal distinction? Hardt argues that the Scotian philosophy, albeit given a Spinozan spin, provides a route, that Bergson does not provide, to the joint doctrines of 'univocity' and 'expressivity': 'Through the investigation of the

⁴³² *The Deleuze Connections*, p.50. Subsequent refs. in this para.: p.50.

⁴³³ *The Deleuze Connections*, p.50.

⁴³⁴ *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy*, p.65.

formal distinction of the attributes, Deleuze arrives at...the principle of the univocity of being'.⁴³⁵
I suggest that we need to add the notion of 'immanence' to this nexus.

For Deleuze, univocal Being means that all existing things are equal. What Deleuze finds in Spinoza is a kind of 'logic' for the parity of Being, everything lies on the same plane: what Deleuze will later call 'the plane of immanence'.⁴³⁶

Spinoza was still on Deleuze's mind in the essay that turned out to be the last words published in his lifetime. If one takes that last opuscle as a valedictory message, then it is clear that Deleuze's message to us is that Spinozism is important because it is a philosophy of 'pure immanence'. It is this doctrine of immanence 'That reintroduces Spinozism into the heart of the philosophical process'.⁴³⁷ I said earlier that *part of* the reason for associating Chapter Three of *Difference and Repetition* ('The Image of Thought') with Deleuze's reading of Spinoza was because of the Chapter's concerns with philosophical beginnings. I further support the connection between Deleuze's 'Image of Thought' and his reading of Spinoza by virtue of the way in which Deleuze interprets 'immanence'. I show how, for Deleuze, Spinoza's philosophy of 'immanence does not only entail the denial of a transcendent God but also a shift of the focus of philosophy away from the 'subject' as thinker.

Hardt points us to the doctrine of 'expression': 'In order to grasp the univocity of being, we have to begin with...its expressivity. The Spinozan attributes, on Deleuze's reading, are the expressions of being'.⁴³⁸ In Deleuze's own words: Spinoza not only inherits the mantle of univocity from Duns Scotus but also 'Marks a considerable progress...With Spinoza, univocal being...becomes expressive' (40). Whereas Howie argues that Deleuze takes too much from Spinoza, Pierre Macherey argues that he takes too little. The clearest sign of which is in the title of Deleuze's book, *Expressionism in Philosophy*:

The word "expressionism"...evokes primarily the aesthetic movement deriving from the work of French and German painters at the turn of the century...spreading into literature and the new art of cinema'...To analyse Spinoza's philosophy in terms of expression...was... to introduce a new version of Spinozism that was at variance, if not

⁴³⁵ Gilles Deleuze: *An Apprenticeship in Philosophy*, p.63.

⁴³⁶ *What is Philosophy?*, pp.35-60.

⁴³⁷ Gilles Deleuze, 'Immanence: A Life', in *Pure Immanence: Essays on A Life*, trans. by Anne Boyman (New York: Zone Books, 2001), pp.25-33 (p.28).

⁴³⁸ Gilles Deleuze: *An Apprenticeship in Philosophy*, p.63.

completely at odds, with the model of demonstrative rationality explicitly adopted by Spinoza himself.⁴³⁹

Macherey is right to complain that Deleuze foists an 'alien' concept of 'expression' onto Spinoza. It suits Deleuze's polemical purposes to claim, at the very outset of *Expressionism in Philosophy*, that: 'The idea of expression appears in the first part of the *Ethics* as early as the sixth Definition: By God I understand a being absolutely infinite, that is, a substance consisting of an infinity of attributes, of which each *expresses* [Deleuze's emphasis] an eternal and infinite essence'.⁴⁴⁰ But Deleuze himself is soon having to explain 'why...most respected commentators [have] taken so little, if any account of [it]'; and then has to admit that: 'The idea of expression is neither defined nor deduced by Spinoza'. Indeed, at first blush it seems 'to speak volumes' that Deleuze's other book on Spinoza, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, published after *Expressionism in Philosophy*, finds no place at all in its dictionary-style format for a definition of 'Expression'. But this is, in fact, misleading because much of the same work is done by the definition of the more thoroughly Spinozan terms: 'Explain-ImPLY (Explicare, Implicare).'⁴⁴¹

Deleuze's concept of 'expression' is elusive but the later Spinoza book gives scope for arguing that although the concept is indeed 'at one remove' from Spinoza, it is nowhere near *as* remote from Spinoza as Macherey would have us believe. Deleuze has, of course, written, most provocatively, on both modern painting and cinema but one does not have to look that far from Spinoza's heritage to find the source of Deleuze's interest in 'expression'. Deleuze writes:

Explain is a "strong" term in Spinoza. It does not signify an operation of the intellect external to the thing, but an operation of the thing internal to the intellect. Even demonstrations are said to be "eyes" of the, meaning that they perceive a movement that is in the thing...the thing explains itself.⁴⁴²

This is redolent of Hegel's claim for the 'logicity of being': the Being that speaks itself. By 'expression' we should understand the claim that there is no 'gap', as it were, between thought and being. As 'thinkers' we assume that we are free agents. On the 'expressive' view of reality that Deleuze sponsors, thinking is not, however, something that we initiate. In Chapter Three of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze anticipates the 'Theory of Ideas' that will only be fully

⁴³⁹ Pierre Macherey, 'The Encounter with Spinoza' in *Deleuze: A Critical Reader*, ed. by Paul Patton (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), pp.139-161 (p.141).

⁴⁴⁰ *EiP*, p.13 (citing Spinoza, the *Ethics* D6). Subsequent refs.: p.17 and p.19.

⁴⁴¹ *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, pp.68-69.

⁴⁴² *ibid.*

developed in Chapters Four and Five: ‘Something in the world forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental *encounter*’ (139). In the following chapter of the thesis I argue that this is where Deleuze finds the starting place of his own philosophy.

For Deleuze to read Spinoza through Hegel is an anachronism but it does not snap the thread of the history of philosophy in the way that Macherey contends. After all, Hegel sees his own discourse as, to some extent, a dialogue with Spinoza. As we have seen, for Deleuze, Hegel is, ostensibly, the enemy, whereas Spinoza is an ally. But in one important respect, Hegel and Spinoza are closer than Deleuze likes to pretend. Deleuze goes back to Spinoza to find an antidote to Hegel’s insistence on the negative nature of difference and of Being founded on contradiction. But Deleuze *adds* to Spinoza an idea of ‘expression’ that Deleuze takes from Hegel. It is Hegel who provokes, in Deleuze, the idea of a Being that is ‘expressive’, but it is the philosophy of Spinoza that provides a logic for it.

Inverting Spinozism.

For Deleuze, Spinoza marks a progress but not the perfection of the univocity of Being. Why? Because, ‘There still remains a difference between substance and the modes: Spinoza’s substance appears independent of the modes, while the modes are dependent on substance, but as though on something other than themselves’ (40). I defer, until the concluding chapter of the thesis, the problem of how the ‘historical Spinoza’ becomes ‘Deleuze’s Spinoza’ by means of Nietzsche’s doctrine of the eternal return.

The single substance.

Conventional scholarly analysis reads the opening arguments of the *Ethics* as the platform for the proof of the single substance. R. J. Delahunty, like most scholars, thinks that opening part of *the Ethics* can be divided into two broad sections: up until Proposition 7, Spinoza aims to establish ‘that there is at least one substance’; after that, the focus shifts to demonstrating that there is *no more* than one substance.⁴⁴³ Deleuze’s analysis is compatible with Delahunty’s insofar as he too respects broadly the same division. Thus we find, Deleuze claiming that, up until Proposition 8, Spinoza’s whole focus is to demonstrate that ‘there is only one substance for each attribute.’ Similarly to Delahunty, ‘from Proposition 9 on,’ Deleuze writes, ‘Spinoza’s objective seems to

shift. It is no longer a question of demonstrating that there is only one substance for each attribute, but that there is only one substance for all attributes'.⁴⁴⁴ In fact, we do not reach the 'single substance' proof until Proposition 14: 'Except God, no substance can be or be conceived.'⁴⁴⁵ Deleuze claims that the 'passage from one theme [one substance per attribute] to the next [one substance for all attributes] seems difficult to grasp'⁴⁴⁶ (34). Howie also voices this difficulty: 'Initially and somewhat surprisingly there appears to be some overlap between the proofs that there is one substance per attribute and one substance for all attributes.'⁴⁴⁷

Real distinction is not numerical distinction.

Thus far, Deleuze's analysis of Spinoza's overall scheme is both unexceptionable and compatible with other scholarly opinion. The novelty of Deleuze's reading of Spinoza starts to emerge, however, when Deleuze supplements the already mentioned scheme with another scheme. Deleuze's expressed intention in drawing out this supplementary reading of Spinoza's overall plan is to ease the alleged difficulty of understanding the basis of the transition, in the *Ethics*, between Propositions 1 – 8, and 9 onwards. Deleuze writes that the transition from *at least one* substance, to *but one* substance:

May be effected by what is called in logic the conversion of a negative universal. Numerical distinction is never real; then conversely, real distinction is never numerical. Spinoza's argument then becomes: attributes are really distinct; but real distinction is never numerical; so there is only one substance for all attributes.⁴⁴⁸

This is revealing of Deleuze's deeper purposes. Whereas most commentators read the opening of *The Ethics* to be a demonstration of Spinoza's thesis of the single substance, Deleuze reads it as an exercise in discovering the nature of difference. In other words, as a contribution to answering the question, what is real distinction? Up to Proposition 8, we are told, Spinoza's ambition is to demonstrate that numerical distinction is never real. After that, in this reading, the trajectory of Spinoza's argument is that, because the attributes of substance are 'really distinct', and it has already been shown that that which is 'really distinct' cannot be numerically distinguished, there can only be one substance. Having given the outline of the argument in Deleuze's supplementary

⁴⁴³ R.J. Delahunty, *Spinoza* (London: Routledge, 1983), p.114.

⁴⁴⁴ *EiP*, p.34.

⁴⁴⁵ Spinoza, *The Ethics*, p.93.

⁴⁴⁶ *EiP*, p.34.

⁴⁴⁷ *D&S: Aura of Expression*, p.21.

reading of Spinoza, I will now discuss it in more detail, alongside the conventional reading of the *Ethics*.

Deleuze writes, ‘At the very beginning of the *Ethics* Spinoza asks how two things, in the most general sense of the word, can be distinguished’.⁴⁴⁹ Deleuze is here ‘nailing his own colours to the mast’ but, for all that, it is not obviously forcing the material. Deleuze gives no explicit reference but is, I assume, referring to Proposition 4:

Two or more distinct things are distinguished from one another, either by a difference in the attributes of the substances or by a difference in their affections.⁴⁵⁰

(The ‘affections’ of a substance are, by Definition 5, understood to mean the same as the ‘modes’ of a substance.)

It is not unreasonable to read the above as an interim step in an enquiry into the nature of difference. Jonathan Bennett glosses P4 in more straightforward terms: ‘Two things must be made distinct from one another – must be made *two* – by a difference either in their attributes or in their states, i.e., either in what basic kinds they belong to or in some nonbasic qualitative way’.⁴⁵¹ Bennett’s summary, with its own references to the nature of distinction, is thus not that far removed from Deleuze’s reading.

Having noted Proposition 4, I now need to show how Deleuze’s preoccupation with the nature of difference underlies his analysis of how Spinoza moves to Proposition 5: ‘There cannot be two or more substances of the same...attribute’.⁴⁵² More plainly stated, this is just equivalent to the claim that no two substances may share an attribute. In Deleuze’s reading of Spinoza there is a short way and a long way to this conclusion.⁴⁵³ It is the long way that contains the crucial moves in respect of the nature of real distinction. Deleuze is referring to the second Scholium to Proposition 8.⁴⁵⁴ The crucial burden of which is, in Deleuze’s words, that ‘Two substances with the same attribute would be only *numerically* distinct – and the character of numerical distinction is such as to exclude the possibility of making of it a real or substantial distinction’.⁴⁵⁵ I still need

⁴⁴⁸ *EiP*, p.34.

⁴⁴⁹ *EiP*, p.28.

⁴⁵⁰ Spinoza, the *Ethics*, E1.P4, p87.

⁴⁵¹ Jonathan Bennett, *A Study of Spinoza’s Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p.66.

⁴⁵² Spinoza, the *Ethics*, P5, p87.

⁴⁵³ *EiP*, pp.31-33. Subsequent ref., p.31.

⁴⁵⁴ Spinoza, the *Ethics*, pp.88-90.

⁴⁵⁵ *EiP*, p.31.

to show how this operates in the context of Spinoza's proof that there cannot be two substances with the same attribute. But while this step is only a means to an end for Spinoza, it is the means, more than the end, which is of importance to Deleuze. As I have said, Deleuze wants to be able to justify the claim that numerical distinction is insubstantial: it is not real distinction. In the commonsensical view, that which is multiple is, necessarily, several. But this is not what Deleuze understands by the multiple. Instead, Deleuze dismisses numerical distinction from his account of the real nature of the multiplicity which, following Bergson, is dubbed 'continuous'.

What have we learnt, thus far, about the nature of numerical distinction? Deleuze writes, 'According to the Scholium, a distinction would not be numerical if the things distinguished did not have the same concept or definition'.⁴⁵⁶ In fact, the most that one could say is that the Scholium is not obviously inconsistent with Deleuze's assertion as to the nature of numerical distinction although Spinoza himself nowhere actually asserts that two things must share the same concept if they are to be distinguished, numerically. Having said that, all that Deleuze is asking us to accept is that the distinction between say, an apple and a pear (i.e. two things that do not share the same concept) is not a numerical distinction. It is the next step that brings us to the defining characteristic of numerical distinction. Deleuze, in his summary of Spinoza's argument, writes that, where two things *are* numerically distinct, there must be 'an external cause, beside the definition, which determined that they exist in such a number'. There is clear warrant for this in the Scholium where we find Spinoza arguing that 'no definition involves or expresses any certain number of individuals, since it expresses nothing other than the thing defined...if, in Nature, a certain number of individuals exist, there must be a cause why those individuals, and why, neither more nor fewer, exist'.⁴⁵⁷ Included in this is what Bennett calls Spinoza's principle of 'explanatory rationalism', namely that for every fact, there must be something that explains it.⁴⁵⁸ If this explanation is not in the definition then it must be in some causal explanation, external to the definition. If Deleuze is entitled to rely, on Spinoza's behalf, on the further claim that 'a substance cannot be referred to an external cause', then, indeed, it follows that 'two or more substances cannot be distinguished *in numero*'.⁴⁵⁹

How does Spinoza justify the claim that a substance cannot have an external cause? In the Demonstration to P7 we find the claim that substance is 'the cause of itself'. I take the argument

⁴⁵⁶ *EiP*, pp.31-32. Subsequent ref., p.32.

⁴⁵⁷ Spinoza, the *Ethics*, p.89.

⁴⁵⁸ *A Study of Spinoza's Ethics*, p.69.

for it to run as follows. Substance, by Definition 3, is to be understood as ‘what is in itself and is conceived through itself, that is, that whose concept does not require the concept of another thing’.⁴⁶⁰ It is held, by Spinoza, to be evident from D3 that (P2): ‘Two substances having different attributes have nothing in common with one another’; and then (P3) that: ‘If things have nothing in common with one another, one of them cannot be the cause of the other.’ If we accept, from what we have already seen of P5, that there are no substances that share the same attribute (although we have, as yet, been given no clear demonstration of this claim), it follows that there are no substances that have anything in common with another and, therefore, Proposition 6 that: ‘One substance cannot be produced by another substance’. Thus culminating in (P7): ‘It pertains to the nature of substance to exist.’ Put more simply, if a substance is just that which does not owe its existence to anything else, but, due to the principle of explanatory rationalism, it must have a cause, then it must be the cause of itself.

Howie rightly reminds us: ‘The contentious and central claim is that substance does not have an external cause.’⁴⁶¹ If this claim fails, then so, it seems, does everything else. Bennett observes: ‘I do not see any way of making *better* sense of “cause of itself” than by equating it with “necessarily existing”; but like most philosophers today I deny that anything is “cause of itself” in this sense.’⁴⁶² Is Deleuze to be included among ‘most philosophers today’? Howie thinks not. She writes:

It does seem as though Deleuze is content to rest on the laurels of Spinoza’s...explanatory or causal rationalism where everything *must* have an explanation or cause. Otherwise, it would be perfectly permissible to say that substance may be uncaused...[and then, crucially for my thesis] we would...be able to say that there could be many substances and that numerical distinction could pertain to substance.⁴⁶³

Delahunty too, lists objections which are fatal to any reliance by Spinoza, or Deleuze, on the claim that substance is the cause of itself and, necessarily, exists. For example, even if P6 has shown that one substance cannot be produced by another substance, ‘it has not shown that a substance cannot be produced by another *thing*...a distinct but non-substantial thing?’ And, perhaps most tellingly, ‘Even if substance is neither caused by another nor uncaused, it does not follow that it is self-caused; for it might not exist at all.’ In effect, this boils down to arguing that,

⁴⁵⁹ *EiP*, p.32.

⁴⁶⁰ Spinoza, the *Ethics*, p.85. Subsequent refs.: pp.87-88.

⁴⁶¹ *D&S: Aura of Expression*, p.16.

⁴⁶² *A Study of Spinoza’s Ethics*, p.73.

'To say of X that it is self-caused...might mean only that *if* X exists it is the cause of its own existence'. And we have no good reason to believe that X (in this case substance) does exist. Delahunty concludes, that 'Spinoza's proof of substantial monism seems to fail, not because there are too many substances... but because he does not succeed in showing that there is even *one*'.⁴⁶⁴ Howie tars Deleuze with the same brush.⁴⁶⁵ If Deleuze really is an unreconstructed Spinozist, then Howie is right to conclude that unanswered objections arising from over three centuries of scholarly analysis of the *Ethics*, 'stop Deleuze's argument in its tracks'.⁴⁶⁶ But I will show that this is too precipitate a judgement.

To get my argument under way, let me first note how Hardt finds a reading of Spinoza's definition of 'substance' that is both much more plausibly Deleuzian than Howie's, and which promises to release Deleuze from Howie's damning conclusion. In the introduction to this chapter I used Deleuze's condemnation of the Cartesian 'image of thought' (the real distinction between mind and body) as a hook to link Chapter Three of *Difference and Repetition* to Deleuze's reading of Spinoza, even though Spinoza is not mentioned in that chapter. Descartes is not (as far as I am aware) mentioned in the *Ethics* but there can be no doubt that the doctrine of the single substance is Spinoza's rebuttal of Descartes' theory of the 'real distinction'. It is a short step from here to a theory of difference. As Hardt puts it:

Descartes's real distinction is relational (there is a distinction between x and y); or more explicitly, it proposes a concept of difference that is entirely founded on negation (x is different from y)...Spinoza wants to identify the real distinction in itself (there is a distinction in x ; or rather, x is different).⁴⁶⁷

In other words, Spinoza's real distinction accords with what I have earlier described as Deleuze's notion of 'internal difference'. When viewed in this light, Spinoza's definition of 'substance' ('what is in itself and is conceived through itself, that is, that whose concept does not require the concept of another thing') takes on a new, distinctively Deleuzian, hue.

⁴⁶³ *D&S: Aura of Expression*, p.17.

⁴⁶⁴ *Spinoza*, p.115.

⁴⁶⁵ *D&S: Aura of Expression*, p.46. Subsequent ref., p.47.

⁴⁶⁶ *D&S: Aura of Expression*, p.21.

⁴⁶⁷ *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy*, p.61.

Real distinction is formal distinction.

The next big move in the *Ethics* is the one that takes us to Proposition 14: the proof of the single substance. Deleuze tells us: ‘When Spinoza is asked how he comes to the idea of a single substance for all attributes, he points out that he has put forward two arguments’. The first of these arguments, Deleuze tells us, takes its cue from the claim that ‘the more reality a being has, the more attributes must be ascribed to it.’⁴⁶⁸ In an endnote, Deleuze, quite rightly comments that he is citing ‘almost verbatim’ Proposition 9, ‘The more reality or being each thing has, the more attributes belong to it.’⁴⁶⁹ The second of the two arguments is that, in Deleuze’s summary, ‘the more attributes we ascribe to a being, the more we must accord it existence’.⁴⁷⁰ Deleuze, in an endnote, cites the Scholium to Proposition 11, where what Deleuze clearly has in mind is:

For since being able to exist is power, it follows that the more reality belongs to the nature of a thing, the more powers it has, of itself, to exist. Therefore, an absolutely infinite Being, *or* God, has, of himself, an absolutely infinite power of existing. For that reason, he exists absolutely.⁴⁷¹

This is, of course, a version of the familiar ontological argument for God’s existence. But, although these two arguments do indeed give the necessary final resources, we still need to bring the material together in P14: Except God, no substance can be or be conceived. In the Demonstration to P14, Spinoza reminds us of the definition of God, D6: ‘By God I understand a being absolutely infinite, that is, a substance consisting of an infinity of attributes, of which each one expresses an eternal and infinite essence’. The next step, as Bennett points out, is to ‘Conjoin [the foregoing definition of God] with the “no shared attribute” thesis, and you reach the conclusion that God is the only substance.’⁴⁷² In Spinoza’s own words: ‘If there were any substance except God, it would have to be explained through some attribute of God, and so two substances of the same attribute would exist...which...is absurd.’⁴⁷³ In effect, if God possesses infinite attributes, and it is impossible for any attribute to be shared, then there can be no other substance which possesses attributes.

⁴⁶⁸ *EiP*, p.35.

⁴⁶⁹ Spinoza, the *Ethics*, p.90.

⁴⁷⁰ *EiP*, p.35.

⁴⁷¹ Spinoza, the *Ethics*, p.92. Subsequent ref., p.85.

⁴⁷² *A Study of Spinoza’s Ethics*, pp.74-75.

⁴⁷³ Spinoza, the *Ethics*, p.93.

Although Deleuze would not demur from the argument for the single substance comprising an infinity of attributes, the novelty of his reading re-emerges when he goes on to remark that the foregoing argument would not suffice:

Were it not supported by the analysis of real distinction. Only that analysis...shows it to be *possible* to ascribe all attributes to one being, and so to pass from the infinity of each attribute to the absoluteness of a being that possesses them all.⁴⁷⁴

We have a position, then, where God possesses all the attributes; each one of these attributes is, somehow different, but each one of them ‘expresses’ the essence of the single substance.

Deleuze asks: ‘How can different expressions refer to one and the same thing? How can different names have the same referent?’⁴⁷⁵ Although Deleuze gives an initial reply cast in terms of ‘a long tradition, from the Stoics down through the Middle Ages’, we know it as Frege’s distinction between sense and reference: ‘Each attribute is a distinct name or expression; what it expresses is so to speak its sense...it is nonetheless related to substance as to the object designated by all the attributes’.⁴⁷⁶ Hence, the attributes each express a different ‘sense’ but one which picks out the same ‘referent’: the single substance. But Deleuze goes on, this does not ‘Resolve the essential problem – that of the difference between those names...their respective senses seem to introduce into the unity of what is designated a necessarily actual multiplicity’. Howie summarises this as: ‘The basic problem is that if an attribute is identified as constituting the essence of substance and if there is more than one attribute then substance must have a plurality of essences or there must be plural substances.’⁴⁷⁷ One might say that it is the relationship between substance and the attributes that has been *the* central problem exercising Spinozan scholarship. If that is the case, then Howie sets a very stern test: ‘I believe that Deleuze was well aware that if he were unable to clarify the relationship between attribute and substance then his whole project would fail’. She does not explain why. It is certainly the case that the solution that Deleuze proposes to this problem is central to his account of real distinction; and, as we shall see, Deleuze does seem to place a worrying emphasis on the apparently fragile thesis that real distinction is formal distinction.

In an earlier chapter of the thesis I defined the relation between univocity, equivocity and analogy. In the introduction to the current chapter I noted how Deleuze identifies Duns Scotus

⁴⁷⁴ *EiP*, p.35.

⁴⁷⁵ *EiP*, p.62.

⁴⁷⁶ *EiP*, p.62. Subsequent ref., pp.62-63.

with the doctrine of univocity. Cross advises that ‘Scotus’s arguments are expressly directed against the theory of Henry of Ghent [but]...The best known defender of a non-univocity theory is Aquinas. Aquinas argues that any given term, when applied to God and creatures, must have at best analogous senses’.⁴⁷⁸ In the earlier chapter of the thesis I disputed the accuracy of Deleuze’s attribution to Aristotle of the concept of ‘analogy’ in this context. The attribution of ‘analogy’ now threatens, again, to become somewhat tangled. Cross advises that ‘In line with his opponents, Scotus refers to the equivocation theory he is rejecting as “analogy”. But what Scotus is rejecting is not that some theological discourse will use analogy, just that *no* theological claims are univocal...this latter claim is taken by Scotus as entailing the equivocation theory’. For Duns Scotus, the doctrine of univocity must be preserved if theology is to be possible, because ‘on the equivocation theory, we cannot use creaturely perfections to make inferences about the divine nature, since the creaturely perfection is “wholly different” from the...divine perfection’.⁴⁷⁹ For Duns Scotus, ‘we can give an account of analogy only if we accept that some concepts we apply to God and creatures are univocal. These univocal concepts correspond to attributes common in some sense to God and creatures’.

Deleuze is careful to point out that the ‘attributes’ actually under scrutiny here, are not the same for Duns Scotus and for Spinoza. Deleuze asks: ‘What in fact did Duns Scotus call an “attribute”?’ And in the spirit of Spinoza, condemns the answers — ‘Justice, goodness, wisdom and so on’ — as mere properties, ‘*propria*’.⁴⁸⁰ This is what Deleuze means by the warning: ‘To picture Spinoza as a Scotist...is to risk certain distortions’. Be that as it may, the assumption of univocity brings in its train a resurgence of the problem of how the infinite can contain distinctions whilst remaining a unity. Deleuze writes: ‘This is the problem to which Scotus applies one of his most original concepts, which complements that of univocity: the idea of formal distinction.’⁴⁸¹

What is formal distinction? Cross advises that we first have to recognize the difference between Scotus’ conception of infinity and that of Aquinas: ‘According to Aquinas, finiteness and infinity are *relational* properties. A thing is finite if it has a relation to a *limiting* entity’.⁴⁸² But Scotus

⁴⁷⁷ *D&S: Aura of Expression*, p.23. Subsequent ref., p.24.

⁴⁷⁸ *Duns Scotus*, pp.34-35. Subsequent ref., p.35.

⁴⁷⁹ *Duns Scotus*, p.36. Subsequent ref., pp.37-38.

⁴⁸⁰ *EiP*, p.66. And subsequent ref.

⁴⁸¹ *EiP*, pp.63-64.

⁴⁸² *Duns Scotus*, p.39.

has a positive conception of infinity: 'If an entity is finite or infinite, it is so not by reason of something incidental to it, but because it has its own intrinsic degree of finite or infinite perfection respectively.'⁴⁸³ This is what Deleuze has in mind because he notes that 'It was without doubt Scotus who pursued farther than any other the enterprise of a positive theology.'⁴⁸⁴ Scotus invites us to consider what it would mean for, say 'goodness', to exist infinitely. Cross writes: 'The basis model is quantitative: we abstract the concept of infinity from that of spatial extension, and then apply it to our concept of being (or good, or true).'⁴⁸⁵ We would have to imagine that there was no more goodness, as it were, that you could add to the infinite goodness that could make it greater. But this quantitative approach to thinking about it is potentially misleading because infinite goodness is not the sum of component parts of goodness. If we think that an angel has 'more goodness' than a human it is not because the angel has, as it were, more of the component 'bits' of goodness than the human being does. Cross writes: 'Scotus is asking us to make just this cognitive move, from quantity to qualitative perfection'. Infinite goodness is, on this view, an intrinsic, non-quantitative feature: 'a *real property* of a thing, not just a relational property (or, in the case of infinity, the *negation* of such a relational property).'⁴⁸⁶

To understand Deleuze's Scotian reading of the *Ethics*, we also seem to need to recognize what Macherey describes as:

A concept that simply does not appear in [the *Ethics*], being explicitly taken from Duns Scotus: that of quiddity or form, which allows one to interpret attributes as infinite or pure qualities, whose indivisible diversity that cannot be decomposed into parts expresses what is absolutely infinite in the essence of substance, its nature its power.⁴⁸⁷

Hence, we can find Deleuze alluding to 'the apprehension of distinct quiddities that nevertheless belong to the same subject.'⁴⁸⁸ Macherey is, however, quite prepared to accept 'that presenting attributes in terms of qualities or quiddities, which must in no sense be understood as properties, does accord with Spinoza's own formulation'. As we shall see, Macherey's more fundamental objection only arises later.

⁴⁸³ Duns Scotus, *Ordinatio* 1.2.1.1-2, n.142; as cited by Cross, *Duns Scotus*, p.43.

⁴⁸⁴ *EiP*, p.63.

⁴⁸⁵ *Duns Scotus*, p.40. Subsequent ref., p.41.

⁴⁸⁶ *Duns Scotus*, p.42.

⁴⁸⁷ 'The Encounter with Spinoza', p.150. And subsequent ref.

⁴⁸⁸ *EiP*, p.64.

For Duns Scotus, ‘God’s attributes are essential to him: he is inseparable from any of them, and they are inseparable from each other. But his attributes are nevertheless *different* attributes’.⁴⁸⁹

The argument for formal distinction starts from an assumption of univocity: that goodness and wisdom, for example, are said of God, in the same sense as they are said of Man. Howie summarises the basic argument as follows: ‘Because these terms mean different things when applied to creatures, they must be different from one another and if they were not distinct in God they would not be distinct in creatures either. We can therefore conclude that God’s attributes are formally distinct’.⁴⁹⁰ This is clearly the unspoken background to Deleuze’s rhetorical question: ‘What, though, if divine names have the same sense as applied to God and as implied in creatures...so that their distinction can no longer be grounded in created things, but must be grounded in this God they all designate?’⁴⁹¹

Deleuze thinks that he is entitled to solve the problem of the relation between the Spinozan substance and its infinite attributes in the manner of Duns Scotus:

Two attributes taken to infinity will still be formally distinct, while being ontologically identical. As Gilson puts it, “Because it is a modality of being (and not an attribute), infinity can be common to quidditatively irreducible formal reasons, conferring on them an identity of being, without canceling their distinction of form.”⁴⁹²

There are clearly problems with this as an exercise in the history of philosophy. Although accepting that it might be fruitful to read Spinoza and Duns Scotus together, Macherey questions the way in which Deleuze moves from ‘considering these qualities or forms [*the quiddities*] to quality as such, conceived as constituting a distinct order of reality corresponding to *natura naturans*’.⁴⁹³ Hence, two orders of reality emerge from Deleuze’s reading of Spinoza: ‘On the level of substance, of the absolutely infinite, one finds only quality, and that only on the level of determinate affections of substance does one begin to find quantity’. Macherey argues that in fact Spinoza never considers any distinction that is purely qualitative because free from any quantitative determination, with quantity understood simply in terms of numerical distinction...for Spinoza there aren’t two different orders of things, but only the single order of

⁴⁸⁹ *Duns Scotus*, p.43.

⁴⁹⁰ *D&S: the Aura of Expression*, p.25.

⁴⁹¹ *EiP*, p.63.

⁴⁹² *EiP*, p.64. Subsequent ref., p.66.

⁴⁹³ ‘The Encounter with Spinoza’, p.150. And subsequent ref.

nature itself'.⁴⁹⁴ However fair this may be to Spinoza, Macherey is wrong to side against Deleuze on the grounds that 'A Hegelian would complain [that the distinction between quality and quantity serves to frame] categories of a logic of being that [have not] even been fully developed, [have not] reached the integration of quality and quantity in measure'. Wrong, because as I showed in chapter 5 of the thesis, Deleuze's reading of Bergson ultimately seeks to collapse any crude distinction between quality and quantity.

Let us say that despite his own apparent claims to the contrary, in *Expressionism in Philosophy*, Deleuze is 'doing philosophy', not the history of philosophy. Deleuze sets up a sharp contrast between the nature of difference as it applies to the attributes and to the modes. For the former:

The distinction of attributes is nothing but the qualitative composition of an ontologically single substance; substance is distinguished into an infinity of attributes, which are as it were its actual forms or component qualities. Before all production there is thus a distinction, but this distinction is also the composition of substance itself.⁴⁹⁵

I have shown that, for Deleuze, Spinozan 'substance' is identified with 'internal difference', the difference of nature, the virtual Bergsonian 'past' and the continuous multiplicity. For the modes, however, Deleuze establishes a difference of quite another stamp:

The production of modes...take[s] place through differentiation. But differentiation is in this case purely quantitative'.

It is inevitable that we should, again, be reminded of external difference, the difference of degree, the actualised Bergsonian present and the discrete multiplicity. In summary, Hardt writes: 'there is a positive correspondence between Bergson's difference of nature and Spinoza's real distinction'.⁴⁹⁶

The question arises, is Deleuze's reading of Spinoza just more of the same? Not according to Hardt: 'With Spinoza's theory of the attributes, Deleuze will extend his argument beyond Bergson to show that the real distinction is also a formal distinction'.⁴⁹⁷ But why is it an extension? Before answering that question, let me posit another objection. I have assumed that Deleuze's mature system is set out in *Difference and Repetition*. In response to Chapter Three of

⁴⁹⁴ 'The Encounter with Spinoza', p.151. And subsequent ref.

⁴⁹⁵ *EiP*, p.183. Subsequent ref., p.183.

⁴⁹⁶ *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy*, p.62.

Difference and Repetition (in which Spinoza is barely mentioned) I have spun a reading of Deleuze's *Expressionism in Philosophy*. My posited objection is, therefore, that Spinoza's concept of formal distinction is not even germane, let alone important, to Deleuze's mature system. This, however, I can refute. In the closing pages of *Difference and Repetition*, we find Deleuze plainly alluding to the argument that I have rehearsed above:

That the attributes ...while they are formally distinct ...all remain equal and ontologically one, and introduce no division into the substance...in other words, the real distinction between attributes is a formal, not a numerical distinction...the numerical distinction between "beings" is a modal, not a real distinction' (303-304).

Indeed, it is this passage that particularly attracts Badiou's attention:

It is obvious that we have to recognize that beings are not the same and that they therefore do not have the same sense. We have to admit an equivocity of *that of which* Being is said: its immanent modalities, that is, beings. But this is not what is fundamental for the philosopher [Deleuze]. What is fundamental is that Being is the same for all, that it is univocal and that it is thus said of all beings in a single and the same sense, such that the multiplicity of senses, the equivocal status of beings, has no real status.⁴⁹⁸

Badiou, in effect therefore, concludes that what we are to understand is that, for Deleuze, the modes are not real. But this is a travesty of Deleuze's meaning. For Deleuze, what is 'not real' is numerical distinction. Far from claiming that the modes are not real, Deleuze, as we shall see, wants to make substance dependent on the modes: 'to make substance turn around the modes' (304).

But this only makes the question I posed above more urgent: 'What does the argument derived from Spinoza and Duns Scotus *add* to the argument derived from Bergson? On the face of it, Deleuze has no right to rely on the arguments provided by Duns Scotus. There is no reason why we should simply accept the notion that 'form', as a kind of infinite quality, can exist separately from matter. Furthermore, as Howie objects: 'The medieval theologian devised this type of argument within a different environment where there was no need to prove the uniqueness or indivisibility of God as these propositions were all known to be true through biblical

⁴⁹⁷ Gilles Deleuze: *An Apprenticeship in Philosophy*, p.63.

⁴⁹⁸ CB, p.25.

revelation.’⁴⁹⁹ We no longer inhabit that world. Do we, then, have no option but to accept Howie’s thesis that it is an elaborate philosophical scam? She writes:

Deleuze tends to reference names as though demarcating systems or expressing arguments. This creates the affect (*sic*) of a scholarly work, well researched, brimming with interesting ideas and new angles. However as soon as the reader scratches the surface, the richly woven tapestry simply begins to disintegrate.

Howie allows ‘That the account of formal distinction...fits well into [*Deleuze’s*] own project’ but, for her, it crucially ‘fails to deliver a proper solution to the ontological problem of the existence of God’.⁵⁰⁰ This is exactly right. What it misses, however, is that Deleuze takes *only* the logic from Spinoza.

In *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, Deleuze evidences impatience with those who cannot think past the single substance: ‘Generally one begins with the first principle of a philosopher. But what counts is also the third, the fourth or the fifth principle’.⁵⁰¹ As Ansell Pearson puts it, Deleuze seems to want to say that ‘The question of the “one” substance is, if properly thought through, inadequate for comprehending what is in play in Spinoza’.⁵⁰² In *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze clearly seeks to break with Spinoza, when he writes: ‘Spinoza’s substance appears independent of the modes, while the modes are dependent on the substance, but as though on something other than themselves’ (40). In the foregoing I have argued, like Hardt, for a continuity between Deleuze’s readings of Bergson and Spinoza but, as Ansell Pearson points out, Deleuze ‘never contends with those moments in Bergson’s texts when an ontological affinity with Spinoza is explicitly repudiated’.⁵⁰³ Deleuze knows that there is no such thing as a substance (either one or many) that exists independently of the modes: ‘Substance must itself be said *of* the modes and only *of* the modes’ (40).

What we have, then, is a Spinozan/Scotian logic. Deleuze asks: ‘What is the character of distinction within infinity?’⁵⁰⁴ And answers: ‘*It is formal distinction that provides an absolutely coherent concept of the unity of substance and the plurality of attributes, and gives real distinction a new logic.*’ Deleuze’s overall project is to match this logic to a Bergsonian

⁴⁹⁹ *D&S: Aura of Expression*, p.26. Subsequent ref., p.25.

⁵⁰⁰ *D&S: Aura of Expression*, p.47.

⁵⁰¹ *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, p.122.

⁵⁰² *Germinal Life*, p.16.

⁵⁰³ *Germinal Life*, p.36.

⁵⁰⁴ *EiP*, p.28. Subsequent ref., p.66.

ontology. This view is endorsed by Ansell Pearson, who writes: 'Bergson transforms duration into the only conceivable notion of substance'.⁵⁰⁵ In Bergson's own words:

There are changes, but there are underneath the change no things which change: change has no need of a support. There are movements, but there is no inert or invariable object which moves: movement does not imply a mobile.⁵⁰⁶

This is what Deleuze calls 'pure difference':

In short, duration is what differs, and what differs is no longer what differs from something else, but what differs from itself. What differs has become itself a thing, a *substance*. Bergson's thesis could be expressed in this way: real time is alteration, and alteration is substance.⁵⁰⁷

What both Hardt and Ansell Pearson lack is an answer to the further question, how does Deleuze *assure* the match between the logic and the ontology? I argue that Deleuze here relies on his creative reading of Kant (see chapter 8 of the thesis).

Univocity, immanence and expression.

What philosophical work does the Spinozan logic actually do? Deleuze's reply would seem to be: 'What is involved is no longer the affirmation of a single substance, but rather the laying out of a *common plane of immanence* on which all bodies, all minds and all individuals are situated'.⁵⁰⁸ In my introduction to the chapter I referred to the primacy given to 'immanence' in Deleuze's last essay. If this is as significant as I claim, one might expect to find some earlier evidence of it in Deleuze's more extended writings on Spinoza. In *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, we find:

The significance of Spinozism seems to me this: it asserts immanence as a principle and frees expression from any subordination to emanative or exemplary causality. *Expression itself no longer emanates, no longer resembles anything.* And such a result can be obtained only within a perspective of univocity.⁵⁰⁹

⁵⁰⁵ *Germinal Life*, p.36.

⁵⁰⁶ *The Creative Mind*, p.173.

⁵⁰⁷ BCD, p.48.

⁵⁰⁸ *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, p.122.

⁵⁰⁹ *EiP*, p.180. Subsequent ref., p.171.

Hence, 'immanence' entails the rejection of 'emanative' and 'exemplary' causality'. By 'exemplary' Deleuze means the creation, by God, of something that did not exist before. Where, before the exemplary cause, there was one kind of 'being' (i.e. God), after it there are two kinds of 'being': two substances, rather than one. 'Emanative' causality is more interesting because it takes us closer to the concept of immanent expression. Deleuze recognizes this. In comparing emanative and immanent causes, he writes, 'Their common characteristic is that neither leaves itself, they produce *while remaining in themselves*'. Unlike exemplary causation, emanation, does not result in a 'stuff' distinct from the stuff out of which its creator is made. But, having said that, 'What is created is distinct from the creator. Moreover, the creator remains privileged in regard to its creation'.⁵¹⁰ As Deleuze himself puts it: 'While an emanative cause remains in itself, the effect it produces is not in it, and does not remain in it...the emanative cause produces through what it gives, but is beyond what it gives'.⁵¹¹ The position Deleuze aims at, therefore, is to claim that for the immanent, or truly 'expressive', cause: 'The effect remains in its cause no less than the cause remains in itself'.

To insist on a philosophy of immanence would normally mean to insist on a reality that is God-less and which places no reliance on a transcendent realm such as that of the Platonic Forms; Deleuze's world-view indeed lacks both of these things. But what does Deleuze mean by a *pure* immanence? He is, in fact, taking another, more radical step. A step that explains the following otherwise opaque passage of the last essay:

Were it not for consciousness, the transcendental field would be defined as a pure plane of immanence, because it eludes all transcendence of the subject and of the object. Absolute immanence is in itself: it is not in something, *to* something; it does not depend on an object and does not belong to a subject. In Spinoza, immanence is not immanence *to* substance; rather substance and modes are in immanence.⁵¹²

What we are to understand by this is more fully explained in *What is Philosophy?*:

Beginning with Descartes, and then Kant...the cogito makes it possible to treat the plane of immanence as a field of consciousness. Immanence is supposed to be immanent to a pure consciousness, to a thinking subject. Kant will call this subject transcendental rather than transcendent, precisely because it is the subject of the field of immanence of all possible experience...He [Kant] may even allow himself the luxury of denouncing transcendent Ideas...But...Kant discovers the modern way of saving transcendence: this

⁵¹⁰ May, *Gilles Deleuze: An Introduction*, p.33.

⁵¹¹ *EiP*, p.171-2. Subsequent ref., p.172.

⁵¹² 'Immanence: A Life', p26.

is no longer the transcendence of a Something, or of a One higher than everything...but that of a Subject.⁵¹³

By *pure* immanence, Deleuze means to exclude the subject. Why?

In my introduction to the chapter I referred to how Deleuze reasons that the *cogito* is flawed by presuppositions: ‘what everyone knows. In Deleuze’s analysis, Kant recognises the Cartesian false step: ‘Kant...”criticizes” Descartes for having said, “I am a thinking substance,” because nothing warrants such a claim of the “I”’. Kant proposes, therefore, another starting point for philosophy and, in so doing, invented the notion of the ‘transcendental deduction’. For Deleuze this is a ‘promise’ for philosophy because, as we shall see, the starting point of Deleuze’s own philosophy also hinges on a transcendental deduction, but for Deleuze, Kant is also another ‘false start’. In Deleuze’s reading, Kant fails to notice an unwarranted presupposition concerning the range of the transcendental. This is the unspoken background to the question with which the last essay begins: ‘What is a transcendental field?’ Deleuze is, in effect, asking the question that he thinks that Kant *should* have asked but failed to ask. Deleuze’s ambition, as Ansell Pearson summarises it, is that of ‘Emancipating the transcendental field from the perceived stranglehold it undergoes at the hands of subjectivity and consciousness’.⁵¹⁴ Kant presupposes the ‘synthetic unity of apperception’ but has, Deleuze claims, no more right to it, than Descartes did to presuppose “I”. Evidence of the attempt to exorcise Kant’s influence comes, in the last essay, in the endnote reference: ‘Sartre establishes a transcendental field without subject which refers to an impersonal, absolute, immanent consciousness’.⁵¹⁵ My point being that Deleuze is accepting Sartre’s critique of the Kantian presupposition.⁵¹⁶ Even if one granted that all of the foregoing were true, where does it leave us? Dropped, it seems, into some kind of ‘primeval soup’ that Deleuze mysteriously entitles ‘the plane of immanence’. What are we to understand by it?

Deleuze is trying to establish a new ‘image of thought’: what it is ‘to think’. Where does Spinoza come into it? Macherey assists my general association of this element of Deleuze’s project with Spinoza, by noting the almost simultaneous publication of Deleuze’s *Expressionism in Philosophy*, volume one of Martial Gu eroult’s ‘monumental study of Spinoza’ and Alexandre

⁵¹³ *What Is Philosophy?*, p.46. Subsequent ref., p.31.

⁵¹⁴ *Germinal Life*, p.87.

⁵¹⁵ ‘Immanence: A Life’, p.33.

⁵¹⁶ *What Is Philosophy?*, p.47 (and endnote no.10, p.221.)

Matheron's, *Individu et Communauté chez Spinoza*.⁵¹⁷ The point of contact being, that 'By [each] insisting on Spinoza's Anticartesianism, they tended to make him into a radical critic of the illusions of subjectivity and consciousness in which the contrasting Postcartesianism of French-style phenomenology had been steeped'. What is it that Deleuze proposes to put in its place? I suggest that it is the processes that occur on what Deleuze calls the 'plane of immanence'. What is more, the impersonal Life, the joyful Life, that is promised in the last essay, is to be found upon this plane: 'What is involved is no longer the affirmation of a single substance, but rather the laying out of a *common plane of immanence* on which all bodies, all minds, and all individuals are situated... Thus, to be in the middle of Spinoza is to be on this modal plane, or rather to install oneself on this plane – which implies a mode of living, a way of life'.⁵¹⁸

The model for Deleuze's new image of thought is not the mind, as conceived by Descartes, but the body, as conceived by Spinoza. What does Spinoza mean by 'a body'?:

[Firstly] a body...is composed of an infinite number of particles; it is relations of motion and rest, of speeds and slowness between particles, that define a body, the individuality of a body. Secondly, a body affects other bodies, or is affected by other bodies; it is this capacity for affecting and being affected that also defines a body in its individuality'.

Deleuze writes: 'We do not even know of what a body is capable, says Spinoza'.⁵¹⁹ Deleuze is, here, paraphrasing Spinoza: 'No one has yet determined what the body can do, that is, experience has not yet taught anyone what the body can do from the laws of Nature alone'.⁵²⁰ The point is not a materialist one, it is not a denial of the mental life but rather a parallelism. The mind is the idea of the body. The implication being that if we do not even know what a body can do, then we do not know what a mind is capable of. This leads to Deleuze endorsing a Spinozan reply to Socrates question, 'How should one live?' Armstrong puts it very well:

Because this plane is given only in the continual variations of the powers and relations that compose it, it is constantly being constructed and reconstructed. Deleuze tells us that to live in a Spinozist manner one must install oneself on this plane and *actively* construct it... To construct a plane of immanence is to participate in the process of composition which defines the plane by experimentally combining powers, by entering into different

⁵¹⁷ 'The Encounter with Spinoza', p.139. Subsequent ref., p.140.

⁵¹⁸ Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, p.122. Subsequent ref., p.123.

⁵¹⁹ *EiP*, p.226.

⁵²⁰ *The Ethics*, p.155.

relations; only in this way are the powers and capacities of any particular body discovered.⁵²¹

Howie claims that Deleuze sponsors 'A belief in the break up of the principle of individuation'.⁵²² I argue that Deleuze fully respects the principle of individuation but the question, for Deleuze, becomes: what is the real nature of individuation? In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari, claim: 'There is a mode of individuation very different from that of a person, subject, thing or substance. We reserve the name *haecceity* for it'.⁵²³ The antique terminology is borrowed from Duns Scotus but the idea is that reality is radically differentiated 'all the way down'. It is not, therefore, people, creatures or things, when they are born or made, that bring individuation into existence, individuation was already there. All differences, including the differences between people, have their source in a kind of originary realm of difference. An individual person's body is, by this account, 'an infinite multiplicity'. An 'infinite multiplicity' of what? Deleuze looks to Spinoza for the answer:

A body is defined only by a longitude and latitude: in other words the sum total of the material elements belonging to it under given relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness (longitude); the sum total of the intensive affects it is capable of at a given power...(latitude)...Nothing but affects and local movements, differential speeds. The credit goes to Spinoza for calling attention to these two dimensions of the Body'.

In chapter 8 of the thesis I will show how this promise of a differential ontology, an ontology of 'powers', is realized, albeit in a Kantian context.

Interim conclusion.

For Deleuze, univocity asserts the *parity* of Being, not an underlying sameness of all that exists: 'Pure immanence requires as a principle the equality of Being'.⁵²⁴ One still might object that to say that everything that exists is equal is vacuous, unless there is some property that everything that exists shares. But for Deleuze, I suggest that the parity is only defined in terms of the claim that everything that exists is connected. Connected by what? Deleuze's answer is, connected by their differences, not by an overarching or underpinning unity. I shall return to this in the

⁵²¹ Aurelia Armstrong, 'Some Reflections on Deleuze's Spinoza: Composition and Agency', in *Deleuze and Philosophy: the Difference Engineer* ed. Keith Ansell Pearson (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 44-57 (p.48).

⁵²² *D&S: Aura of Expression*, p.2.

⁵²³ *A Thousand Plateaus*, p.261. Subsequent refs.: p.254.

concluding chapter of the thesis. But, for the moment, we can see that the problem of life, of ethics, becomes a matter of whether ‘connections’ are close or remote. For Deleuze, the threat of transcendence is that it entails that there are some connections that can never be made. This he denies and in Spinoza he finds a kindred spirit.

In its origins, the univocity of Being is a doctrine that insists that when we speak of the existence of the infinite (God), we mean the same as when we speak of the existence of finite (human). But I suggest that Deleuze goes beyond that in claiming that univocal Being gets a voice. In other words, Being speaks. This is why Deleuze wants to interpret Spinoza in terms of a concept of ‘expression’. Of course, Being does not speak in words. But there is, for Deleuze, an expressiveness which is pre-linguistic. It is internal to things, but is available to us (we can ‘hear’ it) if we are alive to it. Making us alive to it, is what the philosophy of difference aims to achieve. If Being speaks but not in words, then how does it speak? Over the course of the remainder of the thesis I will analyse how, for Deleuze, being speaks to us via what one might loosely call unsettling feelings: what Deleuze calls ‘intensities’. It is this, in the end, that might allow us to narrow the gap the Macherey opened up, at the outset of this chapter, between the apparently wildly different realms of the ‘expressionism’ of modern cinema and painting — and Spinoza. If Being speaks, then what does it say? It says ‘difference’. Hence Colebrook in trying to define Deleuze’s concept of expression, writes: ‘Expression is tied to a commitment to the creation of concepts’⁵²⁵ not the dull acceptance of existing categories based on tired identities. She goes on: ‘Expression is the power of life to unfold itself differently, and one would create a concept in trying to grasp these different unfoldings...The concept of expression refers to intensity, for it allows us to think a type of relation but not any concluded set of relations’.

⁵²⁴ *EiP*, p.173.

⁵²⁵ ‘Expression’, in *The Deleuze Dictionary*, pp.93-94 (p.93). Subsequent reference, p.93.

Chapter 8. An ontology of Ideas: Kant.

Introduction to the chapter.

This, the final substantive chapter of the thesis, spans Chapters Four and Five of *Difference and Repetition*: the final substantive chapters of the book. Chapter Five of *Difference and Repetition* confirms the trajectory of the argument of the book as a whole: the grand structure of *Difference and Repetition* is a transcendental deduction. Hence, I find cause to agree with Smith who asserts that: '*Difference and Repetition* can be read as Deleuze's *Critique of Pure Reason*'.⁵²⁶ How? To answer, and to establish the relevance of this to my theme of multiplicity, I need first briefly to introduce the architectonic of the first *Critique*. In so doing, I shall respect the broad structure that Deleuze advises in his monograph on Kant:

1. Intuition (particular representation which relates immediately to an object of experience, and which has its source in *sensibility*);
2. Concept (a representation which relates mediately to an object of experience, through the intermediary of other representations; and which has its source in *understanding*).
3. Idea (a concept which itself goes beyond the possibility of experience and which has its source in reason).⁵²⁷

Intuitions.

In the first *Critique*, the Transcendental Aesthetic is devoted to the role of intuitions. Kant makes a distinction between a *posteriori* 'empirical intuition' and a *a priori* 'pure intuition'. The former is what we would perhaps most naturally associate with sensibility: 'The effect of an object upon the faculty of representation, so far as we are affected by it, is *sensation*. That intuition which is in relation to the object through sensation, is entitled *empirical*.'⁵²⁸ Jill Vance Buroker advises that, 'By contrast, pure intuition is supplied *a priori* through the sensibility, and is not contingent on the actual objects being sensed.'⁵²⁹ These pure intuitions are Space and Time. Hence, in the Transcendental Aesthetic we find Kant asserting: 'space is not a form inhering in things in themselves as their intrinsic property...objects in themselves are quite unknown to us, and that

⁵²⁶ 'Deleuze, Kant, and the Theory of Immanent Ideas', p.45.

⁵²⁷ Gilles Deleuze, *Kant's Critical Philosophy: The Doctrine of Faculties*, trans. by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Athlone Press: London, 1884), p.8.

⁵²⁸ *Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, ed. and trans. by Norman Kemp Smith. (London: Macmillan, 1983) B34/A20. (Henceforth, *CPR*.)

⁵²⁹ Jill Vance Buroker, *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p.40.

what we call outer objects are nothing but mere representations of our sensibility, the form of which is space'.⁵³⁰ And later: 'Time is nothing but the form of inner sense, that is, of the intuition of ourselves and of our inner state.'⁵³¹ If *Difference and Repetition* is to be understood as Deleuze's *Critique of Pure Reason* we would expect to see in it some analogous treatment of Space and Time; and this is exactly what we do see.

In the Transcendental Aesthetic of the first *Critique*, Kant distinguishes his theory from both the 'absolute theory' of space and time propounded by Isaac Newton and the 'relational theory' championed by Leibniz. For Kant, space and time, as pure forms of human sensibility, are 'contributed by the subject' and it is this that accounts for the necessity of the sciences of mathematics and physics.⁵³² Kant's arguments are carried out, first for the concept of Space, and then for the concept of Time, in the form of a Metaphysical Exposition followed by a Transcendental Exposition.⁵³³ The details of the arguments do not concern me but, for example, in the second argument of the Exposition for space, Kant claims that 'We can never represent to ourselves the absence of space, though we can quite well think it as empty of objects. It must therefore be regarded as the condition of the possibility of appearances'.⁵³⁴ A parallel argument is later applied to time. In his own monograph on Kant, Deleuze cites the later summary: 'Since only [by] means of such pure forms of sensibility can an object appear to us, and so be an object of empirical intuition, space and time are pure intuitions which contain *a priori* the condition of the possibility of objects as appearances'.⁵³⁵ Hence, space and time are the conditions of given experience.

In chapter 6 of the thesis I showed how, in Chapter Two of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze deduced the existence of three syntheses of Time. For Deleuze, our senses of expectation, of the past and of the open future were each to be understood as each providing the 'given', for which the three syntheses of Time were the condition. In Chapter Four of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze carries out a parallel argument with regard to the nature of Space. Thus far at least, the structure of *Difference and Repetition* seems to mimic the structure of the *first critique*. If the

⁵³⁰ CPR, B45/A30

⁵³¹ CPR, B50/A33.

⁵³² Biroker, *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason: An Introduction*, p.40.

⁵³³ Deleuze notes that this is an 'exposition and not a deduction' because intuitions relate 'immediately' to an object of experience, not via the 'mediation' of a concept. *Kant's Critical Philosophy*, pp.16-17.

⁵³⁴ CPR, A24/B38-9.

⁵³⁵ *Kant's Critical Philosophy: The Doctrine of Faculties*, p.16, citing Kant, CPR, A89/B121 — slightly amended.

nature of Space is the condition, what is the given? In this chapter I argue that it is what Deleuze calls our experience of 'depth'.⁵³⁶ However, this is entirely distinct from a simple dimension of extension:

It is notable that extensity does not account for the individuations which occur within it. No doubt the high and the low, the right and the left...are individuating factors...However...their value is only relative. They therefore flow from a "deeper" instance — depth itself, which is not an extension (229).

'Depth', instead, has to do with the feeling of the 'significance' of spaces. This is, of course, alarmingly contingent, something of which Deleuze is perfectly well aware: 'We invoke throws of the dice, imperatives and questions of chance instead of an apodictic principle; an aleatory point at which everything becomes ungrounded instead of a solid ground' (200). Williams advises that Deleuze wants to argue that 'There is only significant measurable diversity because there are differences that cannot be measured'.⁵³⁷

Concepts.

Smith explains: 'Kant distinguishes between three types of concepts: empirical concepts, *a priori* concepts or "categories", and Ideas'.⁵³⁸ Howard Caygill elaborates that 'Derived or "empirical" concepts are drawn from experience by means of comparison, reflection and abstraction'.⁵³⁹ For example, 'table' or 'chair'. What, then, are the *a priori* concepts or 'categories'? Buroker explains that Kant's 'strategy is to show that the categories are necessary conditions for experiencing objects given in intuition'.⁵⁴⁰ Hence, as Smith puts it, for Kant: 'Categories are concepts that are applicable, not just to empirical objects such as tables and chairs, but to any object I could ever come across, ever, for all time, in my experience'.⁵⁴¹ The 'Transcendental

⁵³⁶ Williams muddies the waters by conflating the two sets of deductions: 'In [Chapters Two and Three] Deleuze deduced Ideas from sensations, for example, the sensation of expectation' (*GD's D&R* p.112). Williams here connects the 'given' for the earlier deduction of the syntheses of Time, with the 'condition' for the later deduction: namely Ideas. He later repeats the same conflation: 'The structure [of Ideas] and the way it calls for Deleuzian dialectics are defended by the arguments for the three syntheses of time...as discussed in my Chapter 4' (*GD's D&R* p.134). But this obscures the way in which the pattern of argument in *Difference and Repetition* traces the structure of the *Critique of Pure Reason* in respect of Time and Space.

⁵³⁷ *GD's D&R*, p.167.

⁵³⁸ 'Deleuze, Kant, and the Theory of Immanent Ideas', p.45.

⁵³⁹ 'Concept', in *A Kant Dictionary* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), pp.118-121 (p.120).

⁵⁴⁰ *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason: An Introduction*, p.103.

⁵⁴¹ 'Deleuze, Kant, and the Theory of Immanent Ideas', p.45.

Deduction of the Pure Concepts of the Understanding' takes place in the part of the first *Critique* called the Transcendental Analytic.⁵⁴² Having said that, Buroker anticipates our surprise at the fact that Kant, in both the A and B editions, treats the categories as a group and 'Not until the Principles of Pure Understanding does Kant defend individual categories'.⁵⁴³ T. K. Seung notes that: 'Kant calls them categories because they play the same role as the Aristotelian categories'.⁵⁴⁴ From all that I have shown in this thesis it is evident that any sympathy that Deleuze might have with Kant could never be based on the acceptance on a system of *fixed* categories analogous to that of Aristotle.

Kant defines the faculty of 'understanding', negatively, as the: 'non-sensible faculty of knowledge'.⁵⁴⁵ Buroker advises that the burden of this is that, for Kant:

Understanding and sensibility play distinct roles in knowledge. Sensibility is a merely passive capacity for receiving impressions through the senses. The understanding, by contrast, is a spontaneous power to think of objects through concepts.⁵⁴⁶

This is what lies behind Kant's assertion that: 'concepts are based on the spontaneous power of thought, sensible intuitions on the receptivity of impressions'.⁵⁴⁷ Despite the importance of the distinction between intuitions and concepts, the relationship between sensibility and the understanding is, arguably, *the* key feature, of the critical philosophy. This relationship is expressed in what Kant calls 'judgements': 'We can reduce all acts of the understanding to judgements'. Caygill writes:

The relationship Kant establishes between understanding and sensibility...consists in bringing together the otherwise heterogeneous intuitions and concepts. Both are representations, but the former originate in the receptivity of human sensibility, the latter in the spontaneity of the understanding.⁵⁴⁸

Bringing intuitions and concepts together is, therefore, what Kant means by 'judgement'.

⁵⁴² CPR, A96/ B130.

⁵⁴³ *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason: An Introduction*, p.103.

⁵⁴⁴ T.K. Seung, *Kant: A Guide for the Perplexed*. (London: Continuum, 2007), p.26.

⁵⁴⁵ CPR, A68/B93.

⁵⁴⁶ *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason: An Introduction*, p.77.

⁵⁴⁷ CPR, A68/B93. Subsequent ref., B94;

⁵⁴⁸ 'Understanding', in *A Kant Dictionary*, pp.405-407 (p.407).

For Kant then, a sound judgement is a combination of an intuition and a concept. Buroker advises:

In the section [of the first *Critique*] On the Ground of the Distinction of all Objects in General into *Phenomena* and *Noumena*, and the Appendix On the Amphiboly of the Concepts of Reflection, Kant explains how extending pure concepts of the understanding beyond appearances leads to spurious metaphysical conclusions.⁵⁴⁹

We find Kant distinguishing between transcendental and empirical uses of pure concepts:

The transcendental employment of a concept in any principle is its application to things in general and in themselves; the empirical employment is its application merely to appearances; that is to objects of possible experience...the latter application of concepts is alone feasible.⁵⁵⁰

For Kant, the noumenal are ‘things...in themselves’ and inaccessible to philosophy.

As we have seen, Deleuze distinguishes between the virtual and the actual: ‘We have ceaselessly invoked the virtual’ (208). In arguing for a symmetry between *Difference and Repetition* and the *Critique of Pure Reason* it is tempting to align Deleuze’s distinction between the virtual and the actual with Kant’s distinction between the noumenal and the phenomenal. Although some of Deleuze’s own allusions point in this direction it is crucial to recognize the dissymmetry between the two positions. Whilst Kant closes the noumenal to philosophical scrutiny, Deleuze does not: ‘Difference is not phenomenon but the noumenon closest to the phenomenon’ (222).

Ideas.

What of the third type of concept in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, which Kant calls Ideas? In this chapter I show that it is here that Deleuze’s creative engagement with Kant bites hardest. As we have seen, for Kant, empirical and *a priori* concepts are allied to actual and *possible* sensory experience respectively. Thus, if there are ‘concepts’ that can find no such actual or *possible* partner, then it would follow that such concepts must be separately distinguished. In the major

⁵⁴⁹ *Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason: An Introduction*, pp.201-202.

⁵⁵⁰ *CPR*, A238-9/B298.

division of the first *Critique*, called the ‘Transcendental Dialectic’ Kant argues that *there are* such concepts and distinguishes them by the term Transcendental Ideas:

I understand by idea a necessary concept of reason to which no corresponding object can be given in sense-experience...They are concepts of pure reason...They are not arbitrarily invented; they are imposed by the very nature of reason itself, and therefore stand in necessary relation to the whole employment of understanding.⁵⁵¹

Hence, ‘ideas’ threaten the famous dictum: ‘Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind.’

In chapters 5-7 of the thesis I charted Deleuze’s endorsement of the philosophies of the trinity: Bergson-Nietzsche-Spinoza. But it is the nexus, Plato-Hegel-Kant, that to varying degrees, come to inform Deleuze’s culminating theory of Ideas. Badiou accuses Deleuze of an ‘involuntary Platonism’.⁵⁵² Plato and Deleuze both espouse what one might call a theory of Ideas. What is more, the connection between the Deleuzian and Platonic theories is more than simply terminological: as Smith puts it, for Deleuze as for Plato, ‘Ideas are as much ontological as epistemological’.⁵⁵³ When expressed in that way, one can see that Deleuze’s ontology also brings him closer to the ‘arch-enemy’ of real difference, Hegel, than Deleuze’s own polemics might otherwise seem to allow. Kerslake argues that Deleuze seeks to occupy ‘a novel ontological position between Kant and Hegel’.⁵⁵⁴ But what exactly is that ontology? Chapter Four of *Difference and Repetition* offers a clue: ‘It must be remembered to what extent modern thought and the renaissance of ontology is based upon the question-problem complex’ (195).

We have seen that in Chapter Three of *Difference and Repetition* (‘The Image of Thought’) Deleuze critiques the orthodox view of what thinking is: ‘There is indeed a model...: that of recognition. Recognition may be defined by the harmonious exercise of all the faculties upon a supposed same object.’ (133). Against this harmony of the faculties, Deleuze counterpoises a kind of creative discord which takes inspiration from Kant’s famous ‘case of the sublime’ (146). This is made clearer in the Preface to the book on Kant. Deleuze’s strategy is to read the first *Critique* alongside the later philosophy of aesthetics, in which: ‘The faculties confront one another, each stretched to its own limit, and find their accord in a fundamental discord: a

⁵⁵¹ *CPR*, A327/B384. Subsequent ref., B75/A51.

⁵⁵² *CB*, p.61.

⁵⁵³ ‘Deleuze, Kant, and the Theory of Immanent Ideas’, p.43.

⁵⁵⁴ ‘The Vertigo of Philosophy’, p.20.

discordant accord is the great discovery of the *Critique of Judgement*, the final Kantian reversal.⁵⁵⁵ This is the background against which Deleuze, in *Difference and Repetition*, somewhat coyly introduces his own theory of Ideas:

Perhaps...it will be necessary to reserve the name Ideas not for pure *cogitanda* but rather for those instances which go from sensibility to thought and from thought to sensibility, capable of engendering in each case...the limit- or transcendent-object of each faculty. Ideas are problems'. (146)

But this theory of Ideas is not set out in any detail until Chapter Four of *Difference and Repetition*, 'Ideas and the Synthesis of Difference', and hence I have deferred my analysis of it until now.⁵⁵⁶

Deleuze's choice of the term Idea runs counter to how we tend to think of ideas. In the immediately foregoing chapter of the thesis I have shown something of Deleuze's attempt to radicalise our 'image' of what 'thought' is. With this background in mind, it is very unlikely that Deleuze's understanding of the term 'Idea' will match the image theorized, for example, by the British Empiricists. During a seminar devoted to Spinoza, it is recorded that Deleuze said:

What is an idea?...On this point Spinoza is not original, he is going to take the word "idea" in the sense in which everyone has always taken it. What is called an idea, in the sense in which everyone has always taken it in the history of philosophy, is a mode of thought which represents something.⁵⁵⁷

This *unoriginal* sense of Idea is *not* the one that Deleuze takes up. Deleuze's project is rather to claim: 'that Ideas...do not exist only in our heads but occur here and there in the production of an actual historical world' (190). I have said that Deleuze takes inspiration for his own theory of Ideas from Kant, but we must note a fundamental difference between the two positions. For Kant, ideas are in our heads. Against this, I argue that Ideas exist in what DeLanda calls 'virtual space'.⁵⁵⁸ Ideas thus have an ontological status that is *prior* to any mental state. Ultimately Deleuze seeks to render this *original* sense of Idea compatible with his creative reading of

⁵⁵⁵ Kant's *Critical Philosophy*, pp.xii-xiii.

⁵⁵⁶ Williams objects to Patton's translation of the title of Chapter Four, offering instead: 'The Ideal Synthesis of Difference', *GD's D&R*, p.140. Williams argues that Patton's translation obscures 'the important function of Ideas'. However, this objection is misplaced because Patton's translation emphasises the role of Ideas more clearly than Williams' alternative.

⁵⁵⁷ Gilles Deleuze, *Les Cours De Gilles Deleuze*, Spinoza 24.01.1978. trans. by Timothy S. Murphy, www.webdeleuze.com

⁵⁵⁸ 'Space: Extensive and Intensive, Actual and Virtual', pp. 80-88.

Spinoza: “Spinoza employs the term “automaton”: we are, he says, spiritual automata, that is to say it is less we who have ideas than the ideas which are affirmed in us.”⁵⁵⁹ For Deleuze, Ideas have us, rather than the other way around.

The relationship that Deleuze establishes between Kantianism, a theory of ideas, and a theory of Ideas as multiplicities, is via a connection between ‘problematicity’ and ‘multiplicity’. Looking back to Deleuze’s reading of Bergson, we saw that for Deleuze the multiple is not spatial, but somehow more temporal, something akin to an infinitely varying series. What has this, now, got to do with ‘problems’? A problem is a question in need of an answer. One might take the view that a question, if properly posed, will admit of just one correct answer, but we see the continuity of Deleuze’s project once we recognize that this is precisely the view that Deleuze will seek to combat. In Kant’s theory of ideas, Deleuze finds the philosophical resources for an infinite problematicity that admits of no resolution.

Kant’s theory of ideas.

There can be doubt that Chapter Four of *Difference and Repetition* is intended, in part at least, to be a creative reworking of Kant’s Transcendental Dialectic. This is evident from the Chapter’s opening words: ‘Kant never ceased to remind us that Ideas are essentially “problematic” (168). I have already supplied the background to Kant’s use of the term ‘idea’ as distinct from ‘concept’. Kant distinguishes three ideas: ‘Pure reason...furnishes the idea for a transcendental doctrine of the soul..., for a transcendental science of the world...and, finally, for a transcendental knowledge of God’.⁵⁶⁰ To clarify the Kantian theory further, I will follow the example of the Idea of ‘the world’, defined by Kant as ‘the sum total of all appearances’. Smith explains the thrust of Kant’s argument that we can never ‘know’ the world:

The Idea of the world (as the totality of what is) has no intuition or perception that could correspond to it. We...arrive at this Idea through an extension of the category of causality...if A causes B, and B causes C, and C causes D, and so on...This series constitutes a kind of *problem* for us. We can continue working through this problem, continuing through this series indefinitely, until we finally reach the “Idea” of the totality of everything that is...But in fact we can never, ever, have a perception or intuition of the world.⁵⁶¹

⁵⁵⁹ *Les Cours De Gilles Deleuze*, Spinoza 24.01.1978, no page numbers in the text.

⁵⁶⁰ CPR, A334/B391.

For Kant, therefore, it is not the world (*qua* an actual thing) that is the object of ‘the Idea of the world’, it is, rather this ‘problem’. As we have seen, the conventional scholarly way to interpret Kant’s Ideas are as concepts that lack an intuition. But Deleuze argues that Kant had a better insight: the Idea is, in Kant’s own words, ‘a *problem* to which there is no solution’.⁵⁶² Deleuze employs Kant’s insight to argue for Ideas as structures that are inherently and infinitely ‘problematic’. These Ideas act as *questions* which demand an answer but for which no solution is possible insofar as ‘these Ideas do not disappear with “their solution”, since they are the indispensable condition without which no solution would ever exist’ (168).

Deleuze claims to detect three components in Kant’s theory of ideas:

Ideas...present three moments: [1] undetermined with regard to their object, [2] determinable with regard to objects of experience, and [3] bearing the ideal of an infinite determination with regard to concepts of the understanding’ (169).

Of the first ‘moment’ Deleuze writes:

The undetermined is not a simple imperfection in our knowledge or a lack in the object: it is a perfectly positive, objective structure which acts as focus or horizon within perception. In effect, the undetermined object, or object as it exists in the Idea, allows us to represent other objects (those of experience) which it endows with a maximum of systematic unity (169).

Williams offers, as an example of a Deleuzian reading of a Kantian idea, ‘the idea of the perfect surgical intervention’.⁵⁶³ This is not something that we can have an actual experience of, it is instead:

A problem —...something that can be expressed by an unstable set of contradictory questions and answers. The perfect intervention responds to the tension between damage and cure, between a high degree of toxicity in post-operative (sic) drugs and a rapid return to a “normal” life’.

But to turn to Deleuze’s account of Kant’s second ‘moment’, there could be ‘experiments that attempt to express the idea and temporarily resolve the problem in an actual operation’. We could have actual experiences of these experiments and, therefore, as Deleuze contends, the idea

⁵⁶¹ ‘Deleuze, Kant, and the Theory of Immanent Ideas’, p.46.

⁵⁶² *CPR*, A328/B385.

⁵⁶³ *GD*’s *D&R*, p.141. And subsequent refs.

has acted as a ‘focus or horizon within perception’. The third ‘moment’ is conceptual. In other words, a concept would have an infinite extension. Of which Williams concludes, perhaps somewhat less convincingly: ‘the idea can be thought in terms of determination through the ideal of an infinite determination, for example, in the development of our concept of the perfect intervention through an infinite set of experiments’. Williams allows us to see what is at stake. However, if Williams means to offer this as an example of a Deleuzian Idea, it seems to me altogether *too conceptual* to satisfy the definition of Idea that Deleuze will later propose.

We want some clear examples of Ideas, but Deleuze criticises Kant for being *too* clear about them: ‘Kant incarnated these moments in distinct Ideas: the self is above all undetermined, the World is determinable, and God is the idea of determination’ (170). He finds fault with Kant’s treatment of the tripartite structure of the Idea:

Perhaps this does not appear sufficiently clearly in Kant: according to him, two of the three moments remain as extrinsic characteristics (if Ideas are in themselves undetermined, they are determinable only in relation to objects of experience, and bear the ideal of determination only in relation to concepts of the understanding). (170)

What are we to understand by this? It is a matter of degrees of immanence. First, let us note that the question of immanence is not alien to the Kantian discourse. Although Kant may not use the term it is clearly at least part of what is at stake in section I of the First Book of the Transcendental Dialectic.⁵⁶⁴ Here Kant critiques the Platonic Theory of Ideas:

Plato made use of the expression “idea” in such a way as quite evidently to have meant by it something which not only can never be borrowed from the senses but far surpasses even the concepts of the understanding...inasmuch as in experience nothing is ever to be met with that is coincident with it. For Plato ideas are archetypes of things themselves, and not, in the manner of the categories, merely keys to possible experience...they have issued from highest reason, which...no longer in its original state...is constrained...to recall, by a process of reminiscence...the old ideas, now very much obscured.⁵⁶⁵

In calling the Platonic ideas ‘archetypes’, Kant is calling attention to their transcendent (non-immanent) status. The point is, therefore, that Kant’s overall ambition in the first *Critique* is to make out a theory of ideas that is *more immanent* than the Platonic theory. Deleuze’s ambition is to make out a theory of Ideas that is *more immanent* than the Kantian theory.

⁵⁶⁴ CPR, A312/B369 – A320/B377.

Deleuze's complaint against the Kantian theory is that the tripartite structure is fractured or disunited: 'two of the three moments remain as extrinsic characteristics'. Deleuze aims to reunite the supposedly fractured elements: 'The "critical" point, the horizon or focal point at which difference qua difference serves to unite, has not yet been assigned' (170). Earlier in the same passage, to reinforce the point, we are told what it is that creates the required bond: 'difference immediately reunites and articulates' (170). It is this that lies behind Smith's conclusion that:

We have not yet reached a purely *immanent* conception of Ideas, since it is only a principle of difference that can determine, in a precise manner, the problematic nature of Ideas as such, thereby reuniting the three aspects of the Idea.⁵⁶⁶

This does indeed seem to sound all the right notes but it remains unclear. More simply put, Deleuze's complaint against Kant is that it is *only* the Idea (the undetermined) that is inherently problematical; in other words, actual things (the determined) and concepts are: (1) distinct from the Idea; and (2) unproblematical. It is as if, for Kant, difference stops at the boundary of the Idea. Williams confirms this understanding: 'the problem lies wholly with the Idea — objects of experience and concepts can be detached from its problems'.⁵⁶⁷ In the search for a more immanent theory of Ideas, Deleuze aims to make actual things and concepts inherently problematical.

Deleuze's Theory of Ideas.

The transcendental deduction of Ideas, in Chapter Four of *Difference and Repetition*, is *analogous* to the transcendental deduction of the categories in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. The role of Ideas cannot be the *same* as the role of the Kantian categories because as Buchanan puts it: 'Deleuze's most utopian idea...is that one can think differently — not merely new thoughts, but an entirely fresh way of thinking'.⁵⁶⁸ As we shall see, Ideas, for Deleuze, are made of 'difference' and, therefore, sponsor fresh ways of thinking they do not trap us inside old ones.

⁵⁶⁵ *CPR*, B370.

⁵⁶⁶ 'Deleuze, Kant, and the Theory of Immanent Ideas', p.48.

⁵⁶⁷ *GD's D&R*, p.142.

⁵⁶⁸ *Deleuzism: A Metacommentary*, p.117.

In an obscure move (that has indeed attracted charges of fakery⁵⁶⁹) Deleuze invokes the infinitesimal calculus: ‘In short, dx is the Idea’ (171). The key, it seems, is the notion of differential relations: ‘The reciprocal synthesis of differential relations as the source of the production of real objects — this is the substance of Ideas’ (173). I will shortly clarify this further but first, let us note, that Deleuze explicitly equates Ideas with my thesis: ‘Ideas are multiplicities’ (182). What is more, this is also Deleuze’s ontology: ‘Everything is a multiplicity in so far as it incarnates an Idea’ (182). He has no truck with any of the ontological implications on which Badiou relies:

Even the many is a multiplicity; even the one is a multiplicity...Instead of the enormous opposition between the one and the many there is only the variety of multiplicity — in other words, difference. (182)

We know what a multiplicity is not. As Williams puts it: ‘a multiplicity is not an identifiable unity, nor is it a number of such unities, even infinite’.⁵⁷⁰ We also know what an Idea is not: it is not a mental representation. But it is still far from clear what an Idea/multiplicity *is*. Deleuze offers a tripartite definition:

- (1) The elements of the multiplicity must have neither sensible form nor conceptual signification...They are not even actually existent, but inseparable from a potential or virtuality...they imply no prior identity;
- (2) These elements must...be determined...reciprocally...which allow[s] no independence whatsoever to exist [Williams comments: ‘In other words, you cannot identify A or B in a multiplicity except through the way in which a variation in A can be related to a variation in B’.⁵⁷¹];
- (3) In Williams’ slightly more intelligible summary: “A particular multiplicity...must become actual in diverse spatio-temporal relations. The elements of that multiplicity must be actually incarnated in varying terms and forms”. (183)

The obscurity of the definition cries out for some further elucidation. In order to provide it, and because of its inherently technical nature, I justify quoting DeLanda at some length:

To tackle this ontological issue...we need to go beyond physics and into mathematics to define the status of virtual space. The mathematical distinction that we need is that between metric and non-metric spaces, that is, spaces in which the concept of “length” is fundamental and spaces in which it is not. Mathematically a space is defined by a set of

⁵⁶⁹ Alan Sokal and Jean Bricmont, *Intellectual Impostures: Postmodern Philosophers’ Abuse of Science* (London: Profile Books, 1998), pp.145-158.

⁵⁷⁰ *GD’s D&R*, p.145.

⁵⁷¹ *GD’s D&R*, p.146. And subsequent ref.

points and a definition of “relations of proximity” between points, in other words of the relations which define a given subset of points as a neighbourhood. If proximity is defined via a minimum length...the space is said to be metric...If some other criterion is used the space is said to be non-metric (as in...differential...geometries)...In differential geometry...one takes advantage of the fact that the calculus operates on equations expressing rates of change and one of its operators (differentiation) gives as its output an instantaneous value for that rate of change. The points that form a space can then be defined not by rigid lengths from a fixed coordinate system (as in the metric case) but by the instantaneous rate at which curvature changes at that point. Some parts of the space will not be changing at all, other parts changing slowly, and others changing fast. A differential space, in effect, becomes a field of rapidities and slownesses and via these infinitesimal relations one can specify neighbourhoods without having to use rigid lengths. Mathematicians refer to such differential space as a “manifold” of a “multiplicity”.⁵⁷²

I suggest that this is how we should understand the nature of the obscure ontological entity that Deleuze calls an Idea. It explains both the relevance of Deleuze’s repeated allusions to the infinitesimal calculus and an ontology of speeds and slownesses.

How then does this Idea relate to actual things? I shall follow the instance that seems to me most likely to prove instructive: ‘the organism as biological Idea’ (184). Deleuze writes: ‘An organism is a set of real terms and relations (dimension, position, number) which actualizes on its own account...relations between differential elements’ (185). The differential elements are the ones that I have described above insofar as they obtain in their virtual or Ideal state. Deleuze rehearses this example first in the context of an antique biology but sees no discontinuity in later applying it to modern genetics. May tries to assist by drawing out the influence of Gilbert Simondon’s work on Deleuze. May writes:

The gene is not a closed system of pre-given information that issues directly into individual characteristics. Instead, the genetic code is in constant interaction with a field of variables that in their intensive interaction generate a specific living being...We must conceive of genetic passage...not as the perpetuation of individuals by means of a closed genetic code, but rather as the unfolding of a genetic virtuality that has among its products the individuation of organisms, the creation of biological individuals.⁵⁷³

We are to interpret the genetic example as an instance of an Idea by virtue of the ‘virtual’ nature of the genetic code. It is virtual in the sense that it is *not* a programme or blue-print for the organism: the evolution of organisms is dynamic in a way that is inherently unpredictable.

⁵⁷² ‘Space: Extensive and Intensive’, p.84.

Deleuze's critique of Kant's concept of Space.

I come now to trace my themes through the argument of Chapter Five of *Difference and Repetition*, 'Asymmetrical Synthesis of the Sensible'. Let me first collect up some of the threads of my thesis so far. I have shown how the argument of Chapter Four of *Difference and Repetition* can be seen as analogous to the deduction of the Kantian categories. In chapter 6 of the thesis I argued that in Chapter Two of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze deduced (albeit from a contingent 'given') the nature of Time; this deduction was analogous, therefore, to the Exposition of the concept of Time in the Transcendental Aesthetic. In Chapter Five of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze quite explicitly critiques Kant's parallel Exposition of the concept of Space.

I showed how, for Deleuze, Kant has a vital insight, concerning 'concepts' for which there can be no intuition, but fails to realise the full implications of it. Deleuze interprets Kant to have had a similarly flawed insight into the nature of Space. It turns on Deleuze's reading of Kant's famous argument concerning incongruent counterparts (e.g. left and right hand gloves):

Kant's mistake is to maintain a geometrical extension for it, and to reserve intensive quantity for the matter fills a given extensity to some degree or other. In the case of enantiomorphic bodies, Kant recognised precisely an *internal difference*. However, since it was not a conceptual difference, on his view it could refer only to an external relation with extensity as a whole in the form of extensive magnitude. In fact, the paradox of symmetrical objects, like everything concerning right and left, high and low...has an intensive source. (231)

Deleuze is relying here on a distinction between the extensive and the intensive.

We tend to assume that our experience of space is 'extensive'. In other words, we live within the geometric boundaries of countries or towns or houses. However, DeLanda reminds us that there is another kind of space that we also live in, but which is intensive rather than extensive. For example, we all experience the day-to-day, or season-to-season, fluctuations of ambient temperature. Other more exotic experiences of intensive space are also possible: 'the zones of high pressure explored by deep-sea divers, or the zones of gravity explored by astronauts'.⁵⁷⁴ DeLanda is surely right to say that 'most philosophers have hardly thought about the questions raised by the distinction between the extensive and the intensive'. That Deleuze is, indeed, the exception to this rule is evident from the beginning of Chapter Five of *Difference and Repetition*:

⁵⁷³ Gilles Deleuze: *An Introduction*, p.88. And subsequent ref.

Every diversity and every change refers to a difference which is its sufficient reason. Everything which happens and everything which appears is correlated with order of differences: differences of level, temperature, pressure, tension, potential, *difference of intensity*'. (222)

If we take Deleuze at his word here, *everything* is the product of intensity. Hence, DeLanda writes:

If we characterise the identity of material beings as defined by extensities (not only by its spatial boundaries but also by the amounts of matter and energy contained within those boundaries) then the process that produces those beings will be defined by intensities. In this sense human beings not only inhabit extensive spaces, they are themselves extensive spaces. Generalising this to include mental phenomena would involve defining psychological intensities...grief, joy...but also beliefs and desires which also come in different intensities...as well as the corresponding extensities.⁵⁷⁵

What then, in essence, does the distinction between the extensive and the intensive boil down to? Buroker advises:

A key characteristic of extensive magnitudes is that they are *additive*. Combining a length x with a length y produces a length z where " $x + y = z$ " is a valid arithmetical formula. In terms of measurement theory, extensive properties are those measured on *ratio scales*.⁵⁷⁶

In other words, if we add an extensive property, like 'one mile', to another unit measure of 'one mile', we know very well that we have 'two miles' without having to engage in any further empirical investigations. One might say that large distances are composed of smaller distances. But intensive magnitudes are different:

Combining a quart of water at 72° F with another quart of water at 72° F does not produce two quarts of water at 144° F [but one at the original temperature]. Intensive properties like temperature are measured on *interval scales* rather than ratio scales...measurements on... [interval scales] are not additive because there is no empirical procedure for combining the properties these scales measure.

DeLanda relies on the same example and goes on:

⁵⁷⁴ DeLanda, 'Space: Extensive and Intensive, Actual and Virtual', p.80. And subsequent ref.

⁵⁷⁵ 'Space: Extensive and Intensive', p.82.

⁵⁷⁶ *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason: An Introduction*, p.156. Subsequent ref., pp.156-157.

Deleuze defines intensive quantities as “indivisible”, a definition which is simply another way of expressing the same point: a gallon of water at ninety degrees can be divided in extension, yielding, say, two half gallons, but the two parts will not each have half the temperature.⁵⁷⁷

That Deleuze himself recognises this key difference between additive and non-additive magnitudes is evident when he remarks: ‘Temperature is not composed of other temperatures, or a speed of other speeds (237).

Why then is philosophy not just rendered otiose by physics? It is because science insists on always cancelling-out intensive magnitudes into extensive magnitudes. As Williams puts it:

[Scientists] divide energy into intensive and extensive components. The extensive component allows the intensive component to be identified and compared — it acquires a quality. So energy has a non-spatial, intensive side that must be completed by a spatial side where the energy is extended over a particular surface or in a particular volume.⁵⁷⁸

In Deleuze’s own words: ‘This is the most general content of the principles of Carnot, Curie, Le Chatelier *et al.*: difference is the sufficient reason of change only to the extent that the change tends to negate difference’ (223). In other words, the intensive is subordinated to the extensive: ‘intensity itself is subordinated to the qualities which fill extensity (primary physical qualities or *qualitas*, and secondary perceptible qualities or *quale*). In short, we know intensity only as already developed within an extensity, and as covered over by qualities’ (223).

For Deleuze, ‘buried’ in space, there is something *more* than measurable distance: there is an intensity. Deleuze calls it ‘depth’. It is forever beyond the range of our sensory apparatus, but obliquely signalled to us in, for example, in the paradoxical nature of ‘handedness’. Deleuze argues, contra Kant, that extension is not, therefore, a condition of our experience. There is instead a realm of intensities, the virtual, out of which extension emerges: ‘Extensity can emerge from the depths only if depth is definable independently of extensity’ (230). Deleuze argues that we have an experience of space that he calls ‘depth’. It is neither that of a sensed quality nor that of a measurable extensity: ‘Neither depth nor distances are judged by the apparent magnitude of objects...depth and distances...are fundamentally linked to the intensity of the sensation: it is the power of diminution of the intensity experienced that provides a perception of depth’ (230). What we might think of, therefore, as a simple matter of measurement — ‘No doubt every depth

⁵⁷⁷ ‘Space: Extensive and Intensive’, p.81.

is also a possible length and size' (229) — is not only more than that, but in its genesis, something entirely different and un-measurable. Deleuze's version of the Transcendental Aesthetic aims, therefore, to show that there is something in the world that we cannot 'sense' in any conventional understanding of how our sensory apparatus works but, without which, space could not have the significance for us that it in fact does. Hence, Williams gives the following summary of the central thesis of Chapter Five: 'The sensations that allow us to order actual things imply syntheses of virtual intensities that cannot be fully rendered as actual and these syntheses are the reason sensations...are significant'.⁵⁷⁹ By 'significant' one should understand how it is that 'Heights mean radically different things for the sufferer of vertigo and the insouciant mountain climber.'

Can we have an experience of an intensity? Deleuze's penchant for paradox allows him to answer both yes and no: 'Intensity is simultaneously the imperceptible and that which can only be sensed' (230). How are we to understand this? Deleuze later offers a reply to what is, in effect, the same question:

What is the being of the sensible? Given the conditions of this question the answer must designate the paradoxical existence of a "something" which simultaneously cannot be sensed (from the point of view of the empirical exercise) and can only be sensed (from the point of view of the transcendent exercise). (236)

What are we to understand by this notion of a transcendental exercise of sense? Boundas writes: 'Transcendental empiricism...demands that the intensities that constitute an extensive being, be sensed'.⁵⁸⁰ He does not explain why. Williams' commentary runs-on: 'As the condition for depth, intensity cannot be sensed fully in an object or extension. *But it must be perceived in some way in order to be deduced at all*'.⁵⁸¹

One might object that the whole point of a Transcendental Deduction is to deduce what we *cannot* sense (the condition) from what we *can* sense (the given). In order to answer this objection I need to reflect on how Deleuze's Transcendental Deduction, although similar to

⁵⁷⁸ *GD's D&R*, p.169.

⁵⁷⁹ *GD's D&R*, pp.176-177. Subsequent ref., p.177.

⁵⁸⁰ Constantin V. Boundas, 'Intensity', in *The Deleuze Dictionary*, pp.131-132 (pp.131). And subsequent refs.

⁵⁸¹ *GD's D&R*, p.176; subsequent references, pp.176-177 and p.177.

Kant's, also importantly diverges from it. Deleuze sometimes calls his system Transcendental Empiricism:

Empiricism...becomes transcendental...only when we apprehend directly in the sensible that which can only be sensed, the very being of the sensible: difference...and difference in intensity as the reason behind qualitative diversity. It is in difference that movement is produced as an "effect", that phenomena flash their meanings like signs. The intense world of differences, in which we find the reason behind qualities and the being of the sensible, is precisely the object of a superior empiricism. This empiricism teaches us a strange "reason", that of the multiple, chaos and difference (nomadic distributions, crowned anarchies). (57)

Stagoll explains why Deleuze's Transcendental Deduction must differ from Kant's:

Deleuze seeks after the conditions of *actual* rather than all possible experience. These conditions are not logically necessary, but contingent upon the nature of experience as it is lived...Unlike Kant, Deleuze does not conceive of these unthought conditions as abstract or necessary philosophical entities, but as contingent tendencies beyond the reach of empirical consciousness'.⁵⁸²

But how are these 'contingent tendencies' to be reached? One can understand that part of the reason for its apparent imponderability lies in the nature of what is being sensed. Deleuze writes:

Intensity is simultaneously the imperceptible and that which can only be sensed. How could it be sensed for itself, independently of the qualities which cover it and the extensity in which it is distributed? But how could it be other than "sensed", since it is what gives to be sensed, and defines the proper limits of sensibility? (230)

But this is still not a reply.

Deleuze's Transcendental Empiricism is consistent with his earlier reading of Bergson's method of 'intuition' in that, 'Intuition leads us to go beyond the state of experience towards the conditions of experience'.⁵⁸³ It is, therefore, this 'higher' or 'superior empiricism' that is held to provide the means by which we can remain empiricists but step beyond the limits of the five senses. As Bruce Baugh points out: 'What Deleuze looks for in Bergson is a "higher empiricism" that instead of generalising from experience goes beyond experience to conditions which are

⁵⁸² Cliff Stagoll, 'Transcendental Empiricism' in, *The Deleuze Dictionary*, pp.282-283 (p.282).

⁵⁸³ *Bergsonism*, p.27. Subsequent refs.: p.30.

neither general nor abstract, but are themselves concrete and empirical'.⁵⁸⁴ Deleuze hence distinguishes his own project from that of Kant: 'this broadening out, or even this going-beyond does not consist in going beyond experience toward concepts. For concepts only define, in the Kantian manner, the conditions of all possible experience in general. Here, on the other hand, it is a case of real experience in all its peculiarities.'⁵⁸⁵ We see, then, the principle or aim of Deleuze's Transcendental Empiricism. But what is the actual means by which this higher empiricism will be accomplished? Kerslake, by way of reply, puts together, on Deleuze's behalf, the elements of the approach that I have been following in this chapter:

In Deleuze's reformulation of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, it is not pure intuition that provides the abstract ground for the schematism of the pure concepts of the understanding; it is rather the apprehension of intensive sensible signs that puts us on the path of deciphering the Ideas that, in their intrinsic problematicity, govern experience.⁵⁸⁶

It is our experience of intensity is to lead us back to Ideas. For Deleuze, Ideas are noumenal but, unlike Kant, Deleuze allows access to the noumenal. It is this that places his ontology in a kind of intermediate position between that of Kant and Hegel. The virtual ontology of the continuous multiplicity, only 'promised' by Bergson, is now 'realised' (303) via a Kantian-style deduction from a contingent given.

The individual.

Williams writes: 'With his concept of the individual, Deleuze brings together Ideas, intensities, actual things and his resistance to generalization and universality'.⁵⁸⁷ At the very end of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze's commitment to the individual is surprising. First, because we might be tempted to think of the individual as that particular (i.e. the one out of Many) that together with other individuals make up 'the One' that is society; or we might be tempted to think that the individual is the particular, that together with other like individuals, make up 'the One' that is the species. This is a threat to the coherence of Deleuze's position as a philosopher of the multiple because he must deny any implication of a relationship of Many to One. He must also resist it because of his resistance, as a philosopher of difference, to generalization. Second,

⁵⁸⁴ Bruce Baugh, 'Transcendental Empiricism: Deleuze's response to Hegel', *Man and World*, 25 (1992), 133-148 (p.138).

⁵⁸⁵ *Bergsonism*, p.28.

⁵⁸⁶ 'Deleuze, Kant, and the Question of Metacritique', p.499.

⁵⁸⁷ *GD's D&R*, p.185.

Deleuze's commitment to the individual is surprising because of his attempt to dilute the status accorded in philosophy to the subject, the cogito, the possessor of consciousness.

Deleuze navigates around the above difficulties by giving primacy to the *process* of individuation, as opposed to the result of that process: the achieved individual. This is what lies behind Williams' observation, on Deleuze's behalf, that:

You are not an individual and nor is this bird. The way in which you express Ideas and intensities...is as an individual. The way in which this bird begins to vary its song, distinguishing itself from the rest and giving rise to a new sub-species...is an individual.⁵⁸⁸

For Deleuze the individual has a significance that the species does not have because the individual is a product of a process of difference whereas the species is a mere lifeless generality. We can see this by returning again to Deleuze's interpretation of Simondon: 'Individuation emerges like the act of solving...a problem, or — what amounts to the same thing — like the actualisation of a potential' (246). As we know from the foregoing analysis of Kant, this does not result in 'suppressing the problem' (246). The individual emerges from a 'pre-individual field...a virtual-ideal field, made up of differential relations'. For Deleuze, therefore, the relationship is not between the many individuals that make up the One species, but between the actual individual and the virtual multiplicity that is the pre-individual field.

It becomes clear, in Chapter Five of *Difference and Repetition*, that although 'the individual' includes the human individual, it is not confined to it: animals and inanimate objects are also individuals. The problem then becomes, if intensity has to do with feelings, and intensity is expressed in individuals, but individuation is not confined to human individuals, must it not follow that even the inanimate world is, somehow, sensible? Deleuze's surprising reply is that it is: 'Every body, every thing, thinks and is a thought to the extent that, reduced to its intensive reasons, it expresses an Idea.' The human individual is, literally, composed of animal and inanimate individuals: 'the thinker himself makes his individual difference from all manner of things: it is in this sense that he is laden with stones and diamonds, plants "and even animals" (254).'

⁵⁸⁸ *GD's D&R*, p.189.

I have said that Deleuze critiques Kant's theory of ideas on the grounds that it stops short at problematizing the idea. For Deleuze to develop a more thoroughly immanent Theory of Ideas, the actual/determined must be as problematical as the virtual/undetermined. How is this possible? Deleuze's answer is that the actual and the virtual co-exist, in the individual, in a quasi-causal *reciprocal* relationship. By 'reciprocal' I understand that if A is a virtual Idea and B is an individual that expresses that Idea, then A is the 'cause' of B *at the same as* B is the 'cause' of A. Although clear in principle, how in practice can we make any sense of this relationship? Is it not wholly implausible that something as evanescent as human feelings, for example, could change the nature of some wider, and apparently distinct, ontological reality?

To try to break down this intuitive resistance it is worthwhile briefly to digress to consider an aspect of the aesthetics of Jean Francois Lyotard. In his general survey, *Understanding Poststructuralism*, Williams writes:

*For Lyotard, an object or referent changes with the feelings, desires and language that are associated with it...For him, matter is prior to ideas, but not to feelings. Equally though, feeling is prior to language, but not to matter. This intertwining of matter and feeling, according to relations of mutual transformation, is one of the most exciting and different aspects of Lyotard's thought. It bears strong relations to Deleuze's concept of reciprocal determination, to the point where it is possible to see Deleuze's metaphysics as consistent with Lyotard's aesthetics.*⁵⁸⁹

Instead, therefore, of the conventional sharp distinction between a subjective realm of thought and an objective realm of things, Lyotard tempts us to accept that feelings and matter are part of the same whole.

Let us now note Williams' advice in respect of how a similar idea plays out in Deleuze's work:

The sensations associated with [a] quality [say, a particular shade of red] vary according to the other qualities that are present, according to the actual objects they appear with and according to the individual they appear in...These different contexts "have an effect" on the intensities expressed through them because they bring different intensities into relations of greater and lesser clarity and obscurity...This reciprocal quasi-causal relationship between the condition and the conditioned is perhaps Deleuze's greatest metaphysical innovation and the key to understanding the power of his philosophy.⁵⁹⁰

⁵⁸⁹ James Williams, *Understanding Poststructuralism* (Chesham: Acumen, 2005), pp.80-81.

⁵⁹⁰ *GD's D&R*, p.176.

In Deleuze's own text the example that is played out in most detail is that between depth and extensity. As we have already seen in Deleuze's critique of Kant's account of space, Deleuze's claim is that 'depth' (virtual, un-measurable and undetermined) is an intensity which is then expressed in 'extension' (actual, measurable and determined): 'Extensity can emerge from the depths only if depth is definable independently of extensity' (230). We have to look to Williams again for a clear account of what we are to understand by this:

In terms of altitude [for example], different intensities of sensation should not be referred to different heights. Rather, heights only make sense and change in their sense due to the intensities that occur. Intensity makes space and only depends on it as a necessary condition for its expression rather than as a necessary condition for its measure.⁵⁹¹

The insouciant mountain climber, the individual, responding to the intensity of 'depth' hidden in experience, warps the space around him/her in a modern version of Kant's Copernican Revolution.

I have excluded Deleuze's reading of Leibniz from the scope of the thesis. However, in this context it is not possible to avoid the Leibnizian connection: 'Only Leibniz approached the conditions of a logic of thought, inspired by his theory of individuation and expression' (253). By the reciprocity of actual-virtual, Deleuze intends a kind of monadology. This monadology is explained in an image of the sea borrowed from Leibniz. An image that must remind us of the song of univocal Being: 'the same Ocean for all the drops' (304), with which my thesis began. On the one hand, we have:

The expressed (the continuum of differential relations or the unconscious virtual Idea) [which seems at times as if it should be]...in itself distinct and obscure: for example, all the drops of water in the sea like so many genetic elements with the differential relations, the variations in these relations and the distinctive points they comprise. (253)

On the other hand, we have:

It seems that the expressor (the perceiving, imagining of thinking individual) should be by nature clear and confused: for example, our perception of the noise of the sea, which confusedly includes the whole and clearly expresses only certain relations or certain points by virtue of our bodies and a threshold of consciousness which they determine. (253)

⁵⁹¹ *GD's D&R*, p.177.

For Deleuze, the individual plays the part of the Monad. The actual individual is the outcome of a series of processes that express the *whole* of the virtual realm of Ideas (the continuum of differential relations) but, crucially, only from a single and fleeting perspective. The whole is expressed in a confused way, only the singular is expressed clearly; and therefore, the virtual is changed by the actual individual.

Conclusion.

Deleuze is a philosopher of the multiple because in *Difference and Repetition* he argues for an ontology that is 'multiple' in the sense derived from Bergson's concept of the 'continuous multiplicity'. This multiplicity is real without being actual, it is 'virtual'. For Deleuze, the continuous multiplicity has ontological status. This ontology is shown to be instantiated in the world in the culminating argument of *Difference and Repetition*. In this argument Deleuze deduces, from a 'given' of contingent human feelings, the existence of Ideas. Ideas are structures composed of differential relations. Deleuze's project is to match the ontology of the multiple with a way of doing philosophy, what Deleuze calls a 'logic'. Here, Deleuze takes key inspiration from Spinoza but also, as we will see, from Nietzsche. What emerges is the philosophy of difference as opposed to the philosophies of identity or analogy or contradiction or resemblance. How does this logic work?

In *The Logic of Sense* (published more or less simultaneously with *Difference and Repetition*) Deleuze philosophises by means of a regime called disjunctive synthesis:

It is not that the disjunction has become a simple conjunction. Three sorts of synthesis are distinguished: the connective synthesis (if...then), which bears upon the construction of a single series; the conjunctive series (and), as a method of constructing convergent series; and the disjunctive series (or), which distributes the divergent series: *conexa, conjuncta, disjuncta*.⁵⁹²

Under the regime of disjunctive synthesis no element of the multiplicity negates or opposes any other element. As Tim Clark puts it, Deleuze seeks: 'a synthesis which somehow holds impossibles together; but does so without limitation, opposition, or negation — i.e., a synthesis of "total affirmation"...'⁵⁹³ And Colebrook writes: 'Deleuze and Guattari open the disjunctive synthesis: one can be this or this or this, *and* this *and* this *and* this: neither mother nor father but a becoming-girl, becoming-animal'.⁵⁹⁴ More colloquially, under the regime of the Deleuzian disjoined multiple 'anything goes', anything and everything can potentially connect with anything and everything. Deleuze writes:

⁵⁹² *The Logic of Sense*, p.174.

⁵⁹³ Tim Clark, 'A Whiteheadian Chaosmos: Process Philosophy from a Deleuzian Perspective', *Process Studies*, 28, no.3-4 (1999), 179-184 (at www.religion-online page nos.5-6 of online text).

⁵⁹⁴ 'Disjunctive Synthesis', in *The Deleuze Dictionary*, pp.77-78 (p.78).

[T]he divergence of series or the disjunction of members (*membra disjuncta*) cease to be negative rules of exclusion...Divergence and disjunction are, on the contrary, affirmed as such...We speak...of an operation according to which two things or two determinations are affirmed *through* their difference, that is to say, that they are objects of simultaneous affirmation only insofar as their difference is itself affirmed and is itself affirmative.⁵⁹⁵

The exemplar of this kind of affirmation is Nietzsche, for whom: ‘divergence is no longer a principle of exclusion, and disjunction no longer a means of separation. Impossibility is now a means of communication’.

In Deleuze’s reading of Nietzsche we find a notion of ‘affirmation’, knotted tightly together with my key themes — ‘multiplicity’, ‘unity’, ‘the one’, ‘the many’:

Multiplicity is the affirmation of unity; becoming is the affirmation of being. The affirmation of becoming is itself being, the affirmation of multiplicity is itself one. Multiple affirmation is the way in which the one affirms itself. “The one is the many, unity is multiplicity”.⁵⁹⁶

If we are asked to *affirm* the multiple, does that mean, for example, that we are being invited, in an entirely non-rigorous manner, apparently foreign to philosophical enquiry, to somehow grant its truth without any critical evaluation of it? Deleuze replies:

To affirm is still to evaluate, but to evaluate from the perspective of a will which enjoys its own difference in life instead of suffering the pains of the opposition to this life that it has itself inspired. *To affirm is not to take responsibility for, to take on the burden of what is, but to release, to set free what lives.* To affirm is to unburden: not to load life with the weight of higher values, but *to create* new values which are those of life, which make life light and active.⁵⁹⁷

In other words, the notion of ‘affirmation’ is to be understood in contrast to ‘the pains of the opposition to this life’, the key term here being ‘opposition’. For Deleuze, to ‘oppose’ is to play the dialectical game. Rajchman recommends affirmation in a way that does not end up as a kind of intellectual submission. But more than that, he connects ‘affirmation’ both to Deleuze’s idea of multiplicity and to Deleuze’s appropriation of Nietzsche’s philosophy as a philosophy of the ‘future’:

Affirmation...requires a belief or trust in the world and what may yet transpire in it, beyond what we are “warranted” to assert. In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze puts the problem in terms of an original relation to the future — or a belief of the future, in the

⁵⁹⁵ *The Logic of Sense*, p.172. Subsequent ref., p.174.

⁵⁹⁶ *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p.24.

⁵⁹⁷ *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p.185

future. It is a matter of introducing into our view of ourselves and our world this sense of what is to come — of the untimely rather than of the eternal or the transient...Such then is the point where Deleuze's logic of multiplicity becomes inseparable from an affirmation of life.⁵⁹⁸

To speak of a belief in the world beyond what we are warranted to assert is to embrace a philosophy of change and potential.

An answer to Badiou's objections.

Deleuze writes: 'Univocal Being is at one and the same time nomadic distribution and crowned anarchy' (37). Badiou comments that, for Deleuze, 'it is crucial...to think above all – the crown.'⁵⁹⁹ Does Badiou mean that despite all of Deleuze's protestations to the contrary, an underpinning or overarching identity is restored in the guise of the commonality of Being? Indeed, this is how Widder interprets Badiou's objection:

Badiou's entire critique rests upon a conflation of the univocity of being with a Platonist conception of the One. It is through this move that he interprets the "single voice" in Platonist terms. Similar readings have appeared before in Deleuze literature, often taking the form of an insistence on either a unity underlying multiplicity or a reduction of multiplicity to the self-differentiation of the One.⁶⁰⁰

According to Widder, Badiou's objection falls into the category of readings that insist on a 'unity underlying multiplicity'. This clearly *is* Widder's reading because his reply to Badiou is that: 'univocity is hardly concerned with establishing a unity among differences, but rather with linking differences through their difference'. We have Deleuze's own explicit endorsement for a notion of the connectedness of the multiple which, indeed, relates 'different to different by means of difference' (126). But Widder is *wrong* to attribute to Badiou the objection that, for Deleuze, connection by means of difference is subservient to a prior underlying unity grounded in the univocity of Being. If this *was* Badiou's objection, he would be attributing a crude apostasy to Deleuze; in other words, that Deleuze, having denied in his critique of Aristotle that the multiple is joined by identity, reinstates identity in the guise of the concept of the univocity of Being. But in fact, Badiou is well aware of the privilege that Deleuze accords to difference. Although Badiou attributes to Deleuze a philosophy of 'the One', he plainly states his recognition that, 'The

⁵⁹⁸ *The Deleuze Connections*, p.76.

⁵⁹⁹ *CB*, p.13.

⁶⁰⁰ 'The Rights of Simulacra', p.438. Subsequent ref., p.439.

One is not here [for Deleuze] the one of identity'⁶⁰¹; and later, '*the infinite power of the One*' must be difference not identity. Therefore, Widder's reading of Badiou's objection must be wrong. If that is not the objection, then what is it?

As we have seen, Deleuze philosophises about the continuous multiplicity via a logic of disjunctive synthesis. Why does Badiou think it necessary for Deleuze also to refer to a notion of the One? It is because *the infinite power of the One* is the source of the difference that produces the 'divergent simulacra, dependent on disjunctive syntheses'.⁶⁰² Why is this held to be fatal to be Deleuze's claim to be a philosopher of the multiple? Bearing in mind Deleuze's devotion to Spinoza, it is entirely fitting that Badiou should cast his objection within the tri-partite Spinozist context of substance, attributes and modes:

[Univocity] is fully compatible with the existence of multiple forms of Being. Indeed, it is even in the power of deployment of these multiple forms that the One can be identified: this is true of Spinoza's Substance, which is immediately expressed by an infinity of attributes...[However]...The multiple acceptations of being must be understood as a multiple that is formal, while the One alone is real...In each form of Being, there are to be found "individuating differences" that may well be named beings...For Deleuze, beings are local degrees of intensity or inflections of power...And as power is but a name of Being, beings are only expressive modalities of the One. From this it follows once again that the numerical division between beings "is a modal, not a real distinction"...⁶⁰³

On this view, therefore, Deleuze is a philosopher of the One and not of the multiple because Being is One and real, but beings are multiple and are not real.

Although Widder misjudges the flight of the main trajectory of Badiou's objection he, nevertheless, recognizes the presence in it of the disputed reality of the multiple. Widder condemns it as risible: 'It is a joke to suggest that for Deleuze actual multiplicities are unreal': he goes on, 'Deleuze's words are never used to substantiate this claim'.⁶⁰⁴ In fact, Badiou *does* use Deleuze's words to attempt to substantiate his claim. Badiou writes, 'the plurality of forms does not involve any [now quoting Deleuze], "division within Being or plurality of ontological senses"': and again, Badiou writes, 'the immanent attributes of Being that express its infinite power of One [now quoting Deleuze] "are *formally* distinct [but] they all remain equal and *ontologically*

⁶⁰¹ CB, p.24. Subsequent ref., p.73.

⁶⁰² *ibid.*

⁶⁰³ CB, pp.24-25. Subsequent ref., p.26.

⁶⁰⁴ 'The Rights of Simulacra', p.438.

one” ‘.⁶⁰⁵ To call this ‘a joke’ is rhetoric not argument. But more than that, Badiou’s objection is in a long tradition of scholarly objection that has always dogged Spinozism. It is, therefore, a perfectly pertinent objection.

To rebut Badiou I suggest that we should ask, what does ‘real’ mean in this context? In other words, it is too easy to contrast the supposed ‘reality’ of Being with the putative ‘unreality’ of actual things. We must give some genuine *content* to the pairing real/unreal. This suggestion gets confirmation from Badiou himself insofar as, having set out the above objection, he feels bound to ask what he thinks of as a rhetorical question: ‘what meaning is to be given to the Nietzschean program that Deleuze constantly validates: the overturning of Platonism?’ My rebuttal is based on the claim that it is *not* a rhetorical question. Deleuze *has* a reply: ‘To reverse Platonism means to make the simulacra rise and to affirm their rights...The problem no longer has to do with the distinction...Model-Copy...The simulacrum is not a degraded copy. It harbors a positive power’.⁶⁰⁶ Badiou fails to recognize the import of the fact that, for Deleuze, the ‘reality’ of beings is not determined by their resemblance to an original.

The virtual as ‘ground’.

Thus far, I have argued that Deleuzianism is not a variant of Platonism because it is not based on the model versus copy distinction. But this would not be the end of the matter if Badiou were able to challenge Deleuze’s assumption that the essence of Platonism *is* the model versus copy distinction. If Badiou can cast the net of Platonism more widely, he might still be able to capture Deleuze in it. Reflecting on the private exchange of correspondence that lies behind *The Clamour of Being*, Badiou writes:

I raised the objection to Deleuze that the category of the virtual seemed to me to maintain a kind of transcendence, transposed, so to speak, “beneath” the simulacra of the world, in a sort of symmetrical relation to the “beyond” of classical transcendence.⁶⁰⁷

According to Badiou: ‘Deleuze acknowledged at once that this issue [the nature of the virtual] lay at the very heart of our controversy’. Deleuze thinks that, having re-written the history of philosophy in terms of a false concept of difference, he can now make a new start. But Badiou

⁶⁰⁵ *CB*, p.25, quoting Deleuze *D&R* p.303.

⁶⁰⁶ *The Logic of Sense*, p.262.

⁶⁰⁷ *CB*, p.46. Subsequent ref., p.46.

complains, ‘One should not be too quick to believe that one has finished with the ground, or that one has succeeded in “overturning” Plato.’⁶⁰⁸ I have already referred to my treatment of Deleuze’s critique of Plato and his rejection of the relation of resemblance: i.e. the model and its copy. But Badiou argues that what Deleuze here condemns, sneaks back into his own account in a new guise and in a subtly different relationship. Badiou complains that Platonism is not confined to the relation of model and copy but is also to be found in a notion of ‘ground’. Badiou writes, ‘The ground is...that eternal “share” of beings by which in their variability and their equivocality are moored in the absolute unity of Being’.⁶⁰⁹ Badiou is, therefore, associating this idea of *ground* with both Platonism and one of Deleuze’s key concepts, derived from Bergson: the virtual. Badiou writes, ‘“Virtual” is without any doubt the principal name of Being in Deleuze’s work...the virtual is the ground of the actual.’ Badiou, in effect, argues that Deleuze fails to recognize that the virtual plays the part of ‘the One’ (as ground) in his philosophy; and that the actual, ‘the Many’, is rooted in this same ground and is, therefore, betrayed. Therefore, far from overturning Platonism, Badiou writes, ‘Deleuze’s concern was with a Platonism of the virtual. Deleuze retains from Plato the univocal sovereignty of the One’.

I have already set out Deleuze’s notions of ‘intensity’ and of Ideas as ‘problems’. These concepts provide the resources for a rebuttal of Badiou’s contention that the relation of the virtual to the actual is symmetrical to the relation of the One to the Many of ‘classical transcendence’. The two pairs are not symmetrical because the relationship between the virtual and the actual is reciprocal in a way in which the classical transcendence disallows. It is true that the virtual is, in some sense, the reason for, thus the ‘ground’ of the actual, but the door swings both ways: the state of the actual affects (i.e. changes) the virtual. As we have seen, intensity is sensed, indirectly, in objects in space but it can never be sensed, in itself, because it is transformed. Hence Williams writes of our perception of the colour red:

We never sense the intensity that allows us to perceive that shade since it varies in what it can make us sense with the quality according to the contexts in which it is expressed...This shade of red may appear at different depths depending of what other shades it accompanies — it may arouse different passions depending on the shapes in which it appears...These different contexts “have an effect” on the intensities expressed through them.⁶¹⁰

⁶⁰⁸ *CB*, p.45.

⁶⁰⁹ *CB*, p.45. Subsequent quotations in this para.: p.43; p46.

⁶¹⁰ *GD’s D&R*, p.176

Boundas notes a similar reversibility in the context of what he thinks of as Deleuze's 'process' ontology:

Instead of being a linear process from one actual to another [it] should rather be conceived as the movement from an actual state of affairs, through a dynamic field of virtual/real tendencies, to the actualisation of this field in a new state of affairs. This scheme safeguards the relation of reversibility between the virtual and the actual.⁶¹¹

Boundas is here equating 'virtual tendencies' with Deleuzian Ideas. Hence, he writes: 'tendencies are problems and problems have no final solutions, although the partial solution of a problem transforms the problem back into a tendency'.

The reversibility between the virtual and the actual is the burden of the key distinction that Deleuze makes between differentiation and differenciation: 'Whereas differentiation determines the virtual content of the Idea as problem, differenciation expresses the actualisation of this virtual and the constitution of solutions' (209). Differentiation, then, is virtual, whereas differenciation is actual. Williams helpfully expresses the way the two halves of difference interact:

Ideas become determined as clear and obscure when they are expressed in actual things, through ...differentiation'. But, on the other hand, 'actual things are set in motion as they express Ideas, through a parallel process of differentiation...when intensities bring about shifts within individuals...as their sensations express the intensities that accompany a shift in the clarity and obscurity of Ideas.⁶¹²

Badiou accuses Deleuze of a kind of unwitting classical transcendence, but classical transcendence is characterised by its uni-directionality: the world of appearances can exert no pressure on the eternal and immutable realm of the Forms. Badiou's accusation against Deleuze, of 'involuntary Platonism', takes insufficient note of this fundamental *dissymmetry* between Deleuze's virtual/actual pair and Plato's Forms/Apearances.

⁶¹¹ Constantin V. Boundas, 'Deleuze's Difference', in *Deleuze and Philosophy*, pp.3-28 (p.5). Subsequent reference, pp.5-6.

⁶¹² *GD's D&R*, p.164.

The virtual image.

Widder rightly argues that it is perverse of Badiou to characterise the virtual in terms of Oneness:

It is questionable whether the virtual can adequately be characterised as a realm of Oneness and not of disjointed multiplicity...there is certainly room to distrust the mapping of Deleuzian vocabulary onto the terrain of the One and the Many when Deleuze himself speaks of a multiple that exceeds such terms. To the degree that Badiou admits that the virtual is in fact irreducibly multiple, so that the relation between virtual and actual is one of multiplicity on top of multiplicity.⁶¹³

Indeed, the fragility of Badiou's claim that Deleuze is a philosopher of the One is exposed by the fact that the objection actually reaches its apogee in a complaint against what might more accurately be described as Deleuze's philosophy of 'the Two'. Deleuze writes: 'the virtual must be defined as strictly part of the real object — as though the object had one part of itself in the virtual into which it plunged though into an objective dimension' (209). This is a kind of dualism. The problem, as Badiou notes, is that: 'As the ground of the object, the virtual must not be thought apart from the object itself.'⁶¹⁴ Why not? May replies: 'Because if the virtual is ontologically distinct from the object, then there is no longer a One that expresses itself, but a transcendent Being that gives rise to being: the One becomes a Two, or a Many.'⁶¹⁵ As May puts it, the threat is that, 'Deleuze cannot think specific objects, beings, as at once virtual and actual without collapsing the distinction between the two'. Badiou expresses his point in terms of the taboo concepts of 'equivocity and the dialectic'.⁶¹⁶ He argues that in trying to avoid these concepts, Deleuze paints himself into a corner. If the virtual and the actual are thought of as dialectical opposites, then 'the specter (*sic*) of equivocity' is raised. In other words, the threat is that 'the way of being' of the virtual is different from 'the way of being' of the actual. Deleuze's commitment to univocity (which Badiou, again, identifies with a commitment to 'the One') and Deleuze's rejection of dialectical difference, forces him, therefore, to join the virtual and the actual in the theory of the indistinguishable 'double image'. Badiou argues that this is incoherent:

When the only way of saving...the One, is by resorting to an unthinkable Two...one says to oneself that...the virtual is no better than the finality of which it is the inversion...Let

⁶¹³ 'The rights of simulacra', p.438.

⁶¹⁴ *CB*, p.51.

⁶¹⁵ 'Badiou and Deleuze on the One and the Many', p.72. And subsequent ref.

⁶¹⁶ *CB*, p. 53. Subsequent refs.: p.52 and p.53.

us be particularly harsh and invoke Spinoza against his major, and indeed, sole, truly modern disciple: just like finality, the virtual is *ignorantiae asylum*.⁶¹⁷

Badiou is, here, polemically aligning his own argument with Spinoza's claim (the *Ethics*, part 1 Appendix) that those who uphold the doctrine of final causes instead of seeking a scientific explanation for phenomena, are taking refuge in divine will: that 'asylum of ignorance'. Badiou's objection boils down, then, to a denial of the existence of the virtual. If successful, this would indeed strike at the heart of Deleuze's project.

Boundas aims at Badiou, among others, the rather lame remark that, 'The Deleuzian virtual has generated an endless number of discussions and controversies, but I do not think that there is anything mysterious about it.'⁶¹⁸ I tend to agree with Badiou that the virtual *is* mysterious and, therefore, that it is entirely fitting that it be subjected to critical analysis. However, just as it is perverse of Badiou to characterise the Deleuzian virtual in terms of One-ness it is also perverse of Badiou to focus his criticism of the virtual on what he takes to be Deleuze's theory of the 'object'. Perverse, because it seems to attribute to Deleuze a spatial, static metaphysics which is alien to Deleuze's thoroughly Bergsonian discourse. This same feeling (that Badiou has, as it were, 'queered the pitch' against Deleuze) prompts May, in his reply to Badiou, to insist instead on conducting the defence on ground that is more compatible with Deleuze's overall stance. Of course we must not pick only those arguments that happen to suit our case but May notes that insofar as Deleuze has a concept of the 'object', it is dynamic and temporal: 'Beneath the actual qualities and extensities, species and parts, there are spatio-temporal dynamisms... They must be surveyed in very domain, even though they are ordinarily hidden by the constituted qualities and extensities' (214). May argues, therefore, that the clue to understanding the relation between the actual and the virtual 'lies in temporality, in the temporal unfolding of the virtual into the actual'.⁶¹⁹

To transfer the issue of the virtual from the spatial to the temporal but, at the same time to address Badiou's objection, we need to engage with Deleuze's theory of perception as well as his theory of time. This is because Badiou's objection against Deleuze's theory of the object has, at its core, the Deleuzian notion of the 'virtual image' and this notion is not intelligible without reference to Deleuze's theory of perception. As we have seen, Deleuze's theory of individual beings (what he

⁶¹⁷ *CB*, p.53.

⁶¹⁸ 'Deleuze's Difference', in *Deleuze and Philosophy*, pp.3-28 (p.5).

⁶¹⁹ 'Badiou and Deleuze on the One and the Many', p.74.

sometimes calls ‘objects’) is that they are both virtual and actual. Deleuze asks: ‘How...can we speak simultaneously of both complete determination [i.e. the virtual as a problem ‘determining’ a solution] and only part of the object? The determination must be a complete determination of the object, yet form only part of it’ (209). Badiou writes: ‘In my opinion, the answer [Deleuze] gives is far from satisfactory and it is here that I see the stumbling block for the theory of the virtual’.⁶²⁰ If I can overcome this ‘stumbling block’ then, even on Badiou’s own account, his objection is defused. The ‘answer’ to which Badiou so strenuously objects is Deleuze’s claim that: ‘Every object is double without it being the case that the two halves resemble one another, one being a virtual image and the other an actual image. They are unequal odd halves’ (209-210). Badiou comments:

We can see clearly how Deleuze takes advantage here of the fact that every object, or every being, is a mere simulacrum; for this allows the timely interjection of an immanent theory of the double, backed up by an optical metaphor (the possible status of double images). But it is extremely difficult to understand how the virtual can be ranked as an image, for this would seem to be the status proper to the actual, whereas it is impossible for the virtual, as the power proper to the One, to be a simulacrum. Doubtlessly, the virtual can give rise to images, but in no way can an image be given of it, nor can it itself be an image.⁶²¹

Badiou is claiming that the notion of the virtual as ‘image’ is incoherent. I can show otherwise.

I have already shown how Deleuze’s theory of the ‘virtual image’ is part and parcel of Bergson’s theory of the doubling of time (the memory of the present). In Bergson’s account, which is echoed in *Difference and Repetition*, each present actual perception is ‘mirrored’ by a virtual image. In the substantive work of the thesis I showed that this ‘mirroring’ did not entail any contradiction with Deleuze’s concept of difference and its denial of resemblance. The metaphor of the mirror did not entail that the virtual image was a *copy* of the present perception: it was, rather, an image, as if in a mirror, in the sense that a reflection of a thing cannot do what the thing itself can do. The point of the metaphor was that the virtual image in perception was *inert* whereas the present perception (the actual image) was ‘wired’ for action. I now need to show how this theory of the virtual image, as it obtained in perception, relates to the virtual image in Badiou’s complaint against the coherence of the duality of images that are said to comprise objects. In effect, how do we translate the virtual image from an epistemological context to an ontological context? In chapter 5 of the thesis I set out Bergson’s radical claim that there is a

⁶²⁰ CB, p.51.

difference of degree, rather than a difference of nature, between perception and matter. This provides, in part, the explanation I now seek for the congruence between Deleuze's epistemological and ontological concerns, but it does not solve the problem entirely. To say that our perceptions are, as it were, continuous with objects, is not the same as saying that our perceptions are the same as objects: there is still a difference, even if it is a difference of degree. For a more complete answer, I now rely on Al-Saji's analysis of the multiple senses of the term 'image', for both Bergson and Deleuze.

I have already shown how Bergson uses the term 'image' in a way that is equivalent to our word 'object': 'Matter, in our view, is an aggregate of "images".'⁶²² This sense of image has got nothing to do with 'representation' (if by that term one meant making pictures of the world in our heads). Rather, 'Our representation of matter is the measure of our possible action upon bodies: it results from the discarding of what has no interest for our needs.'⁶²³ It follows that, for Bergson, there is an unperceived universe: in other words, the *full* nexus of images, *in all its richness*, but one that is of no practical interest to us. By this account, our central nervous system is a mechanism that introduces a delay between external stimulus and response (albeit that this delay 'foretells spirit' as Bergson puts it). This delay, which is the 'space' into which the whole of consciousness falls, renders us 'active' in the world, in a way that rocks and water are not, because their reactions to stimuli are unconscious and immediate. But having said that, Bergson establishes the following surprising contrast: 'the perception on any unconscious material point...in its instantaneousness, is infinitely greater and more complete than ours, since this point gathers and transmits the influences of all the points of the material universe, whereas our conscious perception only attains to certain parts'.

Al-Saji speculates, as follows, on the implications of the strangely vacuous nature of the virtual image in Bergson's theory of perception:

How does the so-called "memory of the present" differ from perception of the present? If we note that the virtual is not limited to, nor resembles, actual perception — that unlike the relation of the possible to the real, the virtual is more expansive than the actual — then we can extend the memory of the present beyond what is explicitly found in Bergson. We may say that memory of the present implies more than conscious perception. It records the implicit and unconscious images, the whole interpenetrating

⁶²¹ *CB*, pp.51-52.

⁶²² *MM*, p.9.

⁶²³ *MM*, p.38. And subsequent refs.

nexus of material images, that constitute the universe for Bergson...A connection thus exists between the virtual image...and the material images that make up the universe.⁶²⁴

If this holds, then it also establishes a connection between Deleuze's theory of doubled perception and his doubled ontology. Badiou complains that 'the virtual can give rise to images, but in no way can an image be given of it, nor can it itself be an image. The optical metaphor does not hold up'.⁶²⁵ But although it may be misleading to think of it as 'optical', the metaphor *does* hold up. The virtual image is that part of the object that lies in the unperceived universe: that unperceived, but strangely, *perceiving* universe, beyond the range of our constrained perceptions. It is this which, in Deleuze's theory of perception, shadows each present perception. What is more, the virtual image, in perception, far from being vacuous, becomes a plenum.

An unthinkable Two.

For Deleuze's theory of the Two to work we must admit that the virtual and the actual are both radically distinct *and* so intimately connected as to be indistinguishable. Badiou seems to be occupying the high ground of common sense when he objects that Deleuze has resorted to 'an unthinkable Two'.⁶²⁶ But from all that we have seen in this thesis we might predict Deleuze's reply: for the philosopher, only the unthinkable will suffice. For Deleuze, the truth lies not in *doxa* but in paradox because this forces us to think the unthinkable.

To get a refutation of Badiou under way we must make a case for the coherence of the thought of two elements which differ in kind but which are, nevertheless, intimately connected. I have already established the necessary elements of such a case in my analysis of Deleuze's theory of Time (derived from Bergson). Deleuze seeks to answer a fundamental question that any theory of Time must face: how does the present become the past? So the 'two elements' in question are the present and the past; if they are different in kind but connected, then the unthinkable becomes thinkable: the actual and the virtual may also be different in kind but connected. In his answer to Badiou, May concurs with this general approach: 'it is primarily from the viewpoint of time that the virtual and the actual should be considered'.⁶²⁷

⁶²⁴ 'The memory of another past', p.220.

⁶²⁵ *CB*, p.52.

⁶²⁶ *CB*, 53.

⁶²⁷ 'Badiou and Deleuze on the One and the Many', p.74.

As we have already seen, for Bergson and Deleuze the present can only pass because it is already the past. As May summarises it: 'the past does not follow the present: nor is the present separate from the past. They are of a piece'.⁶²⁸ However contrary to mainstream philosophy of Time this might be, it is a coherent answer to the problem of how time passes. The question now becomes, how can they be both 'of a piece' and radically distinct? May states the case I wish to make, but in a way which, initially, begs the question: 'The two [past and present], although in some sense ontologically distinct, are also ontologically bound to each other'. By begging the question, I mean the crucial problem is, in precisely *what* sense are they ontologically distinct? May goes on, 'As Deleuze reads him, Bergson sees the relationship [between the past and the present] as one of the virtual to the actual'.⁶²⁹ Whilst this is true, it is only to beg the question again, in that it is the distinction between the virtual and the actual that we sought to validate in the first place.

The substantial reply in fact depends on the distinction, derived from Bergson, between two kinds of multiplicity. In his reply to Badiou, May returns to *Bergsonism* to make out this distinction:

[T]wo types of multiplicity. One is represented by space...It is a multiplicity of exteriority, of simultaneity, of juxtaposition, of order, of quantitative differentiation, of *difference in degree*; it is a numerical multiplicity, *discontinuous and actual*. The other type of multiplicity appears in pure duration: It is an internal multiplicity of succession, of fusion, of organization, of heterogeneity, of qualitative discrimination, or of *difference in kind*; it is a *virtual and continuous* multiplicity that cannot be reduced to numbers.⁶³⁰

This distinction is carried into the climax of the argument of Deleuze's mature system as set out in *Difference and Repetition*: 'We must...distinguish between two types of multiplicities...implicit as opposed to explicit multiplicities; those whose metric varies with division [i.e. the continuous multiplicity] and those which carry the invariable principle of their metric [i.e. the discontinuous multiplicity]' (238). The actual and the virtual find a substantial (rather than merely terminological) and radical distinction because of the distinction between the discontinuous and the continuous multiplicities. To answer Badiou we must also find a rationale for the relation *between* the actual/discontinuous/extensive and the virtual/continuous/qualitative. They must be both radically distinct and connected.

⁶²⁸ *ibid.* And subsequent reference.

⁶²⁹ 'Badiou and Deleuze on the One and the Many', p.75.

⁶³⁰ p.38.

In reply, Deleuze strives for a principle of difference which generates *both* the qualitative and the quantitative:

This fundamental differentiation (quality-extensity) can find its reason only in the great synthesis of Memory which allows all the degrees of difference to coexist as degrees of relaxation and contraction...For the differences of degree and extensity which represents them mechanically do not carry their reason within themselves; but neither do the differences in kind and the duration which represents them qualitatively. The soul of mechanism says everything is difference of degree. The soul of quality replies that there are differences in kind everywhere. However, these are false souls, minor. (239)

The authentic or major soul is a single principle of difference, the operation of which Deleuze describes in terms of relaxation and contraction. At the extreme of relaxation is extensity (the discontinuous multiplicity), at the extreme of contraction, is duration (the continuous multiplicity). Hence Deleuze writes: 'Differences of degree are only the lowest degree of difference, the differences of kind are the highest form of difference' (239). This is elaborated in an End Note: 'duration is indistinguishable from the *nature of difference* and, as such, includes all the *degrees of difference*: hence the reintroduction of intensities in duration, and the idea of a coexistence in duration of all the degrees of relaxation and contraction (the essential thesis of *Matter and Memory*...(331). The two radically distinct extremes are connected, therefore, via what Deleuze dubs the intervening 'degrees of difference' as opposed to 'differences of degree'.

The role of the univocity of Being in Deleuze's thought.

Even if the univocity of Being (in its various guises, including 'the virtual') is not actually inimical to Deleuze's advocacy of a philosophy of multiplicity, what *positive* role does it play? Foucault writes: 'The univocity of being, its singleness of expression, is paradoxically the principal condition that permits [Deleuzian] difference to escape the dominion of identity, frees it from the law of the Same because it is not organised in a conceptual hierarchy of species and genus'.⁶³¹ Foucault, rightly, sees univocity as a 'condition' for the philosophy of difference (I, like Boundas, equate difference and multiplicity). What exactly is the nature of the condition? It is clear that Deleuze is committed to a system of immanence: the denial of transcendence. The univocity of being is a condition, then, because it requires that all existents 'lie on the same plane', as it were. The univocity of Being, on this account, is not the sameness but the parity of Being. I can defend this account of univocity using Deleuze's own words at the climax of the

⁶³¹ 'Theatrum Philosophicum', p.192.

argument of *Difference and Repetition*; words shouted rather than spoken: having the same 'enthusiastic vibration' as the 'song' to which Badiou insisted we listen⁶³²: 'Everything is equal!' (304). Unless everything were equal, then everything could not be connected and such connection is the ethical as well ontological heart of Deleuze's message.

The motto 'Everything is equal' might strike us as a rather trite outcome for a modern philosophy with radical aspirations. Or one might simply object, that the equality or parity of the elements of a multiplicity can only be judged with reference to some quality or quantity that they hold in common. If true, this would mean that the philosophy of difference collapses back into a philosophy of identity. Deleuze both rescues his system from triteness and answers the resurgence of identity by complicating his motto in two ways. First, 'Everything is equal...can be said only at the point at which the extremity of difference is reached (304).' I have shown that, for Deleuze, the 'extremity of difference is reached' not via the generic difference of Aristotle, nor by the opposition of the Hegelian dialectic, but in Deleuze's discovery, by palpation (see the introduction to the thesis) of an 'internal difference' that defies conceptualisation.

Second, Deleuze complicates and radicalises his motto by adding, 'Everything returns!' (304). I have affected to 'complain' that for 'the Christ of philosophers' Spinoza commands remarkably little space in *Difference and Repetition*. But 'column inches' are no measure of significance. Spinoza makes a telling re-appearance on the last page of *Difference and Repetition*:

All that Spinozism needed to do for the univocal to become an object of pure affirmation was to make substance turn around the modes — *in other words, to realise univocity in the form of repetition in the eternal return.* (304)

Spinoza and Nietzsche bring to perfection a doctrine of univocity that originated with Duns Scotus. In Nietzsche, Deleuze finds the means for an inversion of Spinozism: substance turns around the modes. One can readily understand that Spinoza's version of univocity is held to mark an advance on that of Duns Scotus in that, for Spinoza, univocity need not be trammelled by the 'requirements of Christianity' (39). But this insistence on immanence would not, in itself, be sufficient to make the doctrine of univocity distinctively Spinozan. What is more, having praised how 'Spinoza organises a remarkable division into substance, attributes and modes' (40), Deleuze abandons it, because 'Spinoza's substance appears independent of the modes, while the modes are dependent on substance, but as though on something other than themselves. Substance itself

⁶³² CB, p.11.

must be said *of* the modes and only *of* the modes' (40). How would this work? It is done in the following dense passage, during which the surviving Spinozism is further diluted by the addition of Nietzsche's doctrine of eternal return:

Such a condition can be satisfied only at the price of a more general categorical reversal according to which being is said of becoming, identity of that which is different, the one of the multiple, etc. That identity not be first, that it exist as a principle but as a second principle...that it revolve around the Different: such would be the nature of a Copernican revolution which opens up the possibility of difference having its own concept...Nietzsche meant nothing more than this by eternal return...The eternal return does not bring back 'the same', but returning constitutes the only Same of that which becomes. Returning is thus the only identity...such an identity, produced by difference is determined as 'repetition'. (40-41)

Rather than the modes being an expression of a separate substance, substance (by which I now understand constancy or regularity or identity) is a kind of surrogate or 'surface effect' produced by the subterranean churning of difference. Univocal Being is identified with the eternal return: 'eternal return is the univocity of being' (41). Univocal Being is the power to differ; and the power to differ is all that is preserved.

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