edited by
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Thinking Between Deleuze and Kant

A Strange Encounter

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Note on Abbreviations and Translations Used

Works either by Gilles Deleuze or Deleuze and Guattari

Details of the editions are contained in the Bibliography.

AO	*Anti-Oedipus*
ATP	*A Thousand Plateaus*
B	*Bergsonism*
D	*Dialogues*
DI	*Desert Islands and Other Texts (1953–1974)*
DR	*Difference and Repetition*
ECC	*Essays Critical and Clinical*
EPS	*Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*
FLB	*The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*
KCP	*Kant's Critical Philosophy*
LOS	*Logic of Sense*
N	*Negotiations*
NP	*Nietzsche and Philosophy*
PS	*Proust and Signs*
SPP	*Spinoza Practical Philosophy*
TRM	*Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975–1995*
WIP	*What Is Philosophy?*
KS1	Kant Seminar of 14 March 1978
KS2	Kant Seminar of 21 March 1978
KS3	Kant Seminar of 28 March 1978
LS1	Leibniz Seminar of 22 March 1980

Works by Immanuel Kant

CPR	*Critique of Pure Reason*

In these chapters this work is cited in the form of '(CPR translator: Akademie page numbers)'. Four different translations are used by authors and because there is no obvious priority of one translation we have allowed this variability as reflecting the authors' own preferences. Hence references are given as in the following example: '(CPR Guyer and Wood: A 272)'.

Editorial Introduction
'On the Very Idea of Conditions of Thought'

It is clear that this edited collection has developed a definite focus. It is one requirement of an editorial introduction that it explains the focus of the chapters in that volume, that it justifies excluding what might have been expected or could have been included. Chief among exclusions are Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason* and *Critique of Judgement*. Kant's *Opus Postumum*, which has of late become of increasing interest, his pre-critical writings and the many shorter works that he wrote during his critical period have received only limited engagement here. The positive reason we offer is that the genesis of this collection is the genesis of the text that dominates it – the *Critique of Pure Reason*. This genesis can be said to be behind the focus of the collection if it provides positive or productive reasons for the exclusions involved. Exclusion is the by-product of a very productive engagement with something that urgently needs this space and attention in order to explore and expand upon the relations of Kant and Deleuze. The focus of the collection was not intended by the editors but tells us a great deal about the current state of Kant and Deleuze studies and about the conflicts between transcendental philosophy and naturalism in which they are both deeply involved.

What do we mean by talking of the genesis of the *Critique of Pure Reason*? We mean a moment capable of animating this text but also something that has been repeated in the work of later thinkers and so earned them the title 'post-Kantian'. Deleuze is arguably included in this since, unlike contemporary thinkers like Quentin Meillassoux, he makes use of a notion of the transcendental. He is concerned with conditions for thought that repeatedly and forcefully pose the question of what it is capable of. We could call this the 'critical moment', the moment when Kant began his critical period with the *Critique of Pure Reason*, seeking to provide transcendental conditions for thought, after his 11 silent years. In the context of the current debates between transcendental philosophy and naturalism, spawning the opposed terms transcendental materialism and speculative materialism

or realism, the value and implications of the 'critical moment' are being keenly debated. Kant at this point becomes concerned with transcendental conditions for knowledge, with what can and cannot be attained in thought by finite rational beings. Emblematic of this change and how Kant responds to it is the contrast between his 'Inaugural Dissertation' of 1770 which proposes an open-ended list of categories and the Table of Twelve Categories presented in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (first edition 1781) which is closed and is to be viewed as an exhaustive whole (Kuehn 2001: 243). This 'limitation' is to be a condition of thought's openness to experience as such and its source is the understanding and what it alone is capable of. Unlike for Deleuze, we do not question the limits of cognition again no matter how forceful and singular our encounters with sensation. For Kant then a Table of Categories provides a condition for thought no matter what happens in experience. The very idea of a condition then brings us to deep conflicts in philosophy and for these we do not have to wait for Deleuze's critique of Kant from the standpoint of sensation and what happens to thought in the wake of our encounters with it. Conflicts between transcendental philosophy and naturalism range in time from Kant's contemporaries to post-Deleuzian thinkers, from Johann Gottfried Von Herder, a former student of Kant's, and his 'metacritique' of transcendental thought, to Quentin Meillassoux and his attack on the alleged 'correlationism' of transcendental thought in *After Finitude*. Is Deleuze to be included in the naturalist camp, given his emphasis upon encounters with sensation that leave Kant's transcendental conditions of thought behind in a manner that would make them not exhaustive and complete but exhausted and redundant? Naturalists see the conditions for thought in something other than the question 'what can thought do and what can it not do?' or 'how can thought be open to experience?' They seek the genesis of thought in something prior to the transcendental, something that opens onto a wider terrain of enquiry than a transcendental thinker can envisage. It is not immediately clear that Deleuze, with his emphasis on transcendental empiricism, fits easily into this naturalist framework.

Let's delve into the late eighteenth century milieu where the issues that animate *After Finitude* were also able to bring together thinkers in debates and sometimes bitter disputes. Herder's approach to the conditions of thought is very well illustrated in the opening sentence of the First Essay of his 'On the Cognition and Sensation of the Human Soul' (1778): 'In everything that we call dead nature we know no inner condition. We daily express the words mass, impact, fall, motion, rest, force, even force of inertia, and who knows what they mean within the thing itself?' (Herder 2002: 187).

He focuses upon language here and seeks the source of language in a way that contrasts with Kant's concern with transcendental conditions that precede language. He calls for us to observe more 'thoughtfully' what he calls '. . . the great drama of effective forces in nature' (ibid.). This is to provide the genesis of language, of concepts that for Kant would either be pure, and hence prior to any account of natural forces, or empirical and so derived from the observation of nature on the basis of pure concepts that structure experience. Herder's critique of transcendental conditions follows from his concern to seek the genesis of thought in natural forces, forces that for him make things individual in a way that linguistic forms such as categories or pure concepts do not. Concepts are never pure and could never account for the individuality of things but are rather expressions of this individuality. For Herder then cognition does not make sense without the forces of sensation, without the forceful volitions that are behind cognitive activity, because they make the object that is cognized individual. He writes of the failings of any thought that does not make the individual its source of insight:

> Natural science was unable to arrive at forces as long as people failed to regard each individual thing as what it is, as unique, as long as they always only imputed to it what it could be or should be in general. The science of the soul must become entirely natural science in regard to each individual force, as though there was no other force but it. There is always time to classify, to unite, when we have first cognized individually; but we will never cognize what something is if we only begin measuring it according to what it is not, i.e. if we only grasp it as a deviation, negatively. (Herder 2002: 181)

This concern with how forces of sensation are individual is echoed in Deleuze's work and in this collection we will see the tension between this aspect of his thought and his concern with how the transcendental is played out. On the one hand he too finds that pure concepts are unconvincing because they lack a genesis in sensation and empirical concepts are made to catch up with sensation rather than dictating its form. Yet we cannot then simply call him a naturalist if his account of forces that echoes Herder's naturalism forms part of what he calls a transcendental empiricism. He does not abandon the term but does subject it to a critique that echoes Herder's account of cognition. The similarities with Herder's work are very significant and point to a tension in Deleuze's thought that is central to his account of experience in all of its aspects. Deleuze asks 'what can

thought do?' through experimenting with its relation to sensation and vice versa. We see that Herder provides an account of the emergence of reason in human beings, rejecting Kant's transcendental account in which reason is always already at work prior to the emergence of phenomena studied by naturalism, in terms of the individual and the expression of individual force or volition. He can envisage within a naturalistic horizon the emergence of rational beings: 'If animal sensuality and restriction to a single point fell away, then a different creature came into being, whose positive force expressed itself in a larger space, in accordance, more clearly, and which, separated and free, not only cognizes wills, and effects, but also knows that it cognizes, wills and effects' (Herder 2002: 84). We see Deleuze too noting the lack of an account of the genesis of reason and the understanding, of Ideas and categories, in Kant, noting that it has been left out of critique, perhaps most notably in his *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. Here the concept of active and reactive forces is to account for and evaluate the abilities of thought, to tell us whether thought is more or less productive on the basis of its relation to sensation. Yet for Deleuze it seems that we need a transcendental empiricism so that forces immanent to sensation produce individuation; we need mechanisms that ensure that individuation is the result of the work of forces. In other words, thought is never to lose sight of the individual because the individual is the ever developing outcome of forces rather than being swept away by them. Otherwise individuation becomes merely an epiphenomenon of the wider movements of forces, and an account of experience as something individuated and thus open to thought is lacking. We see then that this collection will have to make the case for Deleuze being Kantian in the face of his apparent naturalism when it comes to forces immanent to sensation and their role in individuation. The value of the 'critical moment' needs to be shown to be at work in an account of experience that opens itself to encountering sensation. We ask: Is Deleuze concerned with what thought can do when he seems to put thought at the mercy of sensation? How is their relation productive of thought? How does it liberate thought? Kant is clearly concerned with what thought cannot do because he turns to the understanding for the basis of his account of experience. What has this to do with a Deleuze who is concerned with what thought can do merely in response to the limitless forces of individuation that are in themselves not concerned with what it can do?

The case clearly needs to be made for the question 'what can thought do?', linking Kant's and Deleuze's thought. Kant is concerned with what thought cannot do as we noted in his move to closed set of categories.

Yet Kant ultimately asks 'how can thought be productive?' This is to understand his concern to 'limit' thought to be a concern with what is transcendental where this is understood as what is always the same about experience but is not taken from experience. In this sense categories are not tied to experience, they are dynamic structures that therefore embody openness to experience. Now whilst Deleuze argues that Kant does derive the categories from experience, that he betrays his own criteria for transcendental conditions, he still affirms the aim of transcendental philosophy to locate what remains the same but is non-empirical. Thus we have an account of individuation providing transcendental conditions for thought as well as bringing about the encounter with the un-thought in thought or the traumatic limit of thought (DR: 242). What remains the same is not a particular individual or a general type of individual but the individual as the outcome of individuation and the means of realizing the scope of virtual production. Thus if thought is traumatized or encounters its own limit this is because it brings thought closer to a process of individuation, to how things have become individuated and thus can form parts of unities grasped by thought. Deleuze then is concerned with what thought can do, with how it is extended through individuation and how individuation provides a transcendental condition for thought that is, unlike in Kant's allegedly flawed account, not derived from experience.

We see that the capacity of thought refers us to its conditions. We ask: what can it cope with? For Kant there are limits to what can function as conditions of thought if it is to attain dynamic openness to experience whilst, for Deleuze thought must experiment with conditions to keep open the question of what thought can do. Yet we must emphasize that there is still a concern with the transcendental structures of experience, structures that are intended to be wholly non-empirical so as to be dynamic, to be equal to the genesis that sensation and its forces provide. It seems that for Kant thought must be sure of what it can do and limit itself to this, whilst for Deleuze thought must be open to its conditions or to matter as a field of problems and experimentation whose limits are not given. For Kant understanding must legislate in advance (answering the question 'what can thought not do' with principles) whilst for Deleuze conditions for thought are encountered and thought must experiment with these (answering the question 'what can thought do' with facts).

Yet this distinction can be too sharp and make us miss the common concern with transcendental conditions that do not refer to experience in order to provide the fullest account of it, in order to provide openness to it. For Deleuze then there are no limits to what philosophy can do but this

is a response to the Kantian question, to a Kant who becomes critical when he seeks to pose this question. This collection then takes its bearing from this 'critical moment' and considers how Deleuze takes it up.

We've seen that for Herder the conditions of thought are the forces immanent to sensation that articulate the individuality of things – something that Deleuze embraces whilst nevertheless seeking to provide a transcendental account of experience that brings him closer to Kant. When we turn to Meillassoux's post-Deleuzian broadside against transcendental philosophy the conditions of thought are '. . . all those aspects of the object that can be formulated in mathematical terms' (Meillassoux 2008: 3). Thus rather than turning like Kant and Deleuze to faculties like sensation and understanding or to the *a priori* forms and syntheses of space and time Meillassoux turns to the question of what is anterior to these transcendental structures. He turns to what is anterior[1] to conscious forms of life and so anterior to what Kant and Deleuze seem to be talking about, to the question 'what is thought capable of?'. In the data provided in mathematical terms we have, for Meillassoux, the thing-in-itself that is lacking in a transcendental account of experience.

For Meillassoux transcendental philosophy carries forward the legacy of Kantianism by ensuring that thought has no outside that is not relative to us, to the conscious life forms to which experience is given. The relative outside in question is the field of enquiry whose relation to a conscious subject cannot be escaped. It is always a world for conscious beings and never an 'in itself' reality because of how we start to philosophize, because of the 'critical moment' that has been animating countless thinkers since the composition of the *Critique of Pure Reason.* It makes materialism transcendental when it could be speculative, concerned with what thought can do in relation to matter itself. Meillassoux paints a picture of a prospective liberation of philosophy from transcendental thought:

> For it could be that contemporary philosophers have lost the great outdoors, the absolute outside of pre-critical thinkers: that outside which was not relative to us, and which was given indifferent to its own givenness to be what it is, existing in itself regardless of whether we are thinking of it or not; that outside which thought could explore with the legitimate feeling of being on foreign territory – of being entirely elsewhere. (ibid.: 7)

The great limitation of transcendental philosophy is then that it limits thought to what is 'for us', excluding what is 'in itself' (ibid.: 3–4). A process

of cognition is 'always already' underway (ibid.: 7) and if we start with this we only have an outside relative either to consciousness and its forms of understanding (as in Kant) or to consciousness of sensation and its characteristics (Deleuze). The chapters in this volume explore the notion of transcendental conditions and whether they can account for experience fully rather than relatively to conscious forms of life. They show the importance of naturalistic critique of transcendental thought for debates over the relation of Kant and Deleuze.

We suggested that Kant and Deleuze are concerned with what remains the same because it is non-empirical, because it is dynamic enough to embody openness towards experience. What is thought capable of given transcendental conditions which necessarily remain the same? Answers developed in this volume include Ideas, genesis, mechanisms and concepts of critique, sensation, understanding, consciousness, temporal synthesis, object=x and so on. The argument is made that these transcendental structures are not simply for us but are what come before us and what fracture our conscious selves.

Patricia Farrell's chapter locates a transcendental condition in Deleuze's use of Kantian Ideas to account for processes of learning and in this way combine the dynamics of the encounter with dynamical transcendental structures. We see that the autonomy of sensation does not lead Deleuze to reject the transcendental but rather, as we've suggested, to improve its ability to account for experience by purifying it of any reference to experience whatsoever. Levi Bryant takes on Meillassoux's characterization of transcendental philosophy as trapped in a 'correlationist circle' by showing the role of time as both prior to conscious life and as fracturing it. In Matt Lee's chapter we find an exploration of the level of sophistication and naivete in Kant's version of transcendental philosophy and how this relates to Deleuze's thought. In interrogating the ability of Deleuze's notion of the transcendental to 'level' these levels he shows that it is possible for the transcendental to operate immanently to the world of forces that characterize a naturalistic account of thought. Mick Bowles stages a conflict between naturalism and the transcendental in Deleuze's work by interrogating the productivity of force, asking whether it can account for consciousness and understanding. Can naturalism do justice to the faculty that Kant venerated? Edward Willatt poses the question of a genesis of cognition in Kant and the way Deleuze uncovers it, seeking to show that object=x is a transcendental condition capable of attaining openness to experience. Christian Kerslake's chapter makes a strong case for combining a legacy of pre-critical or pre-Kantian metaphysics with Kant's critique

of thought. Deleuze is said to make use of a transcendental that combines the ambitions of rationalism that precedes Kant with Kant's own contributions to questions regarding what thought is capable of. Henry Somers-Hall opposes Descartes' naturalistic account of critique to Kant's account of transcendental illusion as being internal to reason. He shows Deleuze's debt to Kant's critique, the mechanisms of which are now put to work in the attempt to account for experience through difference. The case is made by all the chapters for the need for a transcendental account to grasp what thought can do, to avoid drowning thought in its forceful individuation but to balance this by making this individuation the source of encounters needed for thought to be productive. The 'critical moment' staged in the *Critique of Pure Reason* is seen to connect with his concern with the emphasis upon sensation that we find in Deleuze so that what thought can do and what sensation does to us become part of a full account of experience, part of the discordant accord of the faculties that for Deleuze characterize Kant's critical system.

Deleuze's move from a transcendental empiricism with a concern first of all with what sensation can do, as influenced by Kant's transcendental idealism, and its concern first of all with what understanding can do to a transcendental materialism is something that is also explored. Writing with Félix Guattari in *Anti-Oedipus* Deleuze avoids the language of Kantian faculties that has been present in a number of his earlier solo works. Instead they develop a materialism that is characterized as transcendental in terms of machinic operations rather than the work of faculties. This provides a reading or appropriation of Kant that places the transcendental further from consciousness and closer to matter, dealing with the pressing issues that we saw being raised by Meillassoux. All hint of the psychologism that had characterized Kant's three syntheses in the A-edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* is radically blown away by the terminology of desiring-machines. The three syntheses are transcendental conditions because they are what is always the same about their operations. Michael Olson's chapter considers the object in this context, something that must, like the three syntheses, be transcendental in the sense that it remains the same but must be dynamic enough to cope with an engineering through difference. He seeks to show what makes Deleuze and Guattari's materialism in *Anti-Oedipus* transcendental, concerned with a transcendental account of objects that ensures that differences in flows of desire are realized productively. The challenge to naturalism comes here from the role of difference in machines that are considered in terms of what they do and not in terms of meanings attached to conscious

life. This brings us to some observations about Meillassoux's approach with which we end this introduction.

We must ask whether Deleuze and Guattari's version of transcendental philosophy is able to respond to the problems that Meillassoux raises in *After Finitude*? Meillassoux argues that the 'critical moment' has continued to be at work as the 'post-Kantian' starting point for philosophy. A number of questions are raised by his account. Does speculative materialism rely upon a knowledge structure that could be characterized precisely as transcendental? This is something many of the chapters here are concerned with when they consider Deleuze's use of transcendental conditions and their value to his thought. We find evidence for such reliance in Meillassoux's reference to the meaning of things for us and in themselves: 'All those aspects of the object that can give rise to a mathematical thought (to a formula or to digitalization) rather than to perception or sensation can be meaningfully turned into properties of the thing not only as it is with me, but also as it is without me' (Meillassoux 2008: 3). Deleuze and Guattari talk of machines in *Anti-Oedipus* as an attempt to focus upon use and function so as to evacuate all reference to meaning and hence to conscious life and its way of relating to objects. They attempt to think in terms of processes in order to make what is anterior to conscious life immanent to that very life and to envisage within a machinic transcendental horizon a world prior to such life. Meillassoux's anterior could be the limit of thought for Deleuze and Guattari. Yet Meillassoux claims that what science does is aim for 'external references' that will 'endow [its] experiments with meaning' rather than to support the universal status of its experiment (Meillassoux 2008: 17). Thus the conditions of thought are not tied up with a transcendental horizon but are instead discrete and concerned only with themselves. Science then is not concerned with supporting the transcendental structures of consciousness but with conditions that do not refer to this form of life. Yet we find that for Meillassoux science is concerned with providing meaning. This seems to avoid or neglect Deleuze and Guattari's move to undermine the hold of consciousness upon the conditions of thought. It comes down to an evaluation of whether machinic synthesis or mathematical data are better able to capture what Meillassoux describes as anterior to conscious life. It seems as if scientists for him are implicated in normativity, ignoring the sense in which scientists are concerned with making things work. Do scientists make truth claims or do they engage in technics? It could be argued that the information that they secure through experiment is placed in apparatuses whose value is that they work or successfully account for things. This perhaps illustrates the

dangers of moving too quickly to the next philosophical fashion in our attempts to deal with the valid problem of avoiding presupposing what we are seeking to account for.

In this introduction we have sought to provide some justification for the focus of these chapters. The 'critical moment' is as alive in the context of the clash of transcendental materialism and speculative materialism today as it was in the clash between transcendental idealism and the meta-critique in the late eighteenth century. The volume itself shows that the focus is justified; it shows that it is productive enough to exclude many of Kant's other works and Deleuze's productive engagement with them. It shows that the focus, its narrowness, is not arbitrary but is the result of the singular genesis we summed up with the question 'what can thought do?'.

Matt Lee and Edward Willatt

Note

[1] Meillassoux is careful to distinguish the term 'anterior' from the term 'distant'. What he calls 'ancestral time' concerns what is anterior to life and so in no sense related to conscious life. It is therefore not just an un-witnessed time but a time that is not given or is 'not contemporary with any givenness' (Meillassoux 2008: 20). He argues that we can think the coming into being of givenness rather than finding that what we refer to is just un-witnessed, that is still situated in the context of givenness and so caught in the 'correlationist circle'.

Chapter 1

The Philosopher-Monkey
Learning and the Discordant Harmony of the Faculties

Patricia Farrell

The exploration of Ideas and the elevation of each faculty to its transcendent exercise amounts to the same thing. These are two aspects of an essential apprenticeship or process of learning. *[. . .] Learning is the appropriate name for the subjective acts carried out when one is confronted with the objecticity of a problem (Idea), whereas knowledge designates only the generality of concepts or the calm possession of a rule enabling solutions.*

(DR: 204)

This chapter will interrogate the above quotation from *Difference and Repetition* by focusing on the Idea, (as Deleuze derives it from Kant as 'problematic field'), as also the field of play for the two contrasting games of philosophy he characterizes in both *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense.* One is 'the game of problems and the question' (LOS: 60), 'the game of the problematic and the imperative [. . .] of difference and repetition' (DR: 354) and the other is 'the game of the categorical and the hypothetical' (LOS: 60), 'that of the Same and representation' (DR: 354). The second game, which acts to confirm the same, is, by designation, the Kantian game. However, the first, which acts to affirm difference, is, up to a point, clearly Kantian too. This point at which Kant moves from being an instigator of the first game to being the representative of the second revolves, for Deleuze, around Kant's perceived need to instigate a 'just measure', an harmonious accord of the faculties, structuring the field of inquiry along the horizontal axis of judgement as common sense (the partition and distribution of concepts), and the vertical axis of judgement as good sense (the measuring and hierarchization of subjects), in order to mediate the propensity for illusion and redeem God, Self and the World

for the order of our moral education. Kant's 'work of genius', 'the particular machinery', 'the problems he poses' which Deleuze admires, becomes the fascinating 'perfect incarnation of a false critique' (DI: 139).

Kant, in *The Critique of Pure Reason*, presents a revolutionary and creative reconfiguration of philosophy. From the point of view of Deleuze's project in *Difference and Repetition*, Kant makes a number of significant moves. First, he constructs a method for ordering thinking synthetically, progressing from the conditions of experience to its conditioned reality. Second, in the light of this, he draws a distinction between phenomena and noumena that is radically different from the distinction made by Plato between Ideal forms and their copies. This distinction, in which a phenomenon ceases to be merely a sensible form philosophically inferior to a pure intelligible form, and becomes instead the conditioned object as experienced within the synthetic context of its conditions, fundamentally shapes the view of later thinkers, most notably, as Deleuze suggests in the first of his 1978 Vincennes lectures on Kant, Sigmund Freud (KS1). Deleuze in the same lecture proposes Kant as the first phenomenologist (ibid.). Third, in his formulation of why we can only know and understand reality in contingent phenomenal terms – reality for itself – an experience which is, nevertheless, universally conditioned by reality in itself, Kant gives to philosophy a significant and creatively enhanced concept of the 'transcendental': the necessary which conditions the possibility of experience by way, in methodological terms, of the universal categories and the *a priori* intuitions of space and time.

The parameters of the synthetic and the transcendental open up within thinking the potential for a new inventive order. Deleuze's concern, however, in *Difference and Repetition*, is both about the way in which Kant allows his system to suggest the ways in which it can be subsequently closed down, in order to satisfy what Kant sees as the demands of reason, and that these Kantian methods of definitive closure have themselves been profoundly influential. Deleuze, therefore, seeks to unpick the limitations he sees in Kant's philosophy: the practice of critique having been significantly made possible by Kant.

As he makes clear in the Preface to the English edition of *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze's determination at this point in career was to attempt to 'do philosophy', having already provided a series of engaged readings of philosophy's existing work. He has embarked on discovering the 'system of the future' (DR: 142) that will be the game of difference for which 'there is no pre-existing rule' (ibid.). However, Deleuze's reading of Kant becomes an integral part of finding a means to describe this future game. The Kantian system presents a structured model of how thinking deals

with the problematic that Deleuze can work with and against the grain of. Both Deleuze's early study, *Kant's Critical Philosophy* and his lectures on Kant at Vincennes in 1978 (KS1-4) provide an insight into how Deleuze believes the Kantian system works and how it makes thinking work (how it is a revolutionary project in thinking) that reads alongside his critical commentary in *Difference and Repetition.* Thus we have versions of Kant in the Kant study and the lectures and a radical reversioning of Kant for the game of the future. Kant becomes a topological puzzle within the wider topology of Deleuze's own project.

Deleuze foregrounds what he reads in Kant as the configuration of the Idea as a problematic field that is traversed by thinking in its pursuit of a solution, coupling this with the Kantian description of the Idea as regulative principle. Though we must always beware false problems, 'Ideas have a perfectly legitimate "regulative" function in which they constitute true problems or pose well-founded problems. That is why "regulative" means "problematic" ' (DR: 214). The focus of philosophy becomes a commitment to a *productive* traversal by thinking of the Idea as problematic field. What is happening to thinking as it becomes subject to the problematic? Where does this traversal take thinking and how is this educative?

'Kant was without doubt the first to accept the problematic not as a fleeting uncertainty but as the very object of the Idea, and thereby as an indispensable horizon of all that occurs or appears' (LOS: 54). The Idea, for Kant is the formal device of unconditioned reason: Ideas are pure concepts of reason whose objects do not exist within experience. Here is a generative potential that Deleuze can recuperate from the game of representation for the difference-game. The game of representation in its most characteristic form, operates a circularity of thinking that communicates between an 'Image of [innate] thought' and an essential ground or source in order to ultimately confirm conceptual identity. Difference if it occurs in the relation of thinking to experience is conceptually mediated through a fourfold operation of identity, resemblance, opposition and analogy to draw it into the circularity of the system. Kant takes into account the role of unconditioned reason but ultimately this formative role can be seen to fall prey, within the conditioning of his transcendental philosophy, to the reflexive representationalism that Deleuze exposes in the relationship between the possible and the real he derives from his reading of Bergson. The determination to establish the limits of what is possible for understanding locks thinking into circularity. The possible is only established by being read back on from the real, confirming its relation to Being as existence in contrast to non-Being as contradictory non-existence. The truly generative

potential of the Idea is realized by translating from Being as an unconditioned form of the possible to Being as, in itself, a virtual form that bears no resemblance to its actualization. It is freed from the necessity of being grounded, of being required to pass into conditioning. The relationship between Being and non-Being ceases to be between existence and non-existence but, rather, between actual being and problematic being. The Idea as problematic field is the expression of this problematic being and can *persist* in this problematic state. Not in need of conditioning as the passage of the possible to the real, it is the whole of conditioning. Ideas can have quasi-causal principles in Deleuze's system as the differential relationship of the virtual and the actual, providing a principle of sufficient reason that they do not have in the Kantian system where they can only be a regulative, indicative principle in relation to possible knowledge. A truly creative genesis and evolution, required for Deleuze's transcendental system of the future, involves a different relationship (i.e. a relationship of difference), something more like the real distinction between creating and created nature immanent to Spinoza's *Deus sive Natura.*

The Idea retains in Deleuze's philosophy a structural cohesion of use; it may not be useful as a representation of possibilities but it is genetically usable in its relation to the problematic, which is, Deleuze asserts, quite specifically a 'state of the world': 'the problematic is both an objective category of knowledge and a perfectly objective kind of being' (ibid.: 54). The virtual is no less real than the actual: 'We must avoid giving the elements and relations which form a structure an actuality which they do not have, and withdrawing from them a reality which they have' (DR: 260). In operational terms, the object of the Idea is the problem and the Idea determines its internal structure on these problematic terms. As both virtual and objective Ideas 'combine the greatest power of being differentiated with an inability to be differenciated' (ibid.: 235). This is a positive inability that is a mark of capability, the virtue or efficacy of its virtual state. Differentiation, in the Deleuzian distinction, determines the virtual content of the Idea as problem; differenciation expresses the actualization of this virtual through the constitution of solutions by governing by the internal workings of the Idea. Thus the Idea is an objecticity with its own structural coherence of engagement: 'the problematic [. . .] Idea is a system of connections between differential elements, a system of differential relations between genetic elements' (ibid.: 229). The structure of its problem is the genesis of its solution.

What then is thinking's relation to the Idea? Again, Deleuze, detects in the critical Kant the inception of something different that challenges the

essential innateness of thought: 'to the disjunctive couple appearance/essence, Kant is the first who substitutes the conjunctive couple apparition/sense [. . .] There is no longer the essence behind the appearance, there is only the sense or non-sense of what appears' (KS1). For Kant, Deleuze says, Ideas present three moments, the undetermined with regard to their object (i.e. their particular problem), the determinable with regard to the objects of experience and an ideal of infinite determination with regard to concepts of the understanding. These moments are repeated in the three aspects of the Kantian cogito: the 'I am' as indeterminate existence, time as the form under which this existence is determinable and the 'I think' as determination. This marks the opening up of the closed conditionality of the Cartesian cogito and the opening of the thinking subject into the problematic field of the Idea. Ideas are differentials of thought as well as founding the principles of the pragmatics of the problematic as a state of the world. The Idea, as genetic structure, presents a horizon for the potential of thought, taking the Image of thought to its limit, but it is also the threshold of conditioning of this potential usability for knowledge as conceptual identity. This conditioning is an attempted move of clarification for Kant but introduces, for Deleuze, an unnecessary fog of grounding devices that obscure the genetic potential for thinking that the thinker, Kant, enacts.

Deleuze's concern with 'the sense or non-sense that appears' is ontological rather than epistemological. He presents the practice of thinking as its involvement in a multiplicity of serial ontologies that constitute Being as the overarching Event of Being, implicating, explicating and complicating both the actual and the non-actual (as differential, problematic Being). In a diagrammatic form of the relation between the Idea and thinking, two series run concurrently: that of the object of thinking (Ideas, questions, problems and solutions), and that of the subject of thinking (the genesis, evolution and individuation of the agents of thinking). These serial events take place within and distribute themselves through time synthesizing the ontology of thinking and individuation. As this multiplicity of series proceeds, it presents itself as an order of signs, pure and unmediated expressions, which subsist and insist within the readable world. The entirety of this multiplicity is, Deleuze asserts, objectively real; we must read it literally. This objective reality must be insisted upon not only in relation to the evident and actual operation of these series but also in relation to an imperceptible and inexplicable hinterland, a virtual which pre-exists and co-exists with the actual and which is ontology's genital realm and the impetus of its evolution. The articulators and directors of the serial

multiplicity are difference and repetition. This is difference not as that which is distinguished from, or in contradiction to, something (thereby confirming the representable, recognizable category of that something), but that which distinguishes itself, differentiating itself as difference and thereby affirming its creativity, its genetic power. This is not repetition as the confirmation of the recognizable but the point of affirmation at which difference differenciates itself, the point that establishes the refrain of difference, affirming its power and raising it to the *nth degree.*

Problems are events; solutions are states of affairs. 'Problems are tests and selections' (DR: 201) within the virtual as unformed (not formless) reality. Difference in itself is 'determination *as such*' (ibid.: 36), and thought and difference are mutually implicated 'since thought is that moment in which determination makes itself one, by virtue of maintaining a unilateral and precise relation to the indeterminate' (ibid.: 37). The encounter between thinking and the problem is a turn into difference. In the temporal order of thinking it is both an untimely moment and the perverse moment of a force, turning thinking aside and out from the conditioned circle of innate thought. As an event of ungrounded thinking it is the singularity that seeds the serial system.

The differential turn is the moment of a force of outward propulsion, propelling thinking along its trajectory: an expressive force. We are expressed from the encounter and become the conduits for this expression. We are conducted and must conduct. We actualize the pure expression of the differential turn, we conduct it in what we do, and our doing is a movement out from this expressive line of thinking and across the domain of states of affairs, our words and deeds expressed from the propulsion of the encounter. The pure expression is statically generated in the encounter. Its purity and its force are synonymous with its status as absolute difference unmediated by identity, resemblance, analogy or opposition. At the point of its turn into being pure expression is a virtual actualizing, not a possibility being realized. We 'count upon the contingency of an encounter with that which forces thought to raise up and educate the absolute necessity of an act of thought or a passion to think' (ibid.: 176).

Deleuze uses the example in *Difference and Repetition* of a monkey learning to find food in boxes of a particular colour. There is a 'paradoxical period' in which the monkey performs successfully even though it is not yet in possession of the rule enabling the solution. The genesis of the solution does not happen through correspondences between the actual terms of the problem, but between the problem as virtual and its actualization. In this respect learning happens through the *comprehension* of

problems: 'A problem is determined at the same time as it is solved, but its determination is not the same as its solution: the two elements differ in kind, the determination amounting to the genesis of the concomitant solution' (ibid.: 203). Learning happens as experimentation, through the in-formation of the trajectory of thinking across the problematic field.

The determination of a problem is the genesis of a local solution but the problem persists and insists in the solution. The sign as the ontology of pure sense in the untimeliness of its presentation to thinking inheres and insists in the response. Signs *cause* problems; they incarnate Ideas. The asymmetry of sign and response opens out the refractive and persistent potential of learning. The response does not register in order to confirm just measure in the field of speculation but to problematize states of the world and affirm them as events of problematic being (so that we may carry on experimenting with more monkey-business). Thinking inhabits the problem and is informed by it. The philosopher as apprentice of his or her own system becomes 'the operator of the Idea' (ibid.: 249) but this apprenticeship, in order to work, constitutes 'an involuntary adventure' (ibid.: 205): 'we never know in advance how someone will learn' (ibid.). The distinction Deleuze wishes to make is that learning is not a methodological rule but, rather, a *culture* of engagement with the problematic.

Kant sees the intensive difference as the problematic object internal to the Idea, but also assumes the necessity to project it out into a solution that is an external relation with the world of extensive bodies, in order that it may be posited as merely conceptual difference and therefore mediated, or resolved, into an identical concept: 'the subordination of difference to the analogy of judgement' (ibid.: 338). The process of thinking becomes qualified by being passed through the grid of common sense and good sense in order to find a correspondence of sufficiency between the subject of the process and its object, to arrive at a solution agreeable to judgement: identifying and locating the concepts produced by cognition in the life of thinking, building the superstructure of the *a priori* categories as the external framework for the empirical flexibility of progressive cognition, extending the play of thinking as an intensive engagement with Ideas which have no possible objects of experience (their objects being problems), while discovering the possible. This conditioning externalizes difference, robbing it of its genetic potential as inherent to the Idea and drawing it into mediated knowledge. Deleuze sees a key device for sustaining the coherence of the Kantian system in the role of analogical judgement and its mediation of the accord of faculties.

Deleuze notes in his book on Kant, that faculties have two roles in Kant's philosophy. The first is a 'higher' role, whereby any one faculty 'is capable of a *higher form*. We may say that a faculty has a higher form when it finds *in itself* the law of its own exercise. [. . .] In its higher form, a faculty is thus autonomous' (KCP: 4). This would be the *intrinsic* regulative conduct of a faculty as the relation of conformity (faculty of knowledge) or causality (faculty of desire) between an object and its representative form, be this intuition, concept or Idea, as this relationship is constituted for thinking. However, Kant having discovered this regulative autonomy, then perceives the need for a further *extrinsic* regulative role and this he gives to the faculty of judgement in order to draw the faculties into a working accord: judgement is thus, in itself, 'legislative form'.

The active role of judgement is integral to Kant's method as the agent of the consummation of the work of ongoing philosophical discovery:

> Judgement is always irreducible or original; this is why it can be called 'a' faculty (specific art or gift). It never consists in one faculty alone, but in their accord, whether an accord already determined by one of them playing a legislative role or, more profoundly, in a free indeterminate accord, which forms the final object of a 'critique of judgement' in general. (ibid.: 61)

Judgement can be *in situ* determining or reflective, but in all cases, 'judgement always implies several faculties and expresses the accord between them' (ibid.: 59). Judgement, as a structural device is not a predetermined form, rather, it is an evolved form; as the consummator of the play of the faculties, it is also the conductor of the productiveness of this collective play:

> Every determinate accord indeed presupposes that the faculties are, at a deeper level, capable of a free and indeterminate accord. [. . .] It is only at the level of this free and indeterminate accord (*sensus communis aestheticus*) that *we will be able to pose* the problem of a ground of the accord or a genesis of common sense. (ibid.: 23–4)

This 'level of [. . .] free and indeterminate accord' presents itself as a 'particular machinery' for pure difference. However, for the accord to find a representative form, its ability to pose the problem of the ground of its own genesis must itself be grounded, tied back into the system, and, for this, judgement must be definitively confirmed in its legislative role. Kant

presents himself to Deleuze as the great artificer who enables pure difference and then forbids it.

In both Kant and Deleuze we can argue that thinking has an ethical imperative, however the distinction between them lies in whether this ethical imperative is one of confirming the identity of a just accord or of being able to affirm difference in itself without measure. Kant must consummate his work of philosophical discovery in order to make it usable for the purposes of practical reason, as he conceives its necessity. The overall ethos of the faculties is a matter of categorical moral purpose. Without the legislative accord the Ideas that can reason beyond the concepts of knowledge lead thinking disharmoniously and dissipatively into paradox and illusion, rather than finding their proper form within the system as the regulative principles of ethical thought, placing thinking on a trajectory beyond the possibilities of knowledge but in accordance with a categorical imperative. The aspiration towards a consummate inter-related whole in order to address 'the problems he poses' direct Kantian philosophy towards the production of the transcendental principles of an harmonious idealism in the relation of thinking to experience.

While Deleuze can admire the Kantian system through the rediscovery of the machinery of its problems, he detects a false critique in the need to legislate for the containment of those problems. Rather than allowing the problems encountered by thinking to intrinsically generate their own sense, Kant places the representation of their sense within the significatory system of 'common sense' aligned with 'good sense' which is extrinsically applied as the legislative form of the faculty of judgement, in order to preserve the ethical accord of the faculties. Where there may be a structural adaptation of the value of judgement to the critical circumstances of pure and practical reason – speculative common sense being placed under the chairmanship of the understanding, moral common sense under the chairmanship of reason – in both cases 'it is inevitable that common sense should seem to us a kind of a priori fact beyond which we cannot go' (ibid.: 23).

Kant's evaluative (and pre-emptive) need for 'just measure or "justice"' is key, for Deleuze, to his closure of the potential for an ontology of sense:

> [Common sense] designates [. . .] an a priori accord of faculties, or more precisely the 'result' of such an accord. [. . .] [C]ommon sense appears not as a psychological given but as the subjective condition of all 'communicability'. [. . .] Kant will never give up the subjective principle of a common sense of this type [. . .] the idea of a good nature of the faculties,

> of a healthy and upright nature which allows them to harmonize with one another and to form harmonious proportions. (ibid.: 21)

The attitude to the play of thinking typifies 'the game of the categorical and the hypothetical'. In this game of containment, the categories (as legislative acts) are useful as representatives of just measure within the system. However, Deleuze argues that thinking must be liberated as a faculty to undertake 'the game of the problematic', such that what thinking can do in its encounter with the problematic is usable in its own right: not that the problem as paradox is resolved into orthodoxy, but that thinking subsists within the paradoxical and all 'solutions' are not escapes from but engagements with the problematic field.

Philosophy as a tradition, Deleuze says, finds difference in itself and the problematic field it generates 'monstrous' because it cannot be represented within the measured order. This monstrosity amounts in its lack of fit to immorality: 'it is proposed to "save" difference by representing it [. . .] by relating it to the requirements of the concept in general' (DR: 38). Difference as it unpredictably differentiates itself is 'a bad encounter, a bad occasion' (ibid.) that justice demands should be resolved through mediation: 'Difference is "mediated" to the extent that it is subjected to the fourfold root of identity, opposition, analogy and resemblance' (ibid.).

If it is thought that 'makes' difference then as a faculty it must be free to function as unmediated and unlegislated. The affirmation of the absolutely different, which is thinking's responsibility, cannot happen unless thinking can take itself to the limit of what it can do – and beyond that limit to a point at which it can subsist within a state of paradox.

Deleuze characterizes the game of representation *as* a game of analogy that he compares with his own game of difference, which is, in contrast, a game of ontology. With the accord of faculties established by judgement there may be the institution of a correspondence of subjective and objective validity that is able to be held as true. Kant seeks an accordance of the role of the freedom of rational beings in the purposive system of nature. The challenge for the elegance of the Kantian system is how and where does the confluence of these factors of freedom and teleology constitute itself and fall into place: and how do we constitute it as a philosophical description of what happens to thinking? Analogy as the operational synthesis of creativity and judgement equates to design. This underpins teleology as purposiveness (as well as potentially giving the design argument for God, where if God is such, then Self is such, and world is such). It also grants a legitimate scope of capacity, pointing beyond the empirical to the

transcendental, that justifies the grounded progress of speculative thought. Judgement finds legitimate parameters for spontaneity and autonomy in the maintenance of a relationship of being to knowing. We can legitimately *pose* the delimiting question of what is possible for thinking (without necessarily claiming we have the definitive answer), thus, to use Lyotard's terms for the aspiration of philosophy, saving the honour of thinking. This being the case, we may assert that we are *not* monkeys, we are humans, *because* we have judgement. In finding the solution that maps, that holds as a concept, we *recognize* a valid outcome. The *form* of recognition is the transcendental principle for the conduct of the game that confirms identity rather than affirming difference.

Deleuze sees Kant as working with the challenges to thinking of a dichotomy of the formed and the formless. As such, Kant finds a pre-synthesis, a prior stabilizer, for the possibility of knowledge. Deleuze posits a new discourse of the 'pure unformed' which concerns neither the form of representation as the ratification of identity nor the formless abyss of non-being as nothingness but, rather, the persistence of the transcendental field of the event of the ontology of sense, the virtual actualizing, of non-being as problematic being. The virtuality of the Idea has nothing to do with the possibility of a representation within knowledge. This virtuality is concerned with the ontology of the unformed, not with analogues of the formed and formless.

The affirmative conduct of thinking, as its own faculty, is subject only to the formal constraints of its own ethos and not constrained by external laws of conduct. Deleuze exemplifies philosophy's application of extrinsic constraint in order to justify the systematicity of its operation in his consideration of Kant's harmonious accord of the faculties because Kant, perhaps more than anyone, interrogates the condition of thought and discovers the problematic nature of the field in which it functions. Kant is an exemplum of 'doing' philosophy even if it becomes, 'the perfect incarnation of false critique [. . .]. But when you are facing such a work of genius, there's no point in saying you disagree. First you have to know how to admire' (DI: 139).

Deleuze sees the doctrine of the faculties, as such, as a vital component of philosophy's description of its relation to the empirical. However, the determination of common sense circumscribes the potential of the faculties to find each its own transcendental form in order to enact what Deleuze calls a 'superior empiricism', whereby each faculty 'grasps that in the world which concerns it exclusively and brings it into the world' (DR: 180), rather than abstracting the transcendental analogically from the

proposition of the empirical, such that the transcendental is propped up by the 'vicious circle which makes the condition refer to the conditioned as it reproduces its image' (LOS: 105). The faculties must be released from the accord, maintained by judgement and measured by the graph of common sense and good sense, so that each may find the limit of its own exercise, its imperative, impelled by its own differential object, that expresses its differential and genetic element within the play of faculties. In the description of Deleuze's superior transcendental empiricism, the faculties *discover* a 'harmony' of exercise, through the pervasive engagement of encountered Ideas. In true learning 'Ideas occur throughout the faculties and concern them all' (DR: 242). Through a provocative engagement with the problematic each faculty, through the articulation of Ideas, 'transmits its violence to the other by powder fuse' (ibid.: 243), implying a harmony that is necessarily 'discordant', excluding 'the forms of identity, convergence and collaboration which define a common sense' (ibid.). It is at these extremities, where the lightning flashes – as the Idea performs the topological manoeuvre of communicating between faculties at their divergent limits, describing their serial operation as a disjunctive synthesis – that Ideas come into problematic being: learning seeding itself. This is a catalytic economy that sustains thinking as the faculty of pure thought within the topological asymmetry of the discordant harmony. The faculties are freed and the problematic field mutates but insists, perpetually distributing itself outside and beyond common sense's ability to map the conceptual identity of its distribution: 'God', 'Self', 'world' cannot become equal to themselves. Addressing the question posed by the encounter – being forced to think – is a matter of exercising each and every faculty, testing it according to its capability. The emphasis is upon the *conatus essendi* of each faculty in its mode of being.

The internal imperative of the Idea unpicks the external orders of common sense and good sense, releasing each of the faculties into the wild to find the limit of its own operation. The Idea articulates this serial divergence of the exploratory faculties, distributing themselves across it, as the persistence and insistence of the problematic field, the field of learning as participation in the ontology of difference.

The discordant harmony of the faculties is more than a philosophical alternative to Kant's harmonious accord (another way of presenting what Deleuze agrees as the descriptive necessity of the faculties), it is also actively unpicking it; Deleuze respects Kant's harmony as he simultaneously refuses and reverses it. He turns the Kantian order inside-out and observes how the internal subsistence of the problematic asserts itself.

The turn to analogy is a turn away from ontology. Is there a way of catching Kant before he involves philosophy in the game of analogy, where thinking prevails in encounter with the problem but all the other faculties become merely modalities of thinking? Deleuze focuses on Kant's presentation of the subject as thinking, on the 'I think' as distinct from the 'I am': 'there is another subject which is evidently neither you nor me [. . .] the transcendental subject [. . .] the unity of all the conditions under which something appears [. . .] [to] each empirical subject' (KS1). Deleuze says, in the Vincennes lectures, that Kant reinvents the word 'transcendental' to create a concept for this 'necessary self' which receives the immediate presentation of sense in the apparition prior to its mediated representation. For Kant, the receipt of the presentation of the apparition into representation *as* leading to recognition and confirmation is a necessary transition in order to bring receptivity into activity. For Deleuze, the transcendental potential for learning lies precisely *in the gap between* the presentation, as donation of sense, and the representation. So for Kant, the 'I think' is a form of mediation, but, ironically, a mediation of its own inherent genetic potential. Thinking operates as a synthesis to which anything is possible, if the synthesis is compossible, filtered by cognition, mediated into knowledge. The judgement 'I think' is the filter for concept creation, the principle of apperception prior to but in accord with experiences.

In terms of Kant's machinery, what Deleuze wishes to redeem is Kant's 'furtive and explosive moment [. . .] [introducing] a kind of fissure or crack in the pure Self of the "I think", an alienation in principle, insurmountable in principle' (DR: 70), a fracture in which 'Ideas swarm [. . .] constantly emerging on its edges, ceaselessly coming out and going back [. . .] composed in a thousand different manners' (ibid.: 216). At this moment, Deleuze can foreground and affirm the genetic potential of the transcendental subject (its status as virtual or pure unformed), before it is confirmed as a formal principle of mediation. Deleuze holds Kant in the cataclysmic moment of his machinery, inside this disequilibrated self, unequal to itself, where problematizing Ideas can pass. This marks the persistence and insistence of the Idea/thinker encounter – the *necessity* of Kant's machinery, the *imperative* of his problem – intensifying the untimely moment of the encounter, the caesura that draws an asymmetrical timeline through the coherence of the self, into the ontological genesis of what can be affirmed before the purity of its difference is mediated in the recognizable: 'It is as though the *I* were fractured from end to the other: fractured by the pure and empty form of time' (ibid.: 108). The subject is taken from the point of encounter, along the line of thinking out and onto the

surface of expression, but, in the case of Deleuzian thinking, this is an intensive trajectory rather than an extensive one.

For Deleuze thinking arises in thinking not as a gift of grace but as the violent eruption of the cataclysmic 'never seen before' that throws the circle of conditioned thought out of skew. The untimely moment of the encounter marks an intensity that punctures the cohesion of time, both temporal and eternal. The Cogito, as unified subject, gives way to the 'aleatory point' of the untimely (the cataclysm that Kant unleashed and then stemmed). Thus situated, against our judgement, in the genesis of thinking *qua* thinking – not the representation of thinking constructed by the consensus of faculties – we do not choose to think, we are forced to think. (We may think that we think; but we do not think until we are forced to think; *that's when thinking happens.*)

The philosophical outcome of the encounter between the unequal state of the learner and the asymmetric state of the Idea *will be* the 'creation' of a concept. Philosophers are distinguished, for Deleuze, by the production of concepts, just as artists are distinguished by the production of paintings: and it is on this basis that Deleuze looks to Kant as truly a philosopher. But for Deleuze, there must be a theory of concepts fit for the philosophical game of difference: the concept as a differenciation that expresses an inessential differentiation rather than as an identifier placed within grounded thought. Concepts are what philosophy produces from the local positings of its engagement. Conceptualization works as a matter of pragmatics rather than essences: as Deleuze frequently asserts, to address not *what is x?* but *how much, how and in what cases?* The philosopher does the work, works the problem; the problem works thinking and gives birth to a concept.

Time is the factor that opens out the engagement with the Idea: 'when time is cyclical, [it] is a line which limits the world and just saying that time becomes a straight line means that it no longer limits the world, it will traverse it. [. . .] [I]t is no longer a limit in the sense of a limitation, it is a limit in the sense it's at the extremity, it never ceases to be at the extremity, it's the sense of our passage to the limit' (KS2). Time as the line that cleaves the thinking subject produces an asymmetrical before and after: a caesura as the holding open which is where the Ideas swarm, playing the game of difference (the game of the future in its relation of asymmetry with the past). Time is 'the inherent limit, a limit interior to thought' (ibid.). States of affairs are problematized *out there* in space, thinking is fractured *in here* in time. Engagement with the problem rends the self irreducibly, but this cleavage is the intensification of the problematic field.

The assumption of a pre-existent ground that *externally* conditions thinking's relation to the problem, relying on given propositions and hypotheses and evaluating problems in terms of their solvability, misses the *internal imperative* of the problematic Idea, which is intrinsically genetic as such. The receptive passivity of the fractured-I in Kant is given a coherence of identity by the active synthesis of speculation. Deleuze, on the other hand, locates within the asymmetrical Self an inessential (para-doxical) power of synthesis, a capability to *make sense* and thus to get the truth it deserves according to the sense it makes: 'there occurs at the heart of problems a genesis of truth, a production of the true in thought' (DR: 201). There is a 'propitious moment in which the philosopher-monkey opens up to truth, himself producing the true, but only to the extent that he begins to penetrate the coloured thickness of a problem' (ibid.: 204). The fractured I breaks the Image of innate thought: breaking the circle, ungrounding thinking to become learning as experimentation, rather than the pursuit of knowledge.

The discordant harmony of the faculties articulated by the disequilibrium of the learner, as 'I think', in its encounter with the asymmetry of the Idea, as problematic field, affirms the *divergence* of faculties in their transcendent exercise, to where each may have its encounter to instigating the 'para-sense': contra common sense, that informs the disjunctive synthesis of all the faculties. The Idea as problematic field and regulative principle enacts incompossibility in the same world. The Idea works as an implicated-explicated-complicated incompossible system of divergent series, perverting the circle of conditioning of the objective ground and the subjective Image of innate thought. Topologizing transforms *us* from containers of thought into conduits of thinking. Learning constitutes itself as a *way* of being (an ethos): a *way* of operating (a poetics), relating the Idea to Being as a whole (actual Being and problematic Being), involving it in the ontology of sense as pure difference. In this respect the serial system converges by diverging: 'This harmonious Discord seemed to us to correspond to that Difference which by itself articulates or draws together' (ibid.: 243).

Stopping short of knowledge, not going all the way to the conceptual mediation of difference, and persisting in the gaps in thinking is not a failure to do all that philosophy should do but an opening up of the limitless potential of what thinking can do; it is an argument for the generative power of problematizing as such. The gap is a point that becomes a line, a trajectory along which thinking is propelled by the problem, which then opens out on both sides onto a plane of action. We can grasp the progressive structure of the conduct of thinking in its own right: an unforeseen

encounter that simultaneously forces thinking to happen and engages it in its own activity, which points to its actualization in doing all that it can do, in other words, in its pure expression. By way of the moment of the problematic encounter, thinking is charged with the responsibility to affirm difference rather than confirm the same. The elucidation and substantiation of this conduct, as progressive structure, as the formal activity of thinking, constitutes the writing and reading of the philosophical system that is *Difference and Repetition*. We must observe difference in the forms that it takes, pay attention to how the gaps work. If this establishes a theory of difference, it must also establish a practice of difference.

The monkey illustrates Deleuze's assertion, after Hume, that we can affirm more than we know; it shows that we *can* (and must) play the *ontological* game of the affirmation of difference and not renege on our responsibility to this in favour of the merely *analogical* game of knowledge, of the confirmation of the same: 'the Idea is not the element of knowledge but that of an infinite "learning" which is of a different nature to knowledge' (ibid.: 241). Kant's externalization of difference removes the potential for the genesis of a differential sense that would prove the affirmation of difference and thinking's capability for this. In the Kantian system the '"critical point", the horizon or focal point at which difference *qua* difference serves to reunite, has not yet been reached' (ibid.: 216–17).

> Learning [. . .] means composing the singular points of one's own body or one's own language with those of another shape or 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 and our language? (ibid.: 241)

In the production of these transformations as 'local solutions', it is necessary for the thinking subject to be unequal to itself or else be annihilated by the problematic. The virtual environment of the Idea is both embryonic and perpetually individuating and 'there are "things" that only an embryo can do [. . .]. The destiny and achievement of the embryo is to live the unlivable, to sustain forced movements of a scope which would break any skeleton or tear ligaments' (ibid.: 267). The fractured-I is the 'child-player' of the game without rules able to break down the reflexive communication between the orders of analogy, representation, opposition and identity, which creates the illusion that identity is first, that the reality of individuation proceeds from the possibility of the individual. The individual is not a

cause but an effect of the actualization of the virtual in the process of individuation: 'It is true that every Idea turns us into larvae, having put aside the identity of the I along with the resemblance of the self' (ibid.: 272).

The Idea is the element of an infinite learning; it is playing the game of difference, the Ideal game. For just measure we substitute experimentation, defying Kant's 'highest test': that is, the criterion to decide what in principle can be reproduced and repeated without contradiction in the form of a moral law, keeping difference as conceptual difference. In the game of difference and repetition, the philosopher describes a trajectory that differentiates itself across the problematic field, creating the concept. But in his or her engagement with the game the philosopher-monkey does not so much throw the dice as the dice throws the philosopher. The Idea is the milieu of the actualizing of the virtual actualizing.

The fractured-I, as it persists in Deleuze's Ideal game, is 'perplexed'; it cannot achieve a discrete, transcendent unity and is implicated, complicated in the unrecognizable. But although entangled and fractured, it is not disempowered. If anything, the Deleuzian subject is forcibly freed from subjection; it questions because now it *can*. A question is thus not founded on lack of knowledge; rather, it is the affirmation of a capability to engage with the untimely. Addressing the question is the life-affirming response.

Holding the moment of the encounter with the problematic field, Deleuze is saving the game. Learning is set in motion along the trajectory of the generative principle of the Idea, rather than sitting reflecting on the principle of representation.

Chapter 2

Deleuze's Transcendental Empiricism
Notes Towards a Transcendental Materialism

Levi R. Bryant

1. Transcendental Philosophy Beyond Correlationism

From his earliest work on Bergson[1] to his final published essay, 'Immanence: A Life . . .' (TRM: 384–9), Deleuze describes his philosophical position as a '*transcendental* empiricism'. Although Deleuze is profoundly influenced by the tradition of classical empiricism – especially the thought of David Hume – transcendental empiricism is distinct from, and cannot be assimilated to, sense-data empiricism. Classical empiricism is an *epistemology* premised on the primacy of the given (sensation) as the origin of all our ideas. It seeks to determine both the origins and limits of our knowledge through an analysis of how our ideas are built up from copies of impressions.[2] By contrast, as Deleuze repeatedly insists, transcendental empiricism seeks the *conditions* for the given. As Deleuze succinctly puts it, '[d]ifference is not diversity. Diversity is given, but difference is that by which the given is given, that by which the given is given as diverse' (DR: 280). For transcendental empiricism, *the given is not the origin, but is a result, a product, an effect.* Moreover, while Deleuze will have much to say about sensibility, the reconciliation of the two sundered halves of the aesthetic (ibid.: 68–9), and the conditions of real rather than possible experience (Deleuze DI: 36), these tasks will be situated within a much broader project that is not limited to cognition.[3] Issues of transcendental sensibility (the conditions under which something can be sensed for a specific organism) and the aesthetic are a subset of a much broader project designed to account for the being of entities in general, regardless of whether or not organic and living beings exist. That is, the focus will not be on the relation between a living being (in this case the subject) and the world. Deleuze will argue that '[r]eason must reach all the way to the individual,

the genuine concept all the way to the thing, and comprehension all the way to the "this"' (ibid.: 36). He will speak of a new kind of principle of sufficient reason and indiscernibles, capable of reaching the contingency of the individual in its facticity without the mediation of genus, species and categories (ibid.). Thus, following Alberto Toscano, it would be more prudent to refer to Deleuze's transcendental empiricism as a 'transcendental materialism'.[4] This term at least has the merit of underlining the *ontological* nature of Deleuze's project and rescuing it from too narrow a focus on sensibility and cognition. This thesis does some violence to Deleuze's explicit formulations which often refer to consciousness, suggesting a sort of panpsychism; however, as I hope to show, the formulation of his position as a transcendental *materialism* is more in keeping with the logic of his own arguments.

But in what respect can Deleuze's thought be called a *transcendental* philosophy? We can already sense the strangeness of this claim in the assertion that Deleuze's transcendental materialism is an *ontology*. It was Kant, of course, who invented transcendental philosophy in his *Critique of Pure Reason*. There Kant famously remarks that,

> Up to now it has been assumed that all our cognition must conform to the objects; but all attempts to find out something about them *a priori* through concepts that would extend our cognition have, on this presupposition, come to nothing. Hence let us once try whether we do not get farther with the problems of metaphysics by assuming that the objects must conform to our cognition, which would agree better with the requested possibility of an *a priori* cognition of them, which is to establish something about objects before they are given to us. (CPR Guyer and Wood: Bxvi)

For Kant, transcendental inquiry will thus consist in analysing those *a priori* structures of mind or cognition (pure intuition, the categories of the understanding, and reason) that condition the manifold of intuition (sense experience), giving it universal structure. The aim is both to discover the conditions for *all possible experience* and the limits of knowledge. The price of this move will be that we can only know phenomena or objects as they *appear* to us, not objects as they are in themselves. Those philosophies that claim to have access to the world as it is in itself will be called *dogmatic*, and will be shown to fall into insoluble paralogisms and antinomies.

So begins the long history of what Quentin Meillassoux, in his brilliant *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency*, has referred to as 'correlationism'. As Meillassoux puts it,

> [c]orrelationism consists in disqualifying the claim that it is possible to consider the realms of subjectivity and objectivity independently of one another. Not only does it become necessary to insist that we never grasp an object 'in itself', in isolation from its relation to the subject, but it also becomes necessary to maintain that we can never grasp a subject that would not always-already be related to an object. (Meillassoux 2008: 5)

Elsewhere, Meillassoux will characterize correlationism as the philosophy of access, premised on '. . . the argument that we never have access to something apart from that access – that the "in-itself" is unknown since we only know the for-us' (Meillassoux 2007: 427). Whether we are speaking of mind conditioning the manifold of intuition giving rise to structured experience, language giving structure to experience, or the lived body or being-in-the-world disclosing the world, we are speaking of a variant of correlationism insofar as we are prohibited from any relation to the in-itself that is not already given as it is characterized *for-us*.

Now, it is clear in both his philosophical practice and explicit declarations, Deleuze's thought does not fit this logic of correlationism or ordinary transcendental philosophy in its many variants. In his early essay 'Bergson's Conception of Difference', Deleuze will write that '[i]f philosophy has a positive and direct relation to things, it is only insofar as philosophy claims to grasp the thing itself, according to what it is, in its difference from everything it is not, in other words, in its *internal difference*' (DI: 32). Clearly Deleuze cannot here be working within the logic of correlation, for the grasping of the thing itself in its internal difference is not the grasping of the thing as it is *for-us*, but as it is *for-itself* regardless of whether or not there were anyone there to grasp it. In short, Deleuze is proposing to grasp the thing in its difference independent of any mediating structures of cognition, language, being-in-the-world, or lived body, for to grasp the thing as it is for-us would be to betray *its* internal difference.

Likewise, in his magnificent essay *Bergsonism*, Deleuze will write,

> [t]o open us up to the inhuman and the superhuman (*durations* which are inferior and superior to our own), to go beyond the human condition: This is the meaning of philosophy, in so far as our condition condemns

> us to live among badly analyzed composites, and to be badly analyzed composites ourselves. (B: 28)

The inhuman and superhuman are beyond the logic of correlation, as are durations superior and inferior to our own. Thus, in his cinema books, Deleuze will praise cinema for opening us to images beyond the human condition and the primacy of language and phenomenological lived experience.[5] In *What is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari will not hesitate to celebrate science as opening us on to inhuman and superhuman worlds.[6] And in *A Thousand Plateaus* they will gleefully develop a *naturphilosophie*, without being compelled to raise questions of access. While Deleuze certainly develops a sophisticated and path-breaking account of organic experience relevant to both human experience and the experience of other species – a veritable bio-philosophy – nowhere does the question of correlation and the constraints it imposes play the central and overdetermining role in their ontology. Like the most naïve of dogmatic philosophers, he proceeds as if he could speak directly of the in-itself, of things as they are for-themselves, without having to raise any of these epistemic questions pertaining to how this access is possible.

2. Three Critiques of Kant

These observations invite a number of questions about Deleuze's relationship to transcendental philosophy. First, just how does Deleuze avoid the charge of being a dogmatic philosopher? Put differently, just how does Deleuze escape the correlationist circle wherein objects are only ever encountered in relation to a subject and subjects are always correlated with an object? Closely connected to this question is the question of what set of problems motivate Deleuze to reject Kantianism and its many variants. Second, if Deleuze's transcendental thought no longer refers to the way mind (or language, or the lived body, or being-in-the-world, etc.) structures experience, why retain the qualifier 'transcendental' at all? What does it mean to speak of transcendental conditions of things themselves, independent of any connection to the human in the form of mind, culture, lived body, being-in-the-world, or language? Finally, third, what does Deleuze retain of the critical project? In *Nietzsche & Philosophy*, Deleuze's writes, '. . . the idea of critique is identical to that of philosophy' (NP: 82). For Kant, the object of critique consists of transcendental illusions that arise *immanently* from *within* reason itself in the illegitimate employment of the

categories of the understanding independent of intuition. In short, transcendental illusions are not the result of a simple error or mistake where we fail to accurately represent the world, but are generated from within reason in a manner similar to optical illusions generated as an effect of *our* perceptual faculty rather than the object itself. As we will see, Deleuze wishes to retain something like transcendental illusions (DR: 187–8). Yet if Deleuze has broken the correlationist circle, if objects are no longer understood as conforming to mind, language, or as being disclosed *for* Dasein or the lived body, then what are we to understand by a transcendental illusion? Deleuze's answer to these three questions profoundly transforms Kantianism and its variants, shifting it from the domain of epistemology to that of ontology.

a. The Kantian critique is incomplete

Deleuze contests the Kantian project of critique on three broad, interrelated fronts. On the one hand, in *Nietzsche & Philosophy* Deleuze argues that Kant failed to complete the project of critique insofar as he fails to carry out a critique of the values upon which his critique is founded. Deleuze praises Kant for having discovered the project of immanent critique, where critique no longer refers to something external, and where error is no longer the result of an external instance coming from, for example, sensibility, but rather refers to illusions internal to reason itself (NP: 85). However, despite the importance of this discovery, Kant's critique still remains partial and incomplete.

> There has never been a more conciliatory or respectful total critique . . . Kant merely pushed a very old conception of critique to the limit, a conception which saw critique as a force which should be brought to bear on all claims to knowledge and truth, but not on knowledge and truth themselves; a force which should be brought to bear on all claims to morality, but not on morality itself. Thus total critique turns into the politics of compromise . . . (NP: 83–4)

In short, while Kant denounces the *transcendent*, these values and the categories are nonetheless transcendent to the manifold of intuition they condition insofar as they themselves are not the result of a genesis. As Deleuze remarks, '. . . the abstract does not explain, but must itself be explained; and the aim is not to rediscover the eternal or the universal, but to find the conditions under which something new is produced'

(D: vii). Like Platonic forms that stand outside the flux of becoming and are not themselves affected by the world, these Kantian categories and values are treated as eternal and unchanging, as if they fell from the sky fully made, such that they cannot be affected or changed by sensibility itself. 'Transcendental philosophy discovers conditions which remain external to the conditioned. Transcendental principles are principles of conditioning and not of internal genesis. We require a genesis of reason itself, and also a genesis of the understanding and its categories . . .' (NP: 85).

It is worth pointing out in passing that Deleuze's notion of critique here resonates profoundly with both neo-Darwinian evolutionary theory and Marxist immanent critique. In Darwinian terms, the manner in which the subject relates to the world is the product of a genesis, of a process of individuation, that took place in evolutionary history. It is not simply that bats evolved, but that they also evolved a particular way of relating to the world, a whole set of qualities and a sort of *logos* immanent to bat experience. What we get here is a new theory of aesthetics that seeks to account for the production or individuation of different forms of sensibility or receptivity. This is the motive behind Deleuze's analysis of many artists and novelists in texts like *Proust and Signs*, *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature*, *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, and 'Coldness and Cruelty', as well as his analyses of cinema. The aim is not to *represent* these artists or determine what they *meant*, but to analyse the percepts and affects they *invented*, and uncover the capacities for affecting and being affected they have brought into the world. Likewise, Marxist critique begins with the premise that we cannot simply assume the existence of universal values, but must instead look at the history and conditions of production within which certain values emerged or were invented. Hence, in their analysis of 'savages', 'barbarians', and 'civilized men' in *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari will show, among other things, how various regimes of value emerged in relation to different regimes of social production.[7]

It might be objected that this criticism conflates the empirical and the transcendental. As Meillassoux puts it,

> [t]he empirical question is that of knowing how bodies that were organic prior to becoming conscious appeared in an environment which is itself physical. The transcendental question consists in determining how the *science* of this physical emergence of life is possible. (Meillassoux 2008: 22)

Strictly speaking, so the story goes, 'the transcendental subject *simply cannot be said to exist*; which is to say that the subject is not an entity, but rather

a set of *conditions* rendering objective scientific knowledge of entities possible' (ibid.: 23). However, as Meillassoux goes on to argue, the transcendental is able to escape metaphysical dogmatism insofar as it cannot be separated from a point of view on the world.[8] As such, questions of how the exemplification or instantiation of the transcendental subject are necessarily raised, indicating that the transcendental subject is necessarily tied to a *body* such that while the transcendental is a condition for knowledge of bodies, bodies are themselves conditions for the transcendental (ibid.: 24–5). In short, questions of the transcendental cannot be separated from questions of the individuation of bodies.

b. Kant posits an external relation between concepts and intuitions that is incapable of accounting for how the two are related

We have already seen Deleuze's second substantial criticism of Kant foreshadowed in his critique of Kant's failure to account for the genesis of the values upon which his critique is based. Deleuze argues that transcendental philosophy limits itself to an account of external conditioning wherein the categories of the understanding condition the manifold of intuition in a relation that is external in character. What is the substance of this critique? On the one hand, Deleuze criticizes this account for treating the relationship between concepts and intuitions as external, without giving us an account of the intermediary that allows these two domains to be linked to one another (DR: 220). One might object that the schematism serves this function, but as Deleuze remarks, '. . . the schematism only reinforces the paradox introduced into the doctrine of the faculties by the notion of a purely external harmony . . .' (ibid.). In the *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant introduces the notion of the schematism to account for how concepts of the understanding can be applied to appearances. The problem here is that there is a difference in kind between concepts and intuitions. '. . . [P]ure concepts of the understanding . . . in comparison with empirical (indeed in general sensible) intuitions, are entirely un-homogenous, and can never be encountered in any intuition' (CPR Guyer and Wood: A137/B176). In short, concepts and intuitions differ in kind such that the former are characterized by spontaneity while the latter are characterized by receptivity. Consequently, Kant argues that

> there must be a third thing, which must stand in homogeneity with the category on the one hand and the appearance on the other, and make possible the application of the former to the latter. This mediating

> representation must be pure (without anything empirical) and yet *intellectual* on the one hand and *sensible* on the other. (ibid.: A138/B177)

The schematism serves this function, mediating between concepts and intuitions. The problem here is that this does not resolve the question of how concepts can be applied to intuitions. In effect, Kant argues that the schemata, designed to function as intermediaries between concepts and intuitions, are made possible through the schematization of concepts! Or, if one prefers, Kant in effect argues that concepts can be applied to intuitions because concepts are applied to intuitions. By contrast, Deleuze calls for a genetic account of intuition, dispensing with categories altogether, that would be capable of surmounting the externality of concepts and intuitions by accounting for the production of these forms of intuition from within intuition itself (DR: 221).

This critique is closely related to Deleuze's critique of disorder in his essay *Bergsonism*. If Kant is led to this account of conditioning whereby the categories or concepts of the understanding determine the manifold of sensibility, then this is because, repeating an axiom that extends all the way back to Plato's division of the world into becoming and being, Kant discerns nothing but disordered chaos in the manifold of sensations. Throughout the transcendental deduction, for example, Kant argues that order and structure cannot be found within intuition itself. '. . . [T]he *combination* (*conjunctio*) of a manifold in general can never come to us through the senses, and therefore cannot already be contained in the pure form of sensible intuition . . .' (CPR Guyer and Wood: B129). Elsewhere Kant compares the play of sensation independent of the concepts of the understanding to something that is '. . . less than a dream' (ibid.: A112). Kant thus presents the domain of sensibility, of sensation, as a sort of chaos or disorder, requiring supplementation by pure concepts of the understanding so that it might take on order and structure. Deleuze rejects the thesis that the sensible is 'a contradictory flux . . . or a rhapsody of sensations' (DR: 68). By contrast, argues Deleuze, the idea that sensations are disordered and in need of categorical supplementation arises from a failure to attend to the order immanent in sensations themselves. 'The idea of disorder appears when, instead of seeing that there are two or more irreducible orders . . . we retain only a general idea of order that we confine ourselves to opposing to disorder and to thinking in correlation with the idea of disorder' (B: 19–20). Hence, when Deleuze writes *Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sensation*, we should take the reference to a 'logic' seriously, as uncovering immanent ordering principles within sensation itself.

c. Kant traces the transcendental from the empirical, thereby falling into a vicious circle

Perhaps one of Deleuze's more damning critiques is that Kant traces the transcendental from the empirical. As Deleuze puts it,

> The error of all efforts to determine the transcendental as consciousness is that they think the transcendental in the image of, and in resemblance to, that which it is supposed to ground. In this case, either we give ourselves ready-made, in the 'originary' sense presumed to belong to the constitutive consciousness, whatever we were trying to generate through a transcendental method, or, in agreement with Kant, we give up genesis and constitution and we limit ourselves to a simple transcendental conditioning. But we do not, for all this, escape the vicious circle which makes the condition refer to the conditioned as it reproduces its image. (LOS: 121)

The function of the transcendental is to *ground* the empirical. However, if the transcendental is traced from the empirical, if it is conceived in *resemblance* to the empirical, we have only engaged in a strange doubling of the empirical that risks *essentializing* the recognized, rather than truly grounding that which it seeks to ground. We have not established that the empirical is truly a necessary structure in the sense asserted, rather than something that is simply contingent and could be otherwise. As such, the principle of immanent critique, of reason by reason without any extra-mental elements, is violated. By way of example we might refer to the famous example of white swans. For centuries swans were used as the canonical example of an essential universal truth: 'all swans are white'. However, when black swans were discovered, this judgement which seemed so obviously universal was shown to be particular in character. Could not something similar be the case in the sciences? Certainly the emergence of both relativity theory and quantum mechanics seems to show this with respect to Newtonian physics. Yet Kant took Newtonian physics as clearly being the universal structure of the universe and then sought to discover transcendental principles to ground this universality.

Here Deleuze argues that Kant ends up valorizing *recognition* as a model of what it is to think in a way that ends up defending orthodoxy and prohibiting the emergence of the new. Moreover, in tracing the transcendental from the empirical, we assume that the conditions of the thing *resemble* that thing. As such, we end up valorizing the determinate qualities of the object, ignoring the productive processes through which the object came

to be. In contrast to the static activity of conditioning similar to that of imparting a form to a matter as in the case of shaping dough with a mould, Deleuze will instead seek the *movement* by which an entity is produced. These movements will be the genetic conditions of the entity. As he puts it in his earliest article on Bergson,

> we can already say that there will not be . . . anything like a distinction between two worlds, one sensible, the other intelligible, but only two movements, or even just two directions of one and the same movement: the one is such that the movement tends to congeal in its product, in its result, that which interrupts it; and the other turns back and retraces its steps, rediscovers in the product the movement from which it resulted. (DI: 23–4)

In short, Deleuze's transcendental conditions will be genetic conditions that share no resemblance to that which they produce.

The issue here is not that of valorizing the new and rejecting recognition, but rather that of prohibiting the new by treating recognition as a model of what it is to think and be. '. . . [T]he new – in other words, difference – calls forth forces in thought which are not the forces of recognition, today or tomorrow, but the powers of a completely other model, from an unrecognised and unrecognisable *terra incognita*' (DR: 172). The object of critique here is what Deleuze refers to as 'good and common sense'. By 'common sense', Deleuze is referring to the relation between a pure subject and the form of a pure object=x (ibid.: 169). It will be noted that this is the model of correlation, as well as the relationship between the transcendental unity of apperception and the transcendental object as developed by Kant in the transcendental deduction. Here identity in the form of the transcendental unity of apperception and the form of the object is the ultimate presupposition underlying Kant's model of what it means to know. By 'good sense', Deleuze is referring to the manner in which all of the faculties are to harmoniously converge on a single and same object, thereby producing the effect of identity or the 'same' (ibid.: 169–70). Together good and common sense conspire to admit only the rights of the recognized. Yet in valorizing the primacy of recognition as a model of what it is to think, the recognized is essentialized and naturalized in a way that begs the question, failing to establish the true necessity of that which it seeks to ground. This model of thought ends up effacing that which is a *product* that emerged through a process and history and which can be otherwise.

It is here that we find the key to Deleuze's critique of possibility and why the distinction between the virtual and the actual is crucial to his entire ontology. Deleuze perpetually emphasizes that transcendental empiricism does not seek the conditions of *all possible experience*, but the conditions of *real experience* (DI: 36). Indeed, it should be said that transcendental empiricism searches for the conditions of real *existence*, rather than real experience insofar, as Kant argued, the conditions of *experience* are also the conditions for the objects of experience (CPR Guyer and Wood: A111). We shall see in a moment that Deleuze radicalizes this thesis, drawing it outside the correlationist circle such that the objects the transcendental accounts for are no longer simply objects *for-us*, but conditions for things *for-themselves*; however, for the moment, we must see what leads Deleuze to reject the category of possibility. Deleuze rejects the category of possibility in that it leads to a devaluing of existence such that existence contributes nothing (DR: 264). Existence merely *realizes* possibility without contributing anything of its own. All possibilities are pre-delineated in advance and nothing new is created. As Deleuze puts it, '[t]he idea of the possible appears when, instead of grasping each existent in its novelty, the whole of existence is related to a preformed element, from which everything is supposed to emerge by simple "realization"' (B: 20).

3. Breaking the Correlationist Circle: Time and the Fractured Subject

Deleuze writes, '. . . transcendental empiricism is the only way to avoid tracing the transcendental from the outlines of the empirical' (DR: 181). Yet how is transcendental empiricism capable of doing this? We have seen that the problems with Kant's thought emerge from the correlationist circle wherein a pure subject, an 'I think' as a purely formal structure, is always correlated with the model of a pure object, valorizing the model of recognition. Yet if Deleuze is to escape the difficulties into which Kant falls, he must somehow break the correlationist circle.

Everything begins with Descartes. In his method of radical doubt Descartes had shown that we cannot take our representations of the world, and even our own bodies and personal history at face value as it is possible that we are being deceived. What remains, after doubting everything that can be doubted, is the pure activity of thinking. On the one hand, argues Descartes, whenever we are deceived we necessarily know that we exist because we could not be deceived unless we existed in some manner,

shape, or form. Consequently, since deception is a form of thought, we can be assured that we exist whenever we are thinking. On the other hand, while I cannot be certain of whether or not my representations or thoughts accurately represent the world, I can be certain that I have these thoughts and they *seem* to have such and such characteristics (Descartes 1998: 66). For example, my body *seems* to now be sitting in this chair before my computer, though I cannot say whether or not *I am* sitting at my desk because I have not yet demonstrated the existence of my body. In short, Descartes posits an *immediate* relation between thinking and my being such that I always have a privileged relationship to my thoughts while what they represent remains in doubt. It is for this reason that Descartes is compelled to prove the existence of God prior to proving the existence of the world, for insofar as he only has access to the contents of his own mind he must demonstrate the existence of one being apart from himself and that this being is not a deceiver. If this being must be God rather than the ordinary furniture of the world, then this is because Descartes requires an idea that could not have possibly been created by his own thought so as to establish its genuine transcendence. Insofar as the meditator is finite, the only idea that can fulfil this task is the idea of the infinite. For, according to Descartes, a finite being could not create the idea of the infinite from its own nature or its experience of the world.

Now, the point to take away from this is that it is the immediate relation to the contents of our own thoughts, coupled with our mediated relationship to the world, which generates the entire question of how it is possible for mind to relate the world. If I only have a direct relationship to my own thought, how, from within thought *alone*, am I able to determine whether it accurately represents the world? This problematic even repeats in Hume insofar as while there is no transcendental unity of apperception or self-identical *cogito* in Hume, our minds nonetheless have an immediate relation to our impressions, but not to the relations between objects that produce these impressions. This premise also functions in Kant's critical project. If the thesis that objects conform to mind rather than the mind to objects is able to solve the riddle of how synthetic *a priori* judgements are possible, then this is implicitly because we maintain an immediate relationship to our minds. Like the turtle that carries its home wherever it goes, the invariant structures of mind (intuition and the categories) always condition the manifold intuition, giving it the law-like structure required to ground synthetic *a priori* judgements.

Paradoxically Deleuze finds the resources for breaking the correlationist circle within Kant's thought, though, he contends, Kant did not draw

the consequences of this discovery.[9] This argument is crucial for Deleuze's entire ontology as it radically undermines the distinction between critical and dogmatic philosophy, opening thought to a transcendental ground deeper than that of mind or the transcendental subject. As Schelling, in developing and deepening Kant's transcendental idealism had observed, '. . . undoubtedly . . . *primary knowledge* [for philosophy] is for us knowledge of ourselves, or self-consciousness' (Schelling 1997: 16). If this is the case, then this is because the proposition 'I exist' is the only immediately certain proposition (ibid.: 8). But if this proposition is *immediately* certain then it is only on the condition that I share an immediate and transparent relation to my thought. Consequently, if the correlationist circle is to be broken it is necessary to undermine this claim.

Deleuze begins by observing that for Descartes, determination (the 'I think') *immediately* bears on undetermined existence. Consequently, from the mere fact of thinking we can infer that we exist. Kant contests this thesis by arguing that determination requires a third term, the determinable, to explain how it is that determination (the 'I think') can determine the undetermined (DR: 107–8). 'The *I think* expresses the act of determining my existence. The existence is thereby already given, but the way in which I am to determine it, i.e., the manifold that I am to posit in myself as belong to it, is not yet thereby given' (CPR Guyer and Wood: B157). In effect, Kant argues that our relation to our thought is *not* an *immediate* relation. '. . . I cannot determine my existence as that of a self-active being, rather I merely *represent* the spontaneity of my thought' (ibid., my italics). The form under which my being is determinable by thought is that of time (ibid.: B428–32). But if this is the case, if I merely represent my spontaneity rather than having an immediate relation to it, then it follows that my relationship to my thought is no different than my relationship to objects. In short, my relationship to myself is fractured or split by the form of time such that I only experience myself *within* time, rather than experiencing a direct relation to myself. As Deleuze puts it,

> [t]he consequences of this are extreme: my undetermined existence can be determined only *within time* as the existence of a phenomenon, of a passive, receptive phenomenal subject *appearing within time.* As a result, the spontaneity of which I am conscious in the 'I think' cannot be understood as the attribute of a substantial and spontaneous being, but only as the affection of a passive self which experiences its own thought – its own intelligence, that by virtue of which it can say *I* – being exercised in it and upon it but not by it. Here begins a long

> and inexhaustible story: *I* is an other, or the paradox of inner sense. (DR: 108)

With this argument Deleuze wrecks the central premise of the Kantian solution to the problem of knowledge. In arguing that we only have a transparent, direct, and immediate relationship to our own thoughts, Descartes' only means of showing how we could have knowledge of the world was through a demonstration of God that also attempted to demonstrate that God is not a deceiver. This argument, developed in the famous third meditation, was premised on our clear and distinct idea of God or the infinite. If God exists and is not a deceiver, contends Descartes, then we can trust our clear and distinct ideas and thereby gain knowledge of the world. However, in an *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, Hume had demonstrated that it is possible to give a genetic account of our idea of God derived from empirical experience, thereby destroying Descartes' thesis that we could not create the idea of God.[10] This, in turn, undermined our pretensions to knowledge, demonstrating that we could only have customs where knowledge of the world is concerned. Kant's solution was to concede the sceptical thesis that we never have knowledge of things as they are in-themselves, while arguing that we have knowledge of the world as it *appears* to us, mediated by the necessary and invariant structures of transcendental subjectivity or mind. In this way he was able to preserve universal truths in pure natural science and mathematics. However, Kant's transcendental argument was premised on us having a transparent and immediate relationship to our own minds. If, however, as Kant inconsistently argues, our relationship to our own minds is mediated such that we never directly experience the activity of thought but only the *effects* of this thought, the correlationist circle is broken and mind no longer has the privileged status it claims to have. Mind no longer functions as a bubble from which we cannot escape. Rather, our relation to both ourselves and objects becomes indiscernible.

4. The Transcendental Field

The aim of Deleuze's strategy in locating this precise moment in Kant's thought is not sceptical in its ambition. It is not a question of showing that because our relationship to ourselves is itself mediated we are unable to establish the certainty of transcendental conditions. It will be recalled that Deleuze seeks an ontology capable of reaching the thing itself in its

internal difference. So long as the conditions of objects are attached to mind or a transcendental subject, this project proves impossible insofar as such an account of beings only delivers beings as they are *for-us*, not as they are *in-themselves*. Consequently, Deleuze must seek a transcendental ground distinct from mind, capable of delivering us to the things themselves. Deleuze believes that he finds such a ground in time. As Deleuze puts it, Kant's discovery of time as the third term or the 'determinable', '. . . amounts to the discovery of Difference – no longer in the form of an empirical difference between two determinations, but in the form of a transcendental Difference between the Determination as such and what it determines . . .' (DR: 108). Time becomes the transcendental condition of objects.

However, where Kant understands time as the form of *inner sense* imposed by mind on the manifold of intuition, for Deleuze time is not in the subject or mind, rather subjects and objects are *within* time. That is, time is a ground prior to mind. 'There is only a single time, a single duration, in which everything . . . participate[s], including our consciousness, including living beings, including the whole material world' (B: 78). Elsewhere, when qualifying duration as alteration, Deleuze remarks that '[b]eing is alteration, alteration is *substance*' (DI: 25, my italics). In short, Deleuze shifts time from the epistemic register where time is a condition for *appearances* to the *ontological* register where time is the condition of subjects, organisms, and things. Time consequently becomes a material reality, the material essence of beings, rather than a form imposed on things. Deleuze will thus remark that '[t]he universe is made up of modifications, disturbances, changes of tension and of energy, and nothing else.' and will argue that there are '. . . a plurality of rhythms of duration . . . each more or less slow or fast. . . . each rhythm . . . itself a duration' (B: 76). However, this plurality of durations will belong to a single time where all of these different rhythms virtually coexist (ibid.: 85), such that '[t]here is only one time (monism), although there is an infinity of actual fluxes (generalized pluralism) that necessarily participate in the same virtual whole (limited pluralism)' (ibid.: 82).

As a consequence, things, subjects, entities, beings, are to be understood not so much as being *within* time as in the case of being within a container, as they are to be understood as *being* rhythms of duration. Deleuze will describe duration as naturing nature, and matter as natured nature (ibid.: 93), and will argue that matter is expanded or relaxed duration whereas duration is contracted matter (ibid.: 87–8). In short, space will consist of different rhythms of time in relation to one another such

that '. . . matter has a thousand ways of becoming expanded or extended [and] we must also say that there are all kinds of distinct extensities, all related, but still qualified . . .' (ibid.: 87).

Thus, following Peter Hallward, while maintaining grave reservations about his separation of the virtual and the actual, duration is the productive element in being while matter is that which is produced (Hallward 2006). Rhythms of duration will be the genetic element through which entities are produced. If a transcendental account of entities is required, then this is because the differences or rhythms through which entities are produced in their process of actualization efface themselves in the process of being actualized or individuated, such that the sufficient reason for the thing disappears in its result or product. Deleuze argues that intensive differences preside over the genesis of things such that '. . . difference[s] of quantity [are] cancelled by extension, extension being precisely the process by which intensive difference is turned inside out and distributed in such a way as to be dispelled, compensated, equalised and suppressed in extensity which it creates' (DR: 292). Thus, for example, the tectonic pressures, winds, and gravitational forces presiding over erosion by which a mountain is produced over time disappear in the final result of the mountain – its snapshot at a particular point in time – leading us to focus on the qualities of the mountain ignoring the process by which it came to be. '. . . [O]n the scale of millions of years which constitutes the time of their actualisation, the hardest rocks in turn are fluid matters which flow under the weak constrained exercised on their singularities' (ibid.: 271). Consequently, unlike Kant where transcendental illusions result from reason employing categories independent of intuition, for Deleuze transcendental illusions arise from being itself in the formation of extensities or space. 'Although it is illusion, space is not merely grounded in our nature, but in the nature of things' (B: 34). This nature lies in the manner in which the intensive differences presiding over the genesis of things – 'differences of level, pressure, tension, potential,' etc. (DR: 280) – efface themselves in the result.

But none of this yet tells us how time allows us to reach the thing itself rather than falling into abstraction. We get a sense of Deleuze's ambition when he remarks that,

> 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 concepts. 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, no two revolvers score their bullets in the same manner. (ibid.: 29)

What is it about time that allows us to reach these singular differences? We have already seen Deleuze declare that time is transcendental Difference. Moreover, we can conclude that any account of the transcendental in terms of genesis (rather than conditioning) would require an account of time insofar as genesis unfolds in time. Deleuze draws his conception of time from Bergson, treating it in terms of duration or the virtual (B: 38). As Deleuze puts it, '[s]o, then, what is duration? Everything Bergson has to say about it comes down to this: duration is *what differs from itself.* Matter, on the other hand, is what does not differ from itself; it is what repeats itself' (DI: 37). In other words, duration is characterized by qualitative variation, whereas matter is characterized by repetition. It is precisely here that we discover why Deleuze finds calculus to be of such great importance. Calculus is the mathematics of movements, objects, and forms undergoing continuous variation. As such, it is able to reach all the way to the singular individual, whether that be a static individual with a unique shape such as the veins in the leaves mentioned above, or whether it be an object undergoing continuous change or 'differing from itself' in duration. The veins in the leaf, of course, themselves unfolded in duration as a singular and irreplaceable rhythm of time.

Now, at any particular moment in time or with the completion of a becoming, the conditions under which the object was produced are effaced or become invisible. When I encounter two leaves from the same tree, I see that there are variations with respect to their shape, the configuration of their veins, slight variations in their colour, etc. I also see that there are resemblances. From this *spatialized* perspective – the leaves, after all, coexist in space at this time – my inclination is to focus on the *resemblances* between the leaves. But in doing so, a gap is introduced between the individual leaves in their singular being – the 'this' – and the abstract concept I form of leaves in general. Something in the individual being itself will always be lost in the abstract concept. As Hegel points out,

> It is as a universal too that we *utter* what the sensuous [content] is. What we say is: 'This', i.e., the *universal* This; or 'it is', i.e. *Being in general.* Of course, we do not *envisage* the universal This or Being in general, but we *utter* the universal; in other words, we do not strictly say what in this sense-certainty we *mean* to say. But language, as we see, is more truthful; in it, we ourselves directly refute what we *mean* to say . . . . (Hegel 1970: 60)

Hegel's point is that in trying to utter the singular, I end up only speaking universals. The 'this' can equally apply to this leaf I am considering now or any other 'this'. The individual is lost. Likewise in the case of the individual subsumed under Kant's categories which thereby loses its singularity and comes to resemble everything else by virtue of sharing the same categorical structure.

If this is to be avoided, then we need to discover conditions no broader than the conditioned (B: 27). These conditions must be approached from the perspective of duration rather than space, insofar as space leads to transcendental illusions privileging recognition, identity, and similarity. In Kant's account of time and his critique of the immediacy of the *cogito*, coupled with Bergson's analysis of duration, Deleuze discovers a *transcendental field* as distinct from a *transcendental subject*. Deleuze draws his inspiration for his concept of the transcendental field from Sartre's essay, *The Transcendence of Ego* (Sartre 1990: 31–4; TRM: 399), while transforming it significantly. There Sartre carries out a substantial critique of Kant's thesis that the 'I think' must accompany all of our states of consciousness (CPR Guyer and Wood: B131–2), arguing instead for a pre-personal transcendental field prior to the synthetic activity of the I think (Sartre 1990: 36).

Deleuze finds Sartre's concept of the transcendental field attractive because it separates the field of transcendental conditions from the form of the 'I think', thereby freeing it from its imprisonment in the form of identity. However, Deleuze argues that Sartre does not go far enough in separating the transcendental field from consciousness.

> This field cannot be determined as that of consciousness. Despite Sartre's attempt, we cannot retain consciousness as a milieu while at the same time we object to the form of the person and the point of view of individuation. A consciousness is nothing without a synthesis of unification, but there is no synthesis of unification of consciousness without the form of the I, or the point of view of the Self. (LOS: 118)

By contrast, Deleuze proposes that '. . . impersonal and preindividual nomadic singularities constitute the real transcendental field' (ibid.: 126). The transcendental field is a set of genetic conditions presiding over the individuation of individuals. Here the term 'individual' should be construed broadly to indicate any entity whatsoever, whether it be human, rock, or otherwise. When Deleuze refers to individuation, he is not referring to the classical problem of how one entity is distinguished from another, but rather to the process by which individuals come to be (DR: 47–8).

Earlier we saw that Deleuze criticized Kant for tracing the transcendental from the empirical. The transcendental field avoids this problem insofar as the singularities which compose this field share no resemblance to the entity actualized, generated, or actualized out of this field. 'We seek to determine an impersonal and pre-individual transcendental field, which does not resemble the corresponding empirical fields, and which nevertheless is not confused with an undifferentiated depth' (LS: 118). If this field does not resemble the empirical field of actualized entities, then this is because it is composed of what Deleuze refers to as 'transcendental events' or 'potentials' (ibid.). Indeed, Deleuze equates these singularities to potential energy. These singularities or potentials are activated, as it were, through intensive differences – differences in temperature, pressure, affect, level, tension, etc. – that produce individuated entities.

We might, for example, think of the developmental process of a fertilized egg. Our tendency is to think of the DNA of which the egg is composed as a map that predelineates the final outcome of development. However, as Susan Oyama has so beautifully demonstrated, this model is woefully inadequate as a means of accounting for what actually takes place in development (Oyama 2000). The DNA does not form a map or set of instructions for what the egg will eventually become, but is rather a set of potentials presiding over the genesis of the organism to be actualized. The manner in which these potentials are actualized over the course of the process of individuation will depend on a number of factors pertaining to nutrients in the environment necessary for the building of proteins, the timing of substances reaching one another as the process unfolds, local temperatures and pressures, the nature of the air and so on. Those living in the mountains of Peru, for example, actually have different lung capacities due to evolutionary drift and developmental processes resulting from the altitude at which they live in the Andes mountains.

We can thus see why Deleuze refers to these singularities as 'nomadic'. In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze distinguishes between sedentary and nomadic distributions. Sedentary distributions are premised on the notion of a 'best distribution' characterized by 'fixed and proportional determinations which may be assimilated to "properties" or limited territories within representation' (DR: 45). Here we might think of the Great Chain of Being, where everything has a fixed and defined place in the universe. Or we might think of Aristotle's orders of genera and species, where we proceed from the largest differences to the smallest differences, the latter being subsumed under the former in the order of being. By contrast, Deleuze posits a nomadic distribution where '. . . there is no longer a division of that which is distributed but rather a division among those

who distribute *themselves* in an open space – a space which is unlimited or without precise limits' (ibid.: 46). What is at stake here is not nomadic peoples or individuals, but rather nomadic singularities. Unlike Kantian conditions which are fixed, unchanging, and sedentary, the genetic conditions of the transcendental field are a set of potentials that perpetually shift and change depending on local conditions. One and the same fertilized egg would develop very differently depending on the singularities that populate its transcendental field, as the conjunction of environmental and organic singularities in a transcendental field will be actualized differently. As such, being is profoundly creative in character. Moreover, insofar as the singularities characterizing the transcendental field always form a singular and unique constellation, these conditions are no broader than the conditioned and are capable of accounting for why an entity has these characteristics and no other.

Conclusion

If transcendental empiricism is a transcendental materialism, then this is because the transcendental field is not something imposed by the mind upon the world, nor something that belongs to the subject like Kant's forms of intuition and categories of the understanding, but instead belongs to being itself. These conditions are material insofar as they are constellations of potentials belonging to the material world and presiding over the genesis of material beings such as mountains, organisms, crystals, weather patterns, galaxies, and whatever else we might wish to include. Deleuze is careful to emphasize that these multiplicities or varieties must be surveyed in each field and cannot be generalized from case to case (ibid.: 235–6). If these conditions are nonetheless transcendental, then this is because they erase themselves in their process of actualization, leaving behind the congealed product of the process of production. These genetic conditions deliver us to the thing itself, to the conditions of real existence, insofar as they capture the aleatory conditions under which the individual entity is produced in its singularity.

Notes

[1] In his second 1956 essay on Bergson, Deleuze compares Bergson's thought to transcendental analysis, arguing that Bergson seeks the conditions for the given. Cf. Gilles Deleuze, 'Bergson's Conception of Difference' (DI: 32–51).

[2] For an extended treatment of Deleuze's critique of classical empiricism, cf. Bryant 2008: chapter 1 passim.

[3] For a brilliant and lucid treatment of Deleuze's transcendental empiricism in terms of sensibility and aesthetics, cf. Smith 1996. Although Smith does not himself make this connection, it is clear that Deleuze's account of sensibility can be thought as a sort of Post-Darwinian Kantianism, where the evolution of species is also an evolution of different forms of sensibility. For instance, the evolution of the eye opens an entirely new domain of sensibility, where colour and spatial structure differ from species to species.

[4] Cf. Toscano 2006: 53 – '. . . [T]rancendental materialism [is] the attempt to think the non-empirical determinations of a single matter understood as the field of individuation for all the bodies that constitute the object of our cognition, a cognition that cannot experience this matter as such but must postulate it indirectly.' For reasons that will become clear as I proceed, I diverge from Toscano's account in arguing that transcendental materialism seeks the conditions for objects themselves, and not for our cognition of these objects.

[5] Deleuze and Guattari argue that philosophy, science, and art are each a way of relating to chaos and the infinite. Under this analysis, philosophy creates concepts, science functives, and art creates percepts and affects, or blocks of sensation capable of enduring in time. Cf. WIP:169 – 'Affects are . . . nonhuman becomings of man, just as percepts . . . are nonhuman landscapes of nature.' To take a particularly simple [and simplistic] example in the case of cinema, Steven Spielberg's *War of the Worlds* opens with images at the level of the molecular, first showing us proteins, then strands of DNA, then microbes, then the drop of water in which millions of these microbes exist, then the leaf upon which this water is on. Conversely, Robert Zemeckis' begins Contact at the opposite end of the spectrum, starting from lived experience in the world then following radio signals proliferating out of the earth, then the solar system, and then deeper and deeper into the galaxy. Here we encounter durations inferior to the human at the level of the infinitesimal and durations superior to the human that traverse the galaxy. Cinema is able to capture points of view on matter outside any possible lived experience. It will be recalled that for Bergson images are themselves material realities. 'Matter, in our view, is an aggregate of "images." And by "image" we mean a certain existence which is more than that which the idealist calls a representation, but less than that which the realist calls a thing – an existence placed halfway between "thing" and the "representation" ' (Bergson 1991: 9). Insofar as Deleuze's two cinema books undertake a taxonomy of images we can thus understand these works as exploring the nature of matter from the standpoint of art and not simply as an analysis of cinema.

[6] Cf WIP: chapter 5 passim.

[7] Cf AO: chapter 3 passim.

[8] Cf FLB: chapter 2, for Deleuze's account of point of view.

[9] Deleuze argues that Kant filled in the fracture he discovered with active synthetic identity (DR: 109).

[10] 'Even those ideas, which, at first view, seem the most wide of this origin [in experience], are found, upon a nearer scrutiny, to be derived from it. The idea of God, as meaning an infinitely intelligent, wise, and good Being, arises from reflecting on the operations of our own mind, and augmenting, without limit, those qualities of goodness and Wisdom' (Hume 1993: 11).

Chapter 3

Levelling the Levels

Matt Lee

Introduction

What I want to do in this paper is focus on the way in which Deleuze might be said to 'level the levels' of the Kantian philosophy. The levels which Deleuze levels are found in the distinction between the transcendentally ideal and the empirically real. Just what is at stake in these terms? If Kant's move is to insist on the sensible, we might almost want to say that it is an insistence on a matter that matters which underlies this distinction of levels. 'Almost', because we have yet to understand matter or (maybe more importantly) what it is 'to matter', for anything to be, as Deleuze suggests (following Bateson), a 'difference that makes a difference'.[1] If, however, we were to allow that what underlies Kant's necessary insistence on the empirically real is an anti-rationalist (not anti-rational) move, a move against a 'pure thought' and in favour of a muddy, dirty thought in which the mixing up, the synthesis of concept and intuition (mind and matter), was the central guiding thread, then the way in which this synthesis is produced would be of crucial importance. This 'way it is produced' can be examined, at least in part, by focusing on the concept of determinability.

1. Machinations of Determinability

Something sets a machine going, it doesn't just start from nothing, it starts from somewhere, something, somehow. The concept of determinability forms this 'something' that produces the machine that is 'Kant's system'. Determinability is crucial to the very notion of a 'transcendental' thought and it is through it's role in this that it forms a key aspect of Kant's system. The conditions of a conditioned object are formed as conditions within a specific field of determinability.

Determinability is that peculiar 'framework' or 'way' (some might say scheme) in which we think or act in general. A 'first principle' might be described as a 'principle of determinability' except it would be an inadequate concept of determinability itself, at least for Maimon and also for Deleuze.[2] If there are these 'frameworks' that are grounded in this idea or concept of 'determinability', then the very idea of a 'principle of determinability' would seem to foreclose philosophy and thought because the first principle would act like an unquestionable given. If a principle of determinability was constituted by an unquestionable first principle we would implicitly acknowledge a kind of impotence to reason. We would end up saying something like, 'reason, or thought as reasonable, can act as reasonable but it can do so only in so far as it is sensible enough to begin from the first principle'. Some things, we are told, cannot be questioned – the position of the dogmatist. This is surely not, it will be objected, anything Kant aligned himself to since he orientates his work precisely against the twin problems of dogmatism and scepticism. I claim, however, that Deleuze thinks that there remains a kind of 'dogmatism' of thought within Kant which restricts and constrains the explosive moment of the Kantian discovery of determinability, a dogmatism of the 'common sense'.[3]

Let us accept that the concept of determinability is not then, on pain of rendering thought impotent, a principle. Rather it is a problematic field in which thought actualizes itself. It is a problem which produces thought, or rather which produces a thinking, a thought. Determinability is that problem which produces a transcendental thought, that problematic field in which the field is encountered, where the 'productivity of thought producing' is encountered. Kant's insistence on matter or sensibility is of importance to Deleuze in as much as it is bound up with the Kantian discovery of determinability. Kant's response to rationalism and empiricism, his response of emphasizing synthesis and productivity, is a form of materialist reaction to idealized reason. It is a call back to the world but – crucially – it is unable to breach its bourgeois boundaries and it expresses this call in the form of common sense and humanism. Unable to reach beyond the human into production itself, no doubt because to do so would necessitate an encounter with the mode of production in which Kant was embroiled, philosophy (and Kant) discloses truth in spite of itself. This 'contradiction' (in a dialectical materialist sense) between the truth of the concept and the productive mode in which it is expressed, is what is produced in the peculiar distinction of levels in Kant's system. Deleuze's 'levelling' of Kant's levels puts at stake the simple question Marx raised – if thought is produced, if man, if the human, is a result of the mode of production then

is not the mode of production that which must be understood in order to uncover the truth in thought?

Now the mode of production is not simply the 'economic base', unless we wish to adhere to Menshevism and economism. Capitalism, the Mensheviks say, will produce its own apotheosis and transform, chrysalis-like, into the post-capitalist society. Leninists and revolutionary Marxists, on the other hand, hold to the role of the party, the revolutionary organ, that which in philosophy we encounter as 'free thought' or 'consciousness'. The mode of production, the framework in which production is organized, is an expression of the concept of determinability. As in political economy what is crucial is not the basic model of 'production within a mode of production' but the specific moment or conjuncture we find ourselves in, the particular construction of the machine in question. To understand the Kantian system, to deal with it, to respond to it, we need to try and get a grip on the conjuncture of factors that constitute the production of the system, that agglomeration of factors which formed the machinery of 'transcendental idealism'. To do so we can of course look at texts, at biographies, at histories – and scholars specialize in this – but we can also look at a 'big picture', look at what kinds of things the machine is capable of doing, what kinds of things it is incapable of doing. This latter 'coarse-grained' articulation of a conjuncture is what occurs in this paper. Specifically, I will suggest that a key move in Deleuze's reading of the transcendental – the shift from the 'possible/real' to the 'virtual/actual' – is grounded in a strategic reaction to the mode of production of thought, specifically encountered in terms of the machinery of the Kantian concept of determinability.

2. The Problem of Real Experience

The very notion of 'real experience' is troublesome because it deliberately ignores the Kantian talk of possible experience and in doing so might be thought to simply misunderstand Kant. The issue is more complex, however, because of the way in which, in Kant, a concept of the object is placed in a position of determination with regard to experience. For example, Strawson summarizes the Kantian position well – as he puts it, 'experience involves the employment of concepts of the objective, hence a commitment to the distinction between experiences themselves and an experienced physical world' (Strawson 1995: 237–8). The concepts of the objective arise from what Strawson has called the 'A-relation' (ibid.: 236), which is a kind of 'causal relation' between the affected and affecting. This way of putting

things clearly shows that key moments in the system limit other moments. Once a concept of the objective is established and this is shown to be necessarily involved in any experience, then experience (real or otherwise) is a second order moment limited by the first order moment of the concept of the objective.[4]

Experience, in Kant, is the activity of synthesis. It is not a simple immediate process but rather a structure of judgments, of employing and applying concepts. If we look at Kant's attack on 'transcendental realism', one important aspect of which is found in the deleted sections on the fourth paralogism from the first edition of the critique,[5] we can see clearly how conclusions are drawn from this synthesizing model of experience. The idealist, Kant says, is 'not someone who denies the existence of external objects of sense, but rather someone who only does not admit that it is cognized through immediate perception and infers from this that we can never fully be certain of their reality from any possible experience' (CPR Guyer and Wood: A368).[6] The denial of immediate perception in favour of synthesizing activity is the ground for the inference that knowledge of the external world can never be certain, hence for why Kant thinks his doctrine is a 'transcendental idealism'. The realist is naïve in their insistence on a kind of 'direct access' whereas the sophisticated philosopher understands the role of synthesis and the resulting inferential structure.

What can also be seen in this passage, however, is that reality is in some sense 'judged' (inferred) – 'reality' and 'existence' are bound up closely with each other, if not co-extensive. The Kantian concept of determinability is primarily concerned with the content of knowledge and whilst Deleuze accepts the concept of determinability he rejects Kant's concept of knowledge as primarily a judgment or inferential activity, replacing it with a concept of knowledge as a capacity.

In the introduction to the 'Analytic of Principles' Kant distinguishes between a general logical doctrine of the faculty of judgement and a transcendental doctrine. A general logic cannot direct the faculty of judgement, it 'contains no directions or precepts for the faculty of judgement, nor can it contain any such' (CPR Meiklejohn: A133). A general logic is too abstract to do this, since it deals only with the form of conceptions, judgements and conclusions. Judgement, as the place of applying the rules or concepts of the understanding, sits as a kind of 'mother wit' which cannot be educated, for example, by familiarity with examples. It cannot be educated through examples because giving examples of a concept implies a deficiency in the faculty of judgement (ibid.). The difficulty here is akin to the rule-following paradox, namely that there cannot be a rule for the

application of a rule since this would imply an infinite regress. Judgement is something you're either good at or bad at it would seem. Yet this is not the end of the matter because the very purpose of transcendental logic is to educate us with regard judgement, in particular because it can 'indicate a priori the case to which the rule must be applied' (CPR Meiklejohn: A135). This necessary application takes us beyond the 'mother wit' into the identification of objects of experience as necessarily within the limits of possible experience. Judgement is educated not in its practice but in the limits of its practice and it is educated by the transcendental logic of possibilities – 'every object is subject to the necessary conditions of the synthetical unity of the manifold of intuition in a possible experience' (CPR Meiklejohn: A158). This 'supreme principle of all synthetical judgments' establishes a domain of determinability within which the undetermined, the determinable and the determined will be constrained by a particular kind of necessity and possibility. It is this construction of the domain of determinability that Deleuze challenges. We might accept that objects be subject to the conditions of a synthetical unity but if that synthetic unity is said to only occur (necessarily) in a particular form (a possible experience) then we face the danger of eliding the claim of necessary synthesis into a claim about the necessity of a type or mode of synthesis (judgement). Put more bluntly, the thesis is something like the following with regard to Deleuze's transcendental empiricism: the necessary structure of experience as given in the Analytic is rejected, without thereby rejecting the synthetic nature of experience grounded in the nature of the faculties.[7]

The argument can be reconstructed along the following lines, though the work of detailed exegesis will have to be carried out elsewhere and elsewhen. For Kant, all experience must be constrained by the modes of intuition and judgment he outlines in the Aesthetic and the Analytic. This 'must' derives from conceivability criteria – for example, it is inconceivable that any experience could be said to be an experience without temporal succession, or without unity of the temporal succession.[8] Such conceivability criteria extend into logical and rational modes, limited by contradiction but fundamentally rooted in a 'vague' notion of conceivability, in the sense in which Deleuze and Guattari talk of the 'vague' scientific functions (such as roundness, rather than circularity) of 'nomadic' science which ground 'royal' science.[9] The explicit function rests upon an implicit functionality and analogously the explicit concept rests upon an implicit conceivability. The necessity or force of the 'must' within conceivability, however, is not a logical necessity, where contradiction forms the most potent limit, but a necessity of forces which Deleuze (following Artaud) calls 'cruelty'.

The force of cruelty is fundamentally affective, that is, derives from the relations of affects or powers (capacities).

What are the conditions, Deleuze asks, of *real* experience (DR: 82–3)? What is it Deleuze is asking for here? He is not using 'real' in a sense opposed to 'possible' as though relying upon some pre-critical concept of experience which would mean he simply couldn't engage with transcendental idealism. It is not the 'empirically real' experience in the Kantian sense, whereby the empirically real is a kind of naïve level at which we act as though the objects of experience are external whilst at the transcendental level we know the objects to be merely another class of representations of consciousness. The distinction for Kant is between the 'implicit' knowledge in our activity that is transformed when it is made explicit knowledge at the transcendental level. This move from a level of implicit practice to explicit discursive and conceptual knowledge is simply not accepted in Deleuze as anything other than a move from one practice to another which brings with it no fundamental shift in the force of necessity, the ground of modality. Rather Deleuze is inquiring into the activity of experience itself, thus the concept of 'real experience' is a concept of experience as an activity. This activity is one of 'selection, repetition, etc' (DR: 83) and the search for conditions of real experience must operate immanent to this experience, this activity. The search is for 'an intrinsic genesis, not an extrinsic conditioning. In every respect, truth is a matter of production, not adequation' (DR: 192). The immanence of this search for conditions of experience is what constitutes a 'transcendental empiricism'. Such a search begins from encountering the forces and affects at work as experience, the modality of cruelty/necessity being one of the most fascinating and interesting.

3. The Re-pairing Move

In what we can call 'the re-pairing move' Deleuze suggests a change within the thinking of transcendental conditions, away from the conceptual pair 'possible/real' (P/R) to the pair 'virtual/actual' (V/A). The virtual is distinguished from the possible in the following way:

(a) 'from a certain point of view' (B: 96) the possible is the opposite of the real just as the virtual is the opposite of the actual – thus {P:R::V:A}. The relation of the pairs is not an identity relation but one of analogy and the real is not coextensive with the actual, so that the possible 'has no reality

(although it may have an actuality)' (ibid.). More importantly 'the virtual is not actual, but as such possesses a reality' (ibid.).

This first re-pairing move enables the new pairing of V/A to be a pairing of realities, not of possibles or impossibles. This enables the 'slogan' or formula that Deleuze derives from Proust – the virtual is 'real without being actual, ideal without being abstract' (B: 96; DR: 260; PS: 61). The slogan is a consequence of a change in the logical relations that can be generated between the terms of the pairing. Such a claim, of course, supposes that the limit of logical relations is not determined by a structure of possibility *in the abstract.* The complications of such an assumption are not to be underestimated.

(b) If the re-pairing move alters the terms of the logical relations that might be generated with the pairs, it also shifts the dynamic *between* the terms of the pairs. The P/R relation involves 'a process of realisation' (B: 97) whereas the V/A pair involves a process of actualization. The process of realization involves two factors, viz., limitation and resemblance. The process of actualization, however, involves the two alternative factors of 'difference or divergence and creation' (ibid.).

The real resembles the possible (DR: 349). The real man is a resemblance of the possible man, for example. Deleuze argues that for Bergson this relation between possibility and reality is at the heart of the claim that the possible is a 'false notion', 'the source of false problems' (B: 98). There is a 'sleight of hand', in that the possible stands to the real as though it preceded it, as though the possibility were prior to the reality, whereas in truth the possible is *derived from* the real. This claim that the possible derives from the real is argued for in part by reference to living evolution and in this sense Ansell Pearson is right to focus on the 'bio-philosophical' background to Deleuze's work.[10] For the possible to precede the real would involve, within the realm of biology, a notion of pre-formism that is destroyed by the theory of evolution. The prior nature of the possible is argued to be an illusion.

At the heart of the problem of the possible as the ground of false notions is not a naturalistic appeal to evolution, however, but a specifically philosophical problem. This distinction between the possible/real and the virtual/actual is not a verbal dispute but 'a question of existence itself' (DR: 263). The difference between the real object and the possible is one of existence but that very existence cannot be conceptualized within the possible/real

duality and instead appears as a 'brute eruption'. Existence cannot be distinguished from non-existence in terms of the possible, according to Deleuze, since there is no difference between the existence or non-existence of the possible object. As a possible object it makes no difference whether it exists or not since it is possible regardless of its existence. The concept of the possible object is indifferent to existence, which is conceived as something that is both outside the concept and an 'indifferent milieu'. Within the concept of the possible, the object is conceived of as existing, if it exists, in space and time but these are nothing more than an indifferent milieu. Deleuze opposes a notion of space and time as an indifferent milieu with a productive notion of existence which occurs in 'a characteristic space and time' (DR: 263).[11] Existence is thus something that has a character. The possible and the virtual are thus distinguished by their relation to existence, the former is within indifference, the latter within character.

The virtual, as distinct from the possible, is not outside or indifferent to existence since it is fully real. It is the 'characteristic state of Ideas' (DR: 263) and the production of existence is on the basis of this virtual Idea. The idea of a character picks out a particular collection of intensities. The character of time and space is then assimilated to the Idea rather than being seen as an indifferent milieu, implying that there are a plurality of such characters, that different Ideas have different characters, these characters going so far as to determine different characters of time and space, which are immanent to the Idea. Ideas are distinguished from concepts in this regard since the concept relies upon a notion of identity whereas the Idea is a multiplicity that is virtual, which means fully real but not actual. The Idea is a multiplicity of intensities which provides the ocean from which the actual currents arise. The actual object is not to be related to a concept of the object but to the virtual multiplicity that underlies the actualization of the object. Deleuze goes on to claim that 'any hesitation between the virtual and the possible, the order of the Idea and the order of the concept, is disastrous, since it abolishes the reality of the virtual' (DR: 264). This distinction between a virtual Idea and the concept rests upon a notion of multiplicity. The Idea is the virtual multiplicity which underlies and produces the problem, the Idea is 'neither identification nor confusion . . . but rather an internal problematic objective unity of the undetermined, the determinable and determination' (DR: 216).

The re-pairing move, then, attempts to construct a new assemblage of terms and relations productive of a new thought of the object. To try and explore this new thought it is necessary to put it to work. To do this, I want to outline an account of a kind of Kantianism. The Kantian argument can

be put in the following way: all real experience must also be possible but not all possible experience must be real and thus the category of possible experience is broader than and completely contains the category of real experience. The process of realization is what is produced by the particular structure of determinability that Kant establishes and this process of realization, of *realizing the possible*, limits the real in a negative determination. In effect, albeit in a negative form, possibility will determine reality ('that cannot be real because it is not possible') and yet this would be the ground of the error of general logic that Kant reproaches Leibniz for. Kant argues that an object is not real because it is determined as not impossible – or, more perniciously, as impossible that it could not be (God). Possibility and impossibility cannot be allowed to determine real existence since if they were then the concept of the thing of which 'it is impossible not to be' must be concluded to exist not as mere concept but also as real. The process of realization is, as it were, short-circuited at this moment, a monster rising from thought. Such a short-circuit forces the next move, critical to Kantianism.

We need, for Kant, to focus not on crude metaphysical opinions of what is real or not but instead on what we can know, how we can judge – that is, on issues of determinability, on what must be the case for a determinate judgment. Determinability may be said to be both the greatest invention and simultaneously it's location within judgment the greatest mistake of Kant's critical philosophy. If determinability, which gives the limits of any determination, is itself determined by possibility then a general transcendental structure is mistaken for a particular one. The over-inflation of possibility in a general logic leads to metaphysical error because possibility plays a role in determining reality illegitimately. The real is still, however, determined by the possible in Kant – that, in the end, is Deleuze's charge.

Any philosophy which determines the real by the possible is putting the concept above existence, the mind over the world, thought over matter – it is in effect the tendency known as Idealism with all its associated absurdity. This far-too universal and naïve a claim must be taken seriously. We must, for Deleuze, think determinability and in its pure and immanent sense, conceiving determinability conditions as a pure field or as a general concept. If determinability conditions are to be seen as general, so that Kant's structure of determinability is seen as one particular instantiation of this pure field or general concept, then we can turn this definition back on Deleuze. What sort of structure of determinability does Deleuze offer *as general*. 'Actualisation' is the key word of this general structure

of determinability (DR: 263). The general structure of determinability is actualization.

Deleuze accepts and takes on much of the Kantian structure of determinability. The determined is always determined within a structure of determinability. On this point Kant and Deleuze would agree. This aspect is being understood as the core of what makes both Kant and Deleuze 'transcendental' thinkers. The difference lies in their formulation of the structure of determinability. Transcendental idealism (realization) provides the Kantian answer and transcendental empiricism (actualization) that offered by Deleuze. The conflict between the two structures of determinability lies in the Deleuzian rejection of conditions of possible experience as adequate and sufficient conditions of real experience. In effect the concept of possible-impossible becomes the blockage as it has been placed in an implicitly determinative role in the formulation of a structure of determinability. As such that (Kantian) structure will only ever produce conditions of possible experience and excludes the concept of real experience from being produced. It is this latter concept that must play the implicitly determining central role in any determination of a structure of determinability. The real must be allowed to be real, must be allowed to act as something akin to a ground or in Deleuzian terms a 'plane of immanence', from which illusion, appearance and the unreal take their bearings. The empirically real must become the transcendental framework – this is what is meant by transcendental empiricism.

As I have already suggested, there is something almost excruciatingly naïve in this account, at least, if not only, for the post-Kantian critical philosopher. If this account is Deleuzian then Deleuze must seem to these people as inherently naïve precisely in relation to the very critical philosophy this account is said to be engaging with. Deleuze is aware of this and engages in a complex embrace of such a naïveté.[12] The naïveté is not a philosophical naïveté. Deleuzian naïveté is instead a philosophical route back to belief in the world, a route through philosophy in order to think the belief in the world. As he says in *What is philosophy?*, 'it may be that believing in this world, in this life, becomes our most difficult task, or the task of a mode of existence still to be discovered on our plane of immanence today' (WIP: 75).[13]

4. On the Levels

The critical philosophy depends on a notion of levels in order to underpin, amongst other things, the productive tension between the empirically real

and the transcendentally ideal. Level 1 (L1) is the level of common sense, the non-philosophical level as well as the level of empirical science. Within this level there is of course a dispute between common sense and empirical science, if not a downright opposition. Level 2 (L2), however, is the level of the critical philosophy and takes account of 'factors that common sense and science alike find irrelevant and in turn is not impressed by the distinctions they consider important' (Walsh 1977: 29). If Deleuze seems philosophically naïve then this suggests he is being understood within this structure of levels given by the critical philosophy and so to sustain any claim that his naïveté is something other than a philosophical naïveté, that it is in effect philosophically sophisticated, it has to be shown how his arguments are not reducible to simply bringing in factors that would, by definition, be ruled out by the critical philosophy, factors such as a presupposed real accessible by the obviousness of holding up ones hands in front of ones face and reaching out to it.

'There is no description of the world that can free itself from the reference to experience' Roger Scruton says in his little book on Kant, posing this as a kind of formula for the critical philosophy (Scruton 2001: 102). If we accept this formulation of why the critical philosophy is unavoidable then we face a problem when coming to Deleuze. The practice of Deleuzian philosophy may be capable of being described as a 'description of the world' but on its own terms it rejects this. Whilst Deleuze accepts that he has 'continually proposed descriptive notions' he argues that these are not categories but describe 'actual series, or virtual Ideas, or indeed the groundlessness from which everything comes' – they are analogous to existentials as against essentials and he claims that philosophy has always proposed these sorts of notions, 'notions which are really open and which betray an empirical and pluralist sense of Ideas' (DR: 355). In later works he supplements and extends this idea with a wider claim that philosophy poses itself as a practice, a practice of conceptual creation. Deleuze poses this as the model of philosophical activity in general.[14] In terms of a project of trying to engage Kant and Deleuze, however, we cannot simply hold onto the model of concept creation as an answer to Kant. Instead we need to look at the way Deleuze tries to level the levels that are contained within the critical philosophy.

To begin with it is worth noting that L2 is not the level at which all philosophy will be placed. In effect everything except the critical philosophy will be placed at L1. This is because L2, the critical philosophical level, is instantiated through the invention of the concept of determinability, the search for limits. The immanent critique occurs at L1 in order to produce the critical philosophy aware of its limits that constitutes L2, at which

point critique as a method becomes a philosophical method. For Deleuze this would undoubtedly be an entirely legitimate philosophical operation as it could be said to exemplify the idea of the creation of a concept. Here we encounter something like the key point of tension. If all philosophical activity is one of creating concepts, then this is a single level, a concrete generality which succeeds only if it can somehow contain the very creation of a concept of a 'doubling' of philosophical activity.

5. Speculation about Objects and Relations

It is true, of course, that Kant's transcendental philosophy does not discuss a process of realization but is instead centred on the distinction between the *a priori* and *a posteriori*. Noticing in passing the scare quotes around the word 'transcendental', we find Deleuze claiming that the Kantian notion of the '"transcendental" qualifies the principle of necessary subjection of what is given in experience to our a priori representations, and correlatively the principle of a necessary application of a priori representations to experience' (KCP: 13). Whilst for Kant this involves establishing a set of limitation arguments for the nature of experience by constraining experience to the phenomenal realm,[15] for Deleuze the 'transcendental' involves what can be called the 'giving of the given', which would include the giving of the phenomena that constitute the phenomenal realm but more importantly also the giving of the subject as a 'transcendent' object, an effect that arises from the transcendental field. 'Consciousness becomes a fact only when a subject is produced at the same time as its object, both being outside the field and appearing as "transcendents"' (TRM: 384–5). Consciousness is here the transcendental field of determinability within which the subject and object can appear, something Kant has encountered in the pure forms of intuition. These pure forms cannot belong to the subject, however, but to 'a fact of consciousness'. This identification of consciousness as fact points to its contingency, its reality as it is has become. Nothing in the structure of the critical philosophy accounts for this fact since to do so it would have to be able to prove that consciousness must have become the fact that it has become.[16]

Kant is not transcendental enough for Deleuze, he 'botches' the transcendental and gets caught within the empirical, within this fact of consciousness. What is 'Copernican' about the Kantian move is not the formula 'conditions of possibility', it is the move to grasp the very production of the world itself within experience, within the empirical, within this

fact of consciousness encountered as intuition. Therefore it is not the case that Deleuze simply avoids the implication of the conceptual structure that is established by the particular Kantian formula. That formula produces a peculiarly Kantian transcendental philosophy but does not therefore produce the only transcendental philosophy and Deleuze is pursuing an alternative account of the transcendental rather than a specifically anti-Kantian argument.

A transcendental philosophy is not a formula or, if it is, it is a formula that is structured to provide *both the world and our knowledge of the world.* It is, therefore, fundamentally a formula of *relation.* It is not a conceptual problem – such as the unity or plurality of being – that defines the transcendental philosophy but the problem of the relation of knowledge to the world. This is what is transcendental because this is the structure of the relation of an object as a relation to an otherness, that is, as a relation to another object. At its heart the concept of an object is plural in that an object is never singular. There is never just one object. There is an object in so far as there are objects. There can be no transcendental without a plural structure being implied. The transcendental problem is thus the problem of the relations of the object, its objectivity. Kant's reduction of the relations to a relation of knowledge occludes the problem of the object in its account of objectivity but has the advantage of bringing to the fore the problem of the objectivity of the object. In response Deleuze might be best thought as attempting a project of metaphysical speculation about the object in the light of the problem of the objectivity of the object.

Kant's critical move has both an epistemological and an ontological import. The question that seems crucial to the Deleuzian project, however, is how is it going to cope with the epistemological side of this move? What is the Deleuzian form of knowing? It is an immediate problem for Deleuze of how it is that we might come to grasp or understand the ontological speculation that we are presented with. The very 're-pairing' move might be thought of as simply a kind of bizarre story telling. Kant gathers a kind of necessity to his arguments through the reliance on possibility, a logical necessity which is the ground of the difficulty Deleuze has with his account. At the same time, a necessity of some kind might be thought necessary to the philosophical sustainability of a Deleuzian ontology of virtual and actual. How might we know the virtual and the actual?

Fundamentally Deleuze addresses the problem of knowledge not by investigating the form of all possible knowledge but by experimenting with the ability of knowledge. It is not what we can know, nor how we can know, but what knowledge is capable of that is at the heart of Deleuze's

philosophy, a capacity understood as never anything other than that which is encountered through experiment with that capacity.

We do not know what knowledge is capable of. This 'not knowing' is not a matter of a 'not yet' nor of a 'can not'. It is neither 'fact' nor 'principle' that 'we do not know what knowledge is capable of'. Rather what we know of knowledge is that there is the 'event of knowledge'. This event of knowledge is what Deleuze calls 'knowledge-being'. In his discussion of the work of Foucault Deleuze identifies knowledge-being as caught within the structure of forces that constitutes the transcendental field of production of the event of knowledge, the giving of the given. The giving of any given knowledge is the result of this structure of forces. Forces, as the ground of relations, provide the key element for the structure of the object necessary to establish a transcendental account of thinking that includes the event of 'thinking the transcendental' rather than the mere transcendent, the giving rather than the given. The object is relation 'within' the plane of immanence, the field of forces that constitute it. To think the transcendental without botching it is to think the plane of immanence ('conditions of real experience') rather than the condition of possibility and this means to think the object as relations of force. This enables a move of distinction without transcendence.

If the 'object itself is force, the expression of a force' (NP: 6) then thinking the object involves thinking the expression of the force. In philosophy the concept is the critical event of this thinking. The creation of a concept is an expression of the forces being thought through that concept. The concept is the object of the philosophical work. This is why philosophy is the activity of concept creation. Concept creation is not the construction of a fixed universal that is identifiable and which can serve as a tool to identify particulars. It is instead the creation of a line of movement from the known to the unknown, a diagram of the transcendental practice of knowing. Knowledge of the object is not a distinct relation made between discrete entities, presuppositions which rely upon a sense of transcendence and thus inevitably produce transcendence, whether it be in the form of God or the transcendental ego. If the plane of immanence is a field of forces and the object a particular set of forces, then knowledge of the object is merely a more complicated set of forces.

6. The Complicating Matter of Forces

It is with this notion of a complication of forces that we find the resources for an answer to how we might know the virtual and actual. Knowledge is

fundamentally practical for Deleuze and again a closeness to Kant needs to be acknowledged. This practice, however, is non-teleologically conceived. Practice is instead a kind of 'technics of immanence', supplementary to but constitutive of a plane of immanence. One of the key difficulties at this point is how to conceive of such a 'technics of immanence' as not governed by something like a notion of 'need'. If we drop back into a simple naturalism – 'in order for the organism to survive then X must be the case' – we cannot easily account for the level of the symbolic, of principle and of necessity. What is at stake is the problem of the force of necessity, of this 'in order for'? The transcendental has been posed as a kind of 'argument to the presupposed',[17] such that we might formulate it as 'if X is the case then Y must be the case' or 'in order for X then Y'. It is the force of this 'in order for', the problem of the modality of transcendental claims, that proves troublesome.[18]

In order to pursue this line of thought, which as it stands is still quite abstract and difficult to encounter, consider the objects of social practice, the government and the people. In one sense it is intuitively simple to understand that these are expressions of forces. Whether these forces are called cultural, historical or genetic is going to depend in large measure on the way methodologies are employed in understanding these objects. That we are aware of the variability instituted by these methodologies might suggest that the objectivity of the objects is reduced to a relativism with regard to these methodologies. What is needed to move towards a transcendental critique of forces is a moment or clue as to the actualization of the thinking of forces in any form. For Deleuze this is found in that which forces thought and in doing so constitutes thoughts with a force. The clue is stupidity.

The transcendental condition of thought is stupidity. 'Stupidity (not error) constitutes the greatest weakness of thought, but also the source of its highest power' (DR: 345). Stupidity arises from the indeterminate, the 'groundlessness' of any determination as the field of determinability. In other words, whatever determination of the modality of the 'in order to', the force of this necessity brings with it a kind of stupidity, most commonly revealed by the radical sceptic in the form of a groundlessness of determination. The mistake, Deleuze suggests, is to think that this indeterminateness is to be overcome. If we work, he argues, within a representational mode then the encounter with indeterminacy is encountered as a failure derived from the mode of representations. The shift in the critical philosophy is 'Copernican' precisely with regard to the very concept or mode of representations but not with regard to understanding. Whilst the critical philosophy can find a way to remove indeterminacy from its representations

it fails to account for the actual force of any representation. To begin to move past representation to abstraction, is the task for thought according to Deleuze (DR: 346) and this means to begin to conceive understanding as fundamentally produced, forced and forceful rather than representational, bound up and complicated in that which is necessarily indeterminate in any field of determinability. This is not to deny understanding, either as fact or as a particularly important fact, perhaps the most important fact of consciousness. It is instead to think with complication. Understanding must remain level with the forces it understands as nothing more than – yet everything more than – another force.

Notes

[1] The phrase, central to 'information theory', derives from Bateson 1973, where a brief definition is given in the essay 'Double bind' – 'A difference which makes a difference is an idea. It is a "bit", a unit of information' (Bateson 1973: 242). This concept can also be found at work in philosophy of mind, for example, in Chalmers 1996: 281, 283.

[2] If there are first principles, such as the principles of possible experience, then we can perhaps move through the deduction of the categories but this is dependent upon a quid juris that needs support by a quid facti – cf. Beiser 1993: 289–91 for an account of the way Maimon poses this problem of the quid facti. For Deleuze it is Maimon who 'proposes a fundamental reformulation of the Critique and an overcoming of the Kantian duality between concept and intuition' (DR: 220). In doing so Maimon shows how 'determinability must itself be conceived as pointing towards a principle of reciprocal determination' (ibid.).

[3] 'Always obey. The more you obey, the more you will be master, for you will only be obeying pure reason, in other words yourself . . . Ever since philosophy assigned itself the role of ground it has been giving the established powers its blessing, and tracing its doctrine of faculties onto the organs of State power. Common sense, the unity of all the faculties at the center constituted by the Cogito, is the State consensus raised to the absolute. This was most notably the great operation of the Kantian "critique" . . .' (ATP: 414).

[4] Strawson makes this explicit when he compares experience as appearance with the appearance of the physical and spatial world. Experience is 'the temporally ordered series of experiences, a dependent existence, the outcome of the A-relation' (ibid.).

[5] These sections are deleted because of misunderstanding not incorrectness and contain, as Strawson says 'strikingly bold affirmations of the included phenomenalistic idealism' (ibid.: 256).

[6] I refer here to the Guyer and Wood translation because Meiklejohn's translation – which I use in the rest of this essay – is only of the second, 'B' edition of the Critique and as such the section on the fourth paralogism doesn't appear.

[7] 'The transcendental form of a faculty is indistinguishable from its disjointed, superior or transcendent exercise. Transcendent in no way means that the faculty addresses itself to objects outside the world but, on the contrary, that it grasps that in the world which concerns it exclusively. . . . Despite the fact that it has become discredited today, the doctrine of the faculties is an entirely necessary component of the system of philosophy. Its discredit may be explained by the misrecognition of this properly transcendental empiricism, for which was substituted in vain a tracing of the transcendental from the empirical.' (DR: 180)

[8] Strawson, for example, outlines six theses that he thinks constitute these necessary conditions of any possible experience. He is explicit in his reading about an emphasis on 'significance' – this is, after all, the defining characteristic of the Strawsonian reading – and this slips into the concept of 'conceivability' at particular moments, one of which is the 'temporality thesis', one of these six theses – Strawson 1996: 24–5.

[9] 'Vague' does not mean undetermined but rather a kind of 'rough and ready' or 'practical' function, which operates on a reciprocal relation. Deleuze and Guattari etymologically connect 'vague' with 'vagabond' (nomadic) essences – 'it is neither inexact like sensible things nor exact like ideal essences, but an exact yet rigorous ("essentially and not accidentally inexact"). The circle is an organic, ideal, fixed essence, but roundness is a vague and fluent essence, distinct both from the circle and things that are round (a vase, a wheel, the sun)' (ATP: 405).

[10] For example, Keith Ansell Pearson locates the background of Bergsons' 'biophilosophy' in DR and LOS by pointing out that the concept of individuation, which is so central to these works, derives from Gilbert Simondon. He then argues that this can only be understood against a background of 'Bergsonism', in particular a concern with creative evolution (Ansell Pearson 1999: 79–80). Whilst this Bergsonism is argued by Ansell Pearson to be the background of DR and LOS, it is undergoing a reconfiguration through the introduction of the concept of individuation (ibid.: 77–8). The relation to Bergson is one in which Deleuze 'takes on' the line of thought opened by Bergson and develops it beyond the weaknesses that he found there. This is the general line of argument within Germinal Life.

[11] One of the examples Deleuze gives to illustrate this is that of an erehwon (now/here) that he draws from Samuel Butler's novel of the same name (DR: 356).

[12] There is necessity for a radical honesty in radical thought. This radical honesty is in effect what is meant by naïveté, though it is also directly related to the very attempt to think determinability. Deleuze declares at one point that 'I wasn't better than the others, but more naïve, producing a kind of art brut, so to speak, not the most profound but the most innocent' (N: 89). What is, of course, fascinating is that almost by definition the one who is naïve would be claimed to be the one who cannot declare themselves so.

[13] This can also be connected quite productively to what Deleuze says in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, where there is a rejection of what is there called 'Socratism' as something that distorts thinking, in particular the thinking of life, by subordinating it to knowledge. This rejection enables a new form of thinking and 'thinking would then mean discovering, inventing, new possibilities of life' (NP: 94). The loss of the term 'possibilities' in the latter formulation of what looks like

essentially the same claim, just some 25 years later, goes hand in hand with the loss of the term 'invention' as well.

[14] This is particularly prominent in *What is philosophy?* Cf. WIP: chapter 1, passim.

[15] This move is complicated by it's capacity to be read positively or negatively – Bas Van Fraasen suggests that this restriction is Kant's contribution to a 'purified' empiricism, for example, by reading the restriction as a sceptical argument that establishes the limits of knowledge – cf. Van Fraasen 2002. Karl Ameriks, on the other hand, offers an account of a positive metaphysical content in Kant's work (metaphysical immaterialism) which would imply that the limiting of experience to possible experience is merely part of a general move to limit the knowledge of metaphysical statements, what Ameriks calls the 'combination of metaphysical commitment and non-specificity' – Ameriks 2000: 313.

[16] This echoes Maimon's critique of Reinhold. Maimon argues that the critical philosophy cannot begin from any first principles, such Reinhold's claim that the 'fact of consciousness' is a first principle. For Maimon first principles are either dogmatically held or sceptically doubted rather than sufficiently established. See Beiser 1993: 318–20.

[17] Cf. Palmer 1985: 39. Palmer cites Strawsons' *Introduction to Logical Theory*, London: Methuen 1952: 175.

[18] The reading of transcendental philosophy as 'presuppositional' derives from Strawson's *Bounds of Sense* move. It is still a contemporary framework, in particular for trying to think about the structure of transcendental thought as distinct from transcendental idealism. In a recent essay, for example, Cassam makes explicit the implications of this when he suggests we might need to think the *a priori* as in some sense finding its source within experience: cf. Cassam 2003.

Chapter 4

The Genesis of Cognition
Deleuze as a Reader of Kant[1]

Edward Willatt

In what sense is Deleuze a reader of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*? He offers an account of Kant's critical system and of the points at which he finds it most productive. Does this mean that he is first descriptive and then selective, using Kant's thought as a tool box for his own purposes? If we want to see Deleuze as a descriptive and consistent reader of Kant it would seem that we must turn to his book *Kant's Critical Philosophy* where he seeks to explain Kant's critical system. Yet I will seek an alternative to both of these approaches, descriptive and selective, by considering a place where Deleuze uses a term that Kant also uses but is not explicitly writing about his philosophy. This is his essay 'How do we recognise structuralism?' (DI: 170–92) and the term is 'object=x'. This might seem to be a case where Deleuze is selecting from Kant the terms or tools he finds useful rather than giving a wider and immanent reading. Yet I shall attempt to show that by presenting an account of structure and genesis in this essay Deleuze provides a way of reading Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* in terms of what we will call an 'Idea of the whole'. This Idea is to provide an account of the process of cognition as a whole through its genesis, the object=x. As we shall see, this contributes to debates in Kant scholarship over the terms he uses and even challenges Deleuze's own assessment of his work. This is not to deny the role of genesis in the reading of Kant that Deleuze provides in *Kant's Critical Philosophy*. Yet whereas the genesis of the critical system is here situated in the *Critique of Judgement* we will be using other work by Deleuze in order to locate a notion of genesis in the *Critique of Pure Reason*.[2] Without seeking to deny the importance of the former text in Kant's critical system we will attempt to show that Deleuze provides an immanent and unifying way of reading the latter text. By focusing upon a place were Deleuze is not engaged in setting out Kant's system, its terms and relations, we will be able to consider how the notion

of genesis he presents can transform our understanding of these terms and relations.

The first section of this paper will seek to show that Deleuze offers us an approach to Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* through the notion of the object=x as the genesis of structures that differentiate and unify experience. We will be concerned to show that this approach offers a new way of reading Kant because it focuses upon a notion of the genesis of structures. The second section will consider the differences between Kant and Deleuze that get in the way of this approach. We will consider how Deleuze is critical of Kant's account of cognition in the *Critique of Pure Reason* and yet argue that he allows us to locate a notion of genesis in this text. Having sought to show that the reading of Kant we are proposing has a basis in Deleuze's work we will then seek to show that it has relevance to Kant's text. The rationale behind this way of reading is that a lot of the terms used are understood very differently depending on whether they are considered in isolation or as part of a whole. For proponents of the latter strategy this is a transformation in how we understand the meaning of Kant's terms which comes from within his system and how its works. Deleuze brings to this tendency in Kant scholarship a concern with genesis and how it relates the terms or parts of the process. Gerd Buchdahl is a reader of Kant eager to discard the baggage that Kantian terms have collected because they have been considered in isolation. He writes that he wants to break through '. . . the usual idea of an "authoritarian timelessness" assumed to surround the transcendental approach' (1992: 9). We will try to see what this means and how Deleuze helps to make this a convincing and effective reading strategy. Rather than isolating and analysing the terms used in the *Critique of Pure Reason* from an external viewpoint, these terms are to be viewed, as Kant himself counsels, by '. . . someone who has gained command of the idea as a whole' (CPR Pluhar: Bxliv). The task then is to gain an Idea of the process of cognition as a whole, how it relates it terms and assigns them roles and meanings. This might seem to be an uncritical reading strategy but I want to argue that we can only be critical or evaluative when we have grasped and understood this Idea rather than forestalling it. Let's now see in what sense Deleuze can be said to provide a way of reading the *Critique of Pure Reason* that focuses upon its genesis and through this attains an Idea of the whole.

1. Deleuze on Structure and Genesis

Deleuze raises the question 'How do we recognise structuralism?' in his essay of the same name (DI: 170–92). When it comes to the subject of Deleuze's

essay James Williams has argued that it is as much about poststructuralism as structuralism (Williams 2005: 53). This is because it moves away from an understanding of structure as being developed through its own relations, things already given or secured. It thus moves away from a concern with '... arriving at secure knowledge through the charting of differences within structures' (ibid.: 1). The move is to a structure that is disrupted by its own limit when this introduces instability and plurality of meaning into structures. For Deleuze we do not recognize structuralism by considering how structure is the same across different cases because of the empirical resemblance between how things are structured in each case. As Todd May puts it, Deleuze seeks '... concepts through which the world becomes strange to us again, through which the borders between things become porous and their identities fluid' (May 2005: 72–3). This is not just a way of viewing the world but is to view the world in terms of the way it always comes to be structured. It is to view the world in terms of this process as a whole and not according to the outcomes with which we are familiar. Strangeness has to be realized through this account of structures, structures that allow experience to be grasped but are not tied by resemblance to past experience that is already structured. Deleuze is then concerned with the genesis of differences that make up structures rather than securing what is given through the differences that already make up a structure.[3] It is in search of this that he demands of structuralism a certain radicalization that makes it sound like what we would today call poststructuralism. James Williams writes of how: 'No poststructuralist defines the limit as something knowable (it would then merely become another core). Rather, each poststructuralist thinker defines the limit as a version of a pure difference, in the sense of something that defies identification' (Williams 2005: 3). This is the standard Deleuze sets for any notion of structure. It is a reading strategy that looks for what animates the whole, the limit or genesis of the process but also for a structure that is able to be open to its own genesis. Genesis is what make things fluid and porous in a structure and across structures, unsettling how we are used to classifying things. Structure must therefore be what is differentiated or what realizes this genesis rather than something that is maintained because of its resemblance to what went before in structures. There is then a whole process or system of realizing pure difference through structure, difference that is never already included or given in structure but for this reason differentiates structure rather than becoming something recognizable. What term captures the nature of this genesis for Deleuze? He writes: '... we again find the paradox of the empty square. For this is the only place that cannot and must not be filled ...' (DI: 189).

This is because '[i]t must retain the perfection of its emptiness in order to be displaced in relation to itself, and in order to circulate throughout the elements and the variety of relations' (ibid.). We have then the genesis of structure in pure difference which is productive insofar as it produces new structured things without ever becoming part of structure itself. We have a recognition of structuralism in terms of its genesis and how this transforms our notion of structure.

If structure is to be accounted for by a genesis that disrupts it then the obvious question is how structure is held together by this recurring genesis. We have said the structure is not the same across cases because it is familiar or because of the empirical resemblance between how cases are structured. Genesis is empty of these terms of reference which allow empirical recognition to take place. Empirical recognition does not then provide what is always the same, in and across every structure. Can the notion of genesis that Deleuze formulates provide an account of both the differentiation of structure and how it is consistent or unified across cases? Deleuze seeks to do this by talking about genesis in terms of problems that unify the structuring of experience. They are at work in how a recognizable or structured object emerges but are not recognizable in this object. In what sense is the empty square a source of problems? It is a void but '. . . not a non-being; or at least this non-being is not the being of the negative, but rather the positive being of the "problematic," the objective being of a problem and of a question . . .' (ibid.: 189–90). This combination of the problematic and objectivity is key. In recognizing structuralism we are recognizing the formation of structures as well as their disruption. Deleuze seeks, as he puts it '. . . a way of recalling the objective consistency that the category of the problematic takes on at the heart of structures' (ibid.: 187). Problems have objective consistency insofar as they hold together what they differentiate. This objectivity of a problem is not confined to the outcomes of this process, such as the empirical resemblance of an object, but concerns the way in which they are continuously realized across structures. It is not something to be attributed to the structured object but rather to the way it emerges through the structuring of experience. We must further consider the nature of this sameness and objectivity of structure since they are key concerns for Kant. We will then attempt to secure their role in Deleuze's thought so as to be able, in section two, to better assess his relation to Kant.

We are concerned with the objectivity and consistency of structure that Deleuze develops when he also names the problematic genesis of structure the object=x (ibid.: 184f.). Structure is differentiated and yet the objective

consistency of the problems set by its genesis secure the sameness of structures. This begins with sameness in the most universal sense. The object=x as genesis of structures is what remains the same in every structure, it is the pure difference that differentiates structures and is what they have in common. Yet this has also to be sameness across cases of a problem within a structure or across structures. How is this sameness secured? Deleuze writes that 'The orders of structure do not communicate in a common site, but they communicate through their empty place or respective object=x' (ibid.: 188). This means that a problem can unify two series that have nothing in common because it itself does not resemble either of them, being itself the empty square of structure with no such terms of reference. However, we have to see how this emptiness can become a fullness in the widest communication of series and in objective outcomes in the life of a structure. Let's consider how this communicator of series can be the source of both differentiation and unity.

With the term object=x Deleuze is able to give the sense that a structured object will be the outcome of the process but that its nature is open. Openness is then to be realized in objective structures, accounting for how structured things are recognized and so how they become a part of the familiar world. In other words, this objectivity is to account for what is familiar in the world while having strangeness as its genesis. The structure will thus be extended in objective ways but the genesis that operates is not tied to the way things are already structured and it does not dictate how they will be structured. If we take two structured series of events, which are therefore empirical or already part of structures, then we have to account for their relation through an object=x or common problem. In *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze refers to this object=x, in the case of linguistic structures, as the 'esoteric word' (DR: 150). Here he is concerned with how literary works are differentiated and unified, with esoteric words displacing accepted meanings and creating new ones. There are problems that are realized in understanding how books are meaningful just as in biological structures the object=x is involved in how bodies are organized. The esoteric word lacks meaning, it has no place in structure. However it continues to occur and objectively structure the novel without ever being exhausted, without ever attaining a place in structure that captures and exhausts its meaning. Across the text we recognize a problem not because of the same results but because it is a theme that is realized differently in each case. What does it mean to say that the same theme is realized differently?

In *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze uses the example of Proust's *In Search of Lost Time* to show how two series are related by the object=x (ibid.: 149).

One is the former present, the structured experience of the town of Combray, and the other is the present present where we remember Combray. The two series do share empirical resemblances. This is first of all between two sensations of taste and smell that occur in both series. In the second series, the present present, the taste and smell trigger the remembrance not just of the past sensation but of Combray itself. This suggests that Combray is not an 'esoteric word' at all but something that stabilizes the present structure of experience, securing the meanings that make it up through its empirical remembrance to a structured past. The intense and overflowing meanings that are triggered by the taste and smell are explained by a past experience that links them to a town, Combray, and what happened to the narrator while he was there. The former present is a breakfast on a Sunday morning in Combray in the narrators youth. His aunt Léonie used to give him a piece of madeleine '. . . soaked in her decoction of lime blossom' (Proust 1996: 54). In the present present the narrator is again tasting a piece of madeleine cake soaked in tea. Yet for Deleuze, if what relates these two series were empirical resemblance between how they are both structured we could not account for the sensations undergone by the narrator who is remembering. As Proust writes, the structures of experience, such as the narrator's knowledge of Combray, may be forgotten but something remains:

> But when from a long distant past nothing subsists, after the people are dead, after the things are broken and scattered, taste and smell alone, more fragile but more enduring, more immaterial, more persistent, more faithful, remain poised a long time, like souls, remembering, waiting, hoping, amid the ruins of all the rest and bear unflinchingly, in the tiny and almost impalpable drop of their essence, the vast structure of recollection. (ibid.: 54)

For Proust the memory of a structured experience – the person of Aunt Léonie, the room in which they breakfasted, even the shape of the madeleine – is less permanent than the sensations of taste and smell that persist. They overcome the structure of the narrator's present situation through this remembrance. What he experiences cannot be attributed to the structure of the former present or present present. Furthermore, when the memory of Combray occurs something different results in each case because the narrator is at a different stage of his apprenticeship to these moments. He thus encounters the same thing but the result is a different structure of experience. Combray is then the object=x or theme that

is realized in different sensations and thoughts every time rather than a structured object of memory.

Proust's notion of apprenticeship is important because the apprentice moves away from the empirical resemblance of the two series, they learn how their relations can be more productive than this. For Deleuze, instead of the structured experience of Combray, we have a quality recollected that Proust calls '. . . something isolated, detached, with no suggestion of origin' (ibid.: 51). Apprenticeship involves learning to make this object=x productive without seeking to understand it as part of a structure. It must be encountered as the empty square of structure. In volume six of the work, *Time Regained*, it is the memory of Combray that prompts the exploration of time as a whole that concludes the novel (Proust 2000: 447–51). It did not have to result in this highly productive and conclusive meditation on the subject of the novel. The Combray moment we considered in volume one was where Combray rose up '. . . from my cup of tea' (Proust 1996: 55). This rush of sensation is productive because it exceeds the Combray that was lived and therefore already structured. But in volume six the Combray moment gives rise to the thought of the whole of time, the account of how problems like Combray arise and ultimately relate. Not even taste and smell survive as they did in the first Combray moment because rather than structuring the experience of a sensation differently it now gives rise to the ultimate horizon of every structure, to something that every structure is in search of. We have here an objective process of apprenticeship. The object=x is evoked in different ways throughout *In Search of Lost Time*, prompting new sensations that structure the experience of the narrator and advance his apprenticeship. Combray does not specify how this is realized, it is not a structured object given to us, but rather sets the problems of realizing it in the differentiation of structures that give rise to new forms of objectivity.

So far we have emphasized the role of the object=x and the objective consistency of the problems it sets for structure. We have a series of occurrences of the object=x. For Deleuze then: 'A structure only starts to move, and become animated, if we restore its other half' (DI: 182). The result is the inexhaustible playing out of the other half of structure, problems or Ideas, in the differentiation of structures. Thus it is always through common Ideas, such as artistic, linguistic, biological or social Ideas, that this activity takes place.[4] Combray is an artistic Idea, one giving rise to new sensations that take us beyond the structured or organized bodies we know, just as biological Ideas are realized through new ways of organizing bodies. The apprentice, Proust's narrator, learns that the object=x is not explained

or realized through the structure of the social world he inhabits but can be realized by an artist. The artist encounters the object=x not as part of a structure but as the source of the differentiation of structures that the artist extends and seeks to contribute to in original ways. Meaningful or organized bodies always become porous and fluid in relation to Ideas, whether this is realized through artistic, social or evolutionary activity. Does this provide us with an Idea of the whole that we can work with and proceed to consider whether it provides a valid model for a reading of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*? Deleuze does make his account of structure and its genesis universal, setting forth an Idea of the whole, by declaring structuralism to be:

> a truly general method, valid for all the structurable domains, a criterion for every structure, as if a structure were not defined without assigning an object=x that ceaselessly traverses the series[.] As if the literary work, for example, or the work of art, but other oeuvres as well, those of society, those of illness, those of life in general, enveloped this very special object which assumes control over their structure. (DI: 184–5)

Yet before considering what the object=x is for Kant himself we need to consider whether it really has Kantian connotations for Deleuze. Both questions will determine whether it has purchase on Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* as a reading strategy for this text. Is there a sense in Deleuze's work that his thinking on the object=x as genesis of structure is relevant to Kant and can provide the basis for a reading of his text? In a series of seminars given in 1978 that are concerned with Kant's philosophy Deleuze considers the Kantian notion of the object=x (KS3). We find a similar enthusiasm for the object=x as we do in the essay on structuralism, an interest in treating it as the genesis of an ongoing process of structuring experience. Deleuze writes that,

> the object=x only receives a determination as lion, table or lighter by the diversity I relate to it. When I relate to the object=x a diversity of antelopes: long hair in the wind, a roar in the air, a heavy step, a run of antelopes, well I say it's a lion. (ibid.)

This relates the object=x to the Ideas that are realized in objective series. The diversity encountered in sensation is able to extend biological Ideas but it requires objective consistency to do this. To realize this diversity the object=x must provide the focus of the process. This is a focus upon how

diversity diversifies an organized body in the process of extending Ideas that range beyond the life and reach of such bodies. In other words, the organized and meaningful objects of experience must not be exceeded or left behind in the name of extending Ideas but must play a part in the extension or realization of these Ideas. We note that the example does not proceed by relating the attributes of a lion to an organized body that is recognizable in advance. Instead it shows how an object emerges from the diversity of sensations that are in play. The lion emerges from a diversity of sensations including those that do not belong to it as a recognizably organized body. Thus we see that what this organized body of the lion can do, its roar and heavy step, is grasped and extended through its relation to the ability of antelopes to run. The example starts with how everything relates through a diversity of sensations. Through this there emerges organized bodies with certain abilities. The hunter and hunted are organized according to the abilities that are brought out and developed in the hunt. We therefore start in Deleuze's example with a range of unattributed abilities which are part of a field of activity, a field of hunting, and out of these emerge organized bodies. The concern is with the realization of the diversity of sensation in the form of an object, such as in the meaningful bodies of literary works or in organized biological bodies like that of a lion. Deleuze writes that this is how '. . . the sensible diversity goes beyond itself towards something that I call an object' (ibid.). It therefore seems that in Kant there are the resources to strengthen Deleuze's account of how, in the differentiation of structures, both Ideas and their realization in objective forms are involved in the process as a whole.

So far we've seen that the object=x as the 'empty square' is indeed very 'full' in terms of what it can do in differentiating structure and extending the variety of determinations of the artistic, the linguistic, the biological, the social, and so on. Yet it is 'empty' in that it isn't to be confused with any possible element of structure. In the section that follows we must seek to locate the role of structure and genesis in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* because this will allow us to argue that Deleuze's understanding of this process as a whole can provide a way of reading Kant's text. Yet before we do this we must consider the obstacles to relating Kant and Deleuze in this way.

2. The Strangeness of Kant's Structures

What objections might be raised to finding in Deleuze's essay 'How do we recognize structuralism?' a strategy for reading Kant? If both Kant and

Deleuze provide an account of the structures of experience then there is a certain integrity to each of these accounts. Surely this is what is involved in grasping an Idea of the whole? This concerns what is internal to their accounts and what is not respected if external notions and ends are introduced. Are we not in danger of doing just this? We must consider the scope of the relations between Kant and Deleuze to see if they allow for Deleuze to be considered a reader of Kant using the Idea of a whole he forms when talking not about Kant but about structuralism. Deleuze was concerned to grasp an Idea of structuralism as a whole and we saw that this had its basis in a concern, shared with structuralism, with differences that unify and determine structures. The move to the differentiation of structure through its genesis could plausibly be seen as preserving the integrity of structuralism because it is a radicalization that takes structuralism's concern with difference to its ultimate conclusion. We cannot assess here this claim about structuralism but we must assess the validity of the similar approach that we have so far been taking to the *Critique of Pure Reason.* Are the ends Deleuze pursued in forming this Idea of a whole external to Kant's text? We have so far used Deleuze's work as a guide to form this reading without fully assessing its grounding in either Kant or Deleuze's work. Yet upon this depends the possibility that structure and genesis in Deleuze's work actually allows us to capture an Idea of the whole of the *Critique of Pure Reason.*

Let's consider first whether this reading strategy has any grounding in the text of the *Critique of Pure Reason.* In a section that follows shortly after the deduction of the Table of Categories or pure concepts of the understanding Kant writes:

> But even for these concepts, as for all cognition, we can locate in experience, if not the principle of their possibility, then at least the occasioning causes of their production. Thus the impressions of the senses first prompt [us] to open up the whole cognitive power in regard to them, and to bring about experience. (CPR Pluhar: B118/A86)

This provides a notion of genesis and one that is combined in the notion of object=x with the Categories or pure concepts of the understanding. We have then the occasion and the basic forms of cognition combined. The occasion is always realized through these necessary forms that any object of cognition must take and these basic forms are realized through the occasion.[5] Kant first formulates his notion of the object=x in the three syntheses of time, which are apprehension, reproduction and recognition

(ibid.: A98–110). Here he relates the occasioning cause, apprehension, to the reproduction of these moments of apprehension through imagination and then to the recognition of an object through the object=x. We move from an occasion, via reproduction, to the form of an object in general or object=x which always realizes these reproduced moments in a recognizable object. This he calls the 'transcendental object' or 'object=x'. Kant writes that: 'The pure concept of this transcendental object (which is actually always the same, =x, in all our cognitions) is what is able to provide all our empirical concepts in general with reference to an object, i.e., with objective reality' (ibid.: A109). The problem is to realize the occasion when sensations are to be secured in the unity of cognition by the objective forms provided by the understanding prior to all experience. Empirical concepts are not sufficient because they could be disproved by experience and so would be unable to secure cognition. Pure, non-empirical concepts or Categories are what is always the same, concentrated in the object=x, occasioned by sensory impressions and yet are not taken from experience. We have an echo here of Deleuze's concern with something that is always the same but is not confused with what is already realized and recognized in the structures given to experience. The question for Deleuze, in his critique of Kant, is whether these structures are strange enough to play a part in the genesis of experience. We saw that Deleuze seeks to be consistent in not assuming what is to be accounted for. Thus the process that remains the same does not empirically resemble previous occasions or structures. Kant, like Deleuze, is seeking sameness without empirical resemblance by emptying his Categories or pure concepts of the understanding of any empirical reference (CPR Pluhar: B117/A85). The critical question is whether he meets Deleuze's high standards which are set when he makes pure difference the genesis and the test of any notion of structure.

For Kant then we have the force of the occasion and the completeness of the Categories or pure and basic forms of cognition united in the object=x. Kant is concerned to provide '. . . the rule of the advance of the experience wherein objects – i.e., appearances – are given to me' (ibid.: B524/A496). In embodying the occasion upon which sensations prompt the use of cognitive faculties the object=x must also embody this rule, the pure and basic forms of cognition that realize the occasion. How are we to understand this strange object? For Buchdahl it is to be understood in the context of the process of cognition as a whole. It has a recurring role in the process and in this way distinguishes itself from other types of objects. Thus it is the occasion that animates the activity of cognition in securing objects of cognition rather than being the object of cognition that we are able recognize across

experience as a result of this process. Buchdahl argues that the object=x or transcendental object '. . . always lies at the *origin* of a realization, still to be achieved' (Buchdahl 1992: 44). He seeks to show that this object, which is never included in the structured unity of cognition, is its genesis: '. . . Kant's reduction ends up with the object as something with a genuine zero value, as an "object in the transcendental sense"' (ibid.: 57). This allows the process to begin again rather than being limited by what has already been structured through cognition. It is a reduction that keeps the structures of cognition open. Thus for Buchdahl the transcendental object or object=x is what '. . . neither possesses nor lacks a constitution' (ibid.: 63). In this sense it is empty but not lacking and so echoes Deleuze's concern with the empty square of structure, with how structure is kept open. It is not outside of the process because of its emptiness but is fully involved in the activity of filling out structures with well objects of cognition.

Despite these similarities between Kant and Deleuze, our positive presentation of their relations must inevitably falter. James Williams develops the contrast that arises when we consider structures and how they can relate to their genesis. For Deleuze structures are not timeless like Kant's Table of Categories. James Williams argues that:

> In fact, for Deleuze, in great contrast to Kant's work in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, we will see that conditions are appearance-specific in the sense that the abstract form of conditions turns out to be that there must be specific conditions for each thing, rather than general ones for all of them. (Williams 2003: 18–19)

For Deleuze the object=x would be the condition for realizing appearances in structures but this realization would be singular rather than a general solution to the problem of structuring experience. For Kant, in contrast, the object=x embodies the basic forms of an object in general as secured prior to all experience in the Table of Categories. He produces a Metaphysical Deduction that is timeless, that for him has the virtue of securing once and for all the basic structures of possible experience.[6] For structure to be open to the occasion of its genesis thus means different things. For Deleuze it means that it is involved in a universal process but on each occasion genesis must be realized in different or singular ways. Deleuze's concern with the reciprocal determination of structure and Ideas means that structure both undergoes its own genesis and provides different ways of realizing the Ideas that it poses as problems. Structure is both active and passive in this sense. James Williams has described this as a 'Deleuzian dialectics' in the sense

that structure and the Ideas it incarnates are both involved without being confused and without one side become passive or dominated by the other (ibid.: 17).[7] Thus genesis always provides the starting point for the process and the Ideas to be extended but structure realizes these in different ways that are not set out in advance. Yet despite this significant contrast we must remember that what remains the same for both Kant and Deleuze is not something empirical. It does not prevent the outcomes of cognition from responding to their genesis by assuming in advance the empirical forms this may take. This is what is so strange about Kant's Table of Categories. It's *a priori* concepts are not to be taken from experience and yet it must be able to respond to the occasion of the genesis of cognition. This common concern should prevent us from concluding at this stage that there is no basis for Deleuze's notion of structure and genesis in Kant's text.

Another factor in how we understand the relations of Kant and Deleuze are places where, in contrast to what we saw in his 1978 seminars on Kant, Deleuze questions the scope of these relations. His critique of Kant's alleged empiricism implies that his own approach to the relation of structure and genesis has no relevance to Kant's work other than as an alternative. Levi R. Bryant makes the case that for Deleuze 'Thought does not simply involve mental acts but is that which requires us to go beyond what is familiar' (Bryant 2008: 90). In other words, thought must not seek to overcome strangeness by reasserting the control of the mind over what it encounters. This negative appraisal of Kant has firm grounding in Deleuze's work when he complains that empirical recognition comes to characterize the account Kant gives of cognition and its role in thought. He accuses Kant of tracing '. . . so-called transcendental structures . . .' from the empirical (DR: 171). Kant is said to use this '. . . tracing method . . .' (ibid.) in the *Critique of Pure Reason* as a means of securing the sameness of transcendental structures. It is traced from the habits of the mind in stabilizing and dealing with what it encounters. It is not then enough to argue that Kant's structures are dynamic because they respond to the occasion of genesis if we want to find in Deleuze's reading of structuralism a way of reading the *Critique of Pure Reason*. This is not enough to make the two accounts resonate because such dynamism in responding to the occasion in fact preserves the habits of the mind that Deleuze rejects. In Kant a concern with empirical resemblance mediates the relation of structures and Ideas through their common genesis in the object=x. What James Williams called Deleuzian dialectics excludes any such mediation, whether it be a non-empirical Table of Categories or is in fact traced from the empirical. In other words, the dynamism of structure is no good if it guards against

its genesis, if it seek to confine what it encounters to the stability of patterns of empirical recognition. Bryant argues that Kant's transcendental structures are dynamic in the sense that they preserve a mechanical causality that moves between given or already structured objects of cognition (Bryant 2008: 112). It is a dynamism that does not realize the strangeness of the genesis it encounters but preserves the stability of cause and effect throughout structures and across structures. The movement of the process goes from object of cognition to object of cognition according to relations such as those of mechanical cause and effect.[8] The result is that a structure is always too close to standards of empirical recognition to attain those of Deleuze's notion of genesis. On this reading then Kantian structure is based on what is familiar and so defeats the strangeness of Deleuzian genesis in advance. It seems that to Deleuze's rejection of the notion of timeless structures and deductions in Kant we have to add his critique of an allegedly pervasive empiricism characterizing Kantian transcendental structures. On this basis there seems to be little grounding in Deleuze's work for the assertion that his thoughts on structuralism provide the basis for a reading of Kant's system as an integral whole.

The question that now arises is whether we can locate in Deleuze's work a reading of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* that takes us beyond his criticisms of Kant's account of cognition. We saw Buchdahl writing of how the 'authoritarian timelessness' of Kant's a priori structures could be overcome by reading the text in terms of the system or process as a whole. This means that we locate the terms used in the *Critique of Pure Reason* as various stages in Kant's account of the process of cognition as a whole. This is what Buchdahl argues for when he proposes that Kantian terms are to be understood in terms of '. . . the dynamical imagery of "flow", enabling us to keep in focus simultaneously the various nodal points of the Kantian structure, . . .' (Buchdahl 1992: 38). We saw in the last section that it is in his 1978 seminars on Kant that an Idea of the whole seems to flow in the sense that by focusing upon the object=x other terms find their place in the process that it animates. On this reading of Kant's account of cognition the object=x is a strange and elusive thing that circulates in experience in order that cognition should be open to occasions where diversity must be realized in the form of an object. There must be nothing behind this activity and so we have what we saw Deleuze calling an 'empty square' in his essay on structuralism. This is a way of reading Kant that echoes Buchdahl's approach most clearly when Deleuze warns us that we must '. . . above all never confuse, in the Kantian vocabulary, the object=x and the thing in itself' (KS3). Instead of charting structures given in advance

of the process Deleuze argues that for Kant 'We begin again from zero' (ibid.). Behind structure and its genesis there is nothing that would set out in advance the outcomes of this process. This is then the viewpoint of the process as a whole and excludes any external or in-itself reality.

The question that persists as we consider this way of understanding Deleuze as a reader of Kant is whether Deleuze's thought on structure and genesis resonates with the way Kant presents his own system. Is there a basis in Kant for readings like this? We've seen Kant writing about the object=x but does the *Critique of Pure Reason* allow us to argue that this implies an Idea of the whole, of a process through which terms are to be defined? We have suggested that readers like Deleuze and Buchdahl seek to override the meanings attached to terms by taking the viewpoint of an Idea of the whole and we've seen this strategy at work in readings of structuralism and Kant. We saw that Deleuze sought to recognize structuralism by talking about it in terms that we now associate with poststructuralism. Is it possible to argue that rather than imposing external ends upon structuralism he sought to realize its own ends by locating its internal genesis? Deleuze arguably took the structures of structuralism and developed their relation to a genesis that had not yet played its full role in how structuralism was understood by its own scholars. We do not have the space to assess this claim about structuralism but we are seeking to assess our claim that Deleuze's approach to structuralism can be applied to Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. We have still to see whether a reading of Kant that takes as its starting point the object=x has any basis in Kant's text.

The imagery of Kant's Copernican Turn may provide a link with the Idea of a whole that we've been uncovering in Deleuze's work and that is realized in the role of the object=x. It sets out the position of various terms in relation to a process of cognition and its genesis. However, the notion that this reference to the work of Copernicus is really helpful in grasping Kant's system is disputed by Paul Guyer. He argues that Copernicus lowered the significance of the subject's role, making them an observer, while Kant promotes it. For Kant objects have to conform to our pure and basic forms of cognition, and this distances us from objects as things-in-themselves. Guyer concludes that: 'The analogy seems to be only that in philosophy, as in astronomy, progress sometimes requires a radical reversal of traditional assumptions' (Guyer 2006: 50). He argues that, unlike in Copernicus' work, our experience of objects is downgraded by Kant. There is no orientation towards substantive objects, like the stars and the planets, as there is in Copernicus' new universe. This shows Guyer to be a very different reader of Kant to Deleuze. We saw Deleuze providing a different reading

of the thing-in-itself to Guyer's view that it is the most real or substantial object. Guyer's strategy is to evaluate the term 'thing-in-itself' in isolation. For him it refers to ordinary objects, such as tables and chairs, which exist both as we represent them and as they are in-themselves (Guyer 1978: 335). They exist prior to the process of cognition and are what it is unable to reach, what is lacking in it's outcomes. We only have representations of these ordinary objects, not knowledge of them as they are in-themselves. It seems therefore that Deleuze intervenes in Kant scholarship on a matter that concerns the whole character of Kant's system. A reading of the analogy with Copernicus that follows from his approach would be to understand it as presenting Kant's own Idea of the whole which must orientate a reading of the *Critique of Pure Reason.* It would argue against Guyer's move to isolate the thing-in-itself. Kant writes of Copernicus in the second edition Preface that:

> Having found it difficult to make progress there when he assumed that the entire host of stars revolved around the spectator, he tried to find out by experiment whether he might not be more successful if he had the spectator revolve and the stars remain at rest. (CPR Pluhar: Bxvi–xvii)

Copernicus' revolution is embraced because it makes the spectator active but also gives to the star-like genesis of cognition a new and unrecognizable role. It is a mechanism for throwing the now active Transcendental Subject into a process where sensations occasion or prompt its activity and test its agility. The inactive genesis of the structures of cognition is quite different from the thing-in-itself that would take responsibility for providing or withholding the real and substantive objects of cognition. This genesis is not active in providing objects to a passive subject and it doesn't put them beyond its reach. It rather sets the problems that animate the activity of cognition.

What is the significance of this way of reading Kant's text? In Paul Guyer's reading the down-graded objects or appearances characterize the system as a whole whereas for readers like Deleuze and Buchdahl it is the whole that characterizes its parts. Guyer's reading is often referred to as the 'two-object' or 'two-world' view (Guyer 2006: 68; Allison 2004: 3). It argues from the inability of cognition to reach ordinary objects as things-in-themselves. From this it follows that Kant's system is constituted by an inability or a lack rather than the open-ended potential of problems that never exclude any outcomes of cognition by making them things that cognition lacks or cannot attain. On Deleuze's reading there is nothing that the object of

cognition cannot become through the object=x. None of the diversity that can be realized through the object=x exists beyond its reach. We saw Deleuze developing the genesis of structure in terms other than lack because for him this 'empty square' is full of the problems of extending or realizing Ideas through structures. When this is applied to the *Critique of Pure Reason* it becomes possible to see the lack of a transcendent thing-in-itself as being instead the fullest possession of genesis as the immanent source of the activity of cognition. Henry Allison also argues that the notion of objects outside of the realm of cognition is vacuous in Kant's system (Allison 2004: 62). There are for him different 'aspects' of objects rather than different objects. There are objects as things-in-themselves or insofar as they are not involved in possible experience and objects as 'appearances' or as the very materials of cognition. Thus his view is distinguished from the 'two-object' or 'two-world' view as the 'two-aspect' view because it has behind it an Idea of the process of cognition as a whole. It allows the whole process of accounting for cognition to question the assumption that these objects of cognition pre-exist this whole and characterize it. As we've seen, Deleuze's model of structures that is focused upon their genesis is able to develop this. It allows us to read with an Idea of the whole in view so that we can try to see how convincing the parts really are.

Conclusion

In seeking to locate a reading strategy for approaching Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* in Deleuze's essay on structuralism we began by ignoring their differences. When we then considered these we sought to show that they now appear in a new light because of the reading strategy we have been following. We have thus sought to consider Deleuze as a reader of Kant, making him a contributor to vital debates in Kant scholarship, but have had also to consider whether his critique of Kant will allow this. If he is so different in his thought from Kant how can we say that he allows us to read Kant when he writes about structuralism? There must be common ground if we are to say that Deleuze's thought can, without referring to Kant, help us to understand Kant better. By drawing us to Kant's notion of genesis, the occasioning cause of cognition, Deleuze led us to begin to re-think aspects of his system that are otherwise read in isolation. Their shared concern with the occasion of genesis and the sameness of structures that should not be based upon empirical resemblance helped to show the relevance of the reading strategy we have uncovered. Deleuze pursued a concern that he

shared with Kant and yet which he believed Kant to have betrayed through his 'tracing method'. Yet, as he claimed to do with structuralism, he allows us to 'recognise' Kant's account of cognition through its genesis. To avoid the impression that this is to undermine the integrity of Kant's account we sought to show that Deleuze makes highly relevant contributions to debates in the field of Kant scholarship. It could be argued that he allows us to preserve the integrity of an Idea of the whole of Kant's account of cognition while a reader like Paul Guyer endangers it by making the thing-in-itself an external term. This questions an approach that isolates the parts of Kant's system in order to understand them. We saw that this can make the difference between an Idea of the whole characterized by the lack of things-in-themselves, and one characterized by the fullness of problems that account for all aspects of objects. It does then seem to make sense to call Deleuze a reader of Kant without limiting this engagement to a selective or a descriptive approach.

Notes

[1] I would like to thank Mick Bowles and Matt Lee for their comments on various drafts of this essay.

[2] Deleuze locates the genesis of Kant's critical system in the *Critique of Judgement*, the third and last of Kant's Critiques, in the following terms:

> Thus the first two Critiques set out a relationship between the faculties which is determined by one of them; the last Critique uncovers a deeper free and indeterminate accord of the faculties as the condition of the possibility of every determinate relationship. (KCP: 68)

[3] Jean Piaget defines structuralism in a way that points to the role of differentiation or transformation in structures but also seeks to capture transformation in terms of laws. This passage from his book *Structuralism* illustrates the distinction that James Williams makes between transformation as the genesis of the system or transformation as such and transformation as something subject to structural laws:

> At a first approximation, we may say that a structure is a system of transformations. Inasmuch as it is a system and not a mere collection of elements and their properties, these transformations involve laws: the structure is preserved or enriched by the interplay of its transformation laws, which never yield results external to the system nor employ elements that are external to it. (Piaget 1971: 5)

[4] See DR: 232–5 where Deleuze presents a physical Idea, a biological Idea and a social Idea.

[5] On the surface this notion appears circular but in fact employs a concept of reciprocal determination where pure and basic forms of cognition and their occasioning causes are determined through each other.

[6] Kant writes of the pure and basic judgements of the understanding, from which the Table of Categories is to be derived and which are always already at work in cognition, that: '. . . these functions of the understanding are completely exhaustive and survey its power entirely' (CPR Pluhar: B105/A80).

[7] Writing here on Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition* James Williams talks of actual and virtual rather than empirical structures and the Ideas behind them but the same process is referred to. It is here expressed in terms of the relation between actual structures and virtual structures or virtual Ideas. Deleuze seeks to show the role of both actual and virtual, forming a dialectic, as we have seen in his notion that Ideas are extended or realized through empirical structures as well as occurring in the genesis of these structures.

[8] In the *Critique of Pure Reason* Causality and Dependence or Cause and Effect is the second Category of Relation in the Table of Categories (A80/B106) and its application as a Principle for the a priori structuring of experience is developed in the Second Analogy of Experience in the Analytic of Principles.

Chapter 5

The Nature of Productive Force
Kant, Spinoza and Deleuze

Mick Bowles

The reader of Gilles Deleuze encounters an insistence that philosophical thinking must be taken back to productive forces. This concern is by no means new. Philosophers have always been anxious that what they write will disturb the world; that the energy of philosophical thinking will spread out and reorganize the arrangements of everyday life. But with Deleuze, unlike philosophers of previous ages, one meets an ongoing claim that productive forces coincide, if one may use the phrase, with the emergence of the unconscious. The more that writing is not in conscious control of itself, the more powerful the work. This approach is by no means restricted to Deleuze. It has something of an obvious feel about it, a fixture of the contemporary intellectual landscape. In the following this 'fixture' is analysed through a comparison of Deleuze's account of the nature of productive forces with the work of Kant and Spinoza. Both thinkers share Deleuze's concern that philosophical thinking must be productive, but it is by no means the case that they accept the epiphenomenalist assumption that a productive force does not require consciousness.

1. Kant's Respect for Consciousness

It is not consciousness in general but a particular kind of consciousness that fascinates Kant in the 'Analytic' of the first *Critique*. His concern is with that type of consciousness that gives us understanding, or cognition [*Erkenntnis*]. We must note that there are two aspects to Kant's approach to the understanding: he seeks to explain it and he uses it as the touchstone of the viability of explanation. Kant's explanation of understanding is familiar: understanding occurs when sense data is gathered and brought to logic. The function of logic, Kant maintains on numerous occasions, is to

bring the disparate to unity. Logic is indeed a productive force, and what it produces is unity.[1] But we must give some thought to the nature of unity. Unification, Kant tells us, does not occur simply because we aggregate a number of parts, but concerns those parts functioning within a whole. An account of logic must consequently be governed by 'an idea of the whole'.[2] Logic does not achieve understanding because it draws an arbitrary line around a disparate collection of parts; rather, it is only when we grasp a multiplicity as a whole that we understand. Any enquiry into the nature of logic must be guided by this function; that is, by the extraordinary event of understanding. We can set out the different aspects of unity (quantity, quality, relation and modality) only if unity is already understood. Kant famously argues against pure abstraction (general logic). Logic, if it is to be a viable science, must take its bearing from cognition. For it is cognition – the event of understanding – that grounds the notion of unity: we know and recognize this unity when we have understanding. Understanding is a distinctively phenomenological event. It occurs, for example, with the exclamation, 'at last I understand!' The difference between unity and non-unity is determined by whether or not this phenomenological understanding is present. Unity is not just a gathering of the manifold of sense data, but an effective gathering; the final arbiter of this effectivity is the phenomenological event of understanding. When such understanding is not present (which is not to claim that the psyche is then in an unconscious state, for, after all, we can be conscious and not understand), then sense data remains disparate (a mere aggregate). Kant's insistence on transcendental logic, as opposed to general logic, makes apparent that he is not just concerned to offer an *explanation* of cognition. There is also, within Kant's epistemology, a deep respect for cognition: an acceptance that cognition is the ground that all explanations must be taken back to.[3] Hence we find that Kant's explanation of understanding is never quite complete. Certainly the event of understanding arises through the workings of logic, but logic, in its turn, is justified by an appeal to conscious understanding.

It seems clear that philosophy cannot both explain the genesis of understanding and revere understanding as the ground upon which all explanations rest. We must either give up our reverence for understanding or give up the attempt to provide an explanation of how cognition is produced. It is not too much of an exaggeration to state that the philosophers that precede Kant opt for reverence; and those that succeed him, seek only for the genesis. The underlying assumptions of his epistemology make it clear, however, that Kant himself is not ready to jettison the understanding: it is axiomatic for Kant that any philosophical explanation must be conditioned

by the understanding. Indeed the very notion of a philosophical explanation rests upon the axiom that we can, ultimately, understand it. To be sure Kant places this axiom under extreme pressure. The very notion of the transcendental constantly pulls his thinking in the direction of the genesis of understanding. However, Kant, at least in the 'Analytic' of the first *Critique*, does not abandon his first love: the event of conscious understanding is a power that philosophy can try to explain but the explanation cannot completely replace what it seeks to explain.

Later Kant does betray this first love: the second half of the first *Critique*, the moral writings, the third *Critique*, are no longer held by the specific gravity that Kant once discovered in the understanding. And moreover the history of European philosophy, in the main, has followed the later Kant. The initial infatuation with the power of conscious understanding is regarded as a blunder that cripples serious philosophical reflection by holding genesis down to its condition, or, as is often said, reading production in terms of its products. Consequently, if we are to enquire further into the power of conscious understanding we must move in the other direction. We must attempt to return to the source of the fire that is still burning at the beginning of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. And, of course, the foremost example of reverence for the understanding in pre-Critical philosophy is found in the writings of Spinoza. Let us then consider Spinoza's love for conscious understanding.

2. Spinoza: The Logic of the Understanding

Spinoza famously challenges the conception of the human productive force as if it were a 'kingdom within a kingdom' (Spinoza 1996: III, Preface); that we conceive our power as if it consisted in the imposition of intention upon the order of nature (I choose and the world moves). It is a mistake to read Spinoza's critical remarks concerning intention as equivalent to the claim that humans are completely without power (and are, in consequence determined by external forces). Spinoza's principal concern is not to reject human power, but to demonstrate that the notion of will provides a very inadequate conception of how it is that we can effectively act in the world. In place of will Spinoza offers the notion of affirmation: 'there is no absolute faculty of willing . . . but only singular volitions, namely, this and that affirmation' (ibid.: II, Prop. 49, Dem.). We must not read this remark as a precursor of Nietzsche; for by affirmation Spinoza is turning us toward the logic of the understanding. The sense of freedom and power that hovers

around the concept of intention is to be traced back to understanding, not to willing: 'the power of the mind is defined only by understanding' (ibid.: V, Preface, last para). We have already seen that Kant, in attempting to explain the power of the understanding, reaches for logic. Moreover, we have seen that Kant encounters a tension between understanding and logic: is it the case that understanding is to be explained in terms of logic, or is logic only ever a logic *of* understanding? With Spinoza, however, there is no attempt to ground understanding in logic (as if logic could completely explain understanding), rather, understanding and logic are one and the same thing.

There is a worry that in Kant, when one understands, it is unclear how the understanding arose and, indeed, how it will unfold. Nevertheless we go too far if we assert that Kantian understanding is blind to genesis. We must remember that the categories that frame the understanding are not just mathematical but also dynamical. To be sure what we understand is measurable into units and has a definite degree of intensity, but the understanding also involves connections that propel consciousness out beyond isolated determinations: we do not simply accept the given but seek its ground and cause. The frame of the understanding is dynamical precisely because it involves relations whereby we do not experience isolated cognitions but events which plug cognition immediately into a field of interrelations.[4] Nevertheless, for Kant, such glimpses of connectivity remain obscure and little understood: there is no *clear* link between what we understand and where we go from there. For Spinoza, however, when understanding occurs there is no hesitation. A seamless connection carries consciousness out and beyond any particular cognition. Spinoza's understanding is a series of cognitions, or, to use the wonderful phrase he coins in *Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione*, an 'irrefragable concatenation'.[5] Spinoza maintains that conscious understanding does not merely sense a network of connections on the horizon, rather, when we understand cognition is immediately a logical unfolding that is without hesitation – it is irrefragable. It is this concatenation that Spinoza calls affirmation.

It is because the concatenation is irrefragable that it cannot be housed by the concept of time. With time the line stretches back and advances forward; the now is indeed apprehended as part of a larger series. But while with time there is always a before and after (there is never a way out of the concatenation), the linkage between the parts is contingent. That is to say, the modality of the series is entirely that of possibility. Such a vision of networks is, for Spinoza, a vision of utter impotence. The series swarms with possibilities; it spreads in every direction, nothing is ruled out and

consequently no clear path is discerned. A series conceived of in this way is haunted by incompletion. Every line drawn could be otherwise. Spinoza's work fights the temptation to make an ontology out of contingency; that, instead of regarding contingency as a function of the mind's failure to understand, we regard it as a characteristic of nature.[6]

It is well known that Spinoza concludes, that the logic of understanding is a question of *sub specie aeternitatis*. Here 'eternity' does not mark time taken to infinity, but rather a way of thinking no longer held by the fabrication of contingent succession.[7] To think in terms of 'eternity' is to reach the point where concatenation is not grasped through the modality of possibility, but becomes irrefragable. To change modality is not to move from comprehending isolated identities to the realization, at last, that cognitions are modes within a network. For Spinoza, whatever the logical modality of our thinking, we are always in a network. The modal distinction concerns how we view the nature of networks. A contingent network is such that we do not understand connections. They simply happen, we suffer them and can discern no reason for why the series went this way. But to understand a network is for the concatenations to be such that the next stage *follows* from the current state. We must look more closely at what Spinoza is indicating when he tells us that eternity requires that connections are logically grasped.

The standard examples Spinoza offers to illustrate this feature of understanding are taken from geometry.[8] Once it has been demonstrated that the angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles, there is no going back. Prior to the demonstration of this equation there was an infinity of possibilities (nothing but a swarm of the virtual); once the demonstration has taken place the meanderings of the virtual have been effectively shut down; but only because a path has been created that is something more than the fluxes of imagination. The risk Spinoza takes by citing examples from geometry to illustrate the force of the irrefragable concatenation that obtains when understanding occurs, is that the flow of understanding appears to become the easiest thing in the world: as if logic were simply a case of plugging in a set of algorithms. Spinoza himself likens this movement to a 'spiritual automaton',[9] and, thereby, unintentionally, conjures images of robotics and the negation of creativity. In likening the logic of the understanding to a machine we summon up the cruelty of determinism. It seems that should we achieve this understanding we become a monstrous flow that has no control of itself; understanding connects with the world but only at the price that the subject who has understanding becomes but nothing but a weather cock buffeted by inhuman forces. However, this

reaction to Spinoza, fails to register his insistence that understanding is an activity; indeed human freedom is achieved only to the extent to which we have learned to understand the world.[10] It is essential to realize that for Spinoza the logic of understanding is a practice, a practice that cannot be reduced to an algorithm.

A useful way to try and connect with why Spinoza considers understanding a practice is to consider the process that logicians call *reductio ad absurdum*. This inference always proceeds by way of the etiolation of understanding: we need to be lost and confused for this affirmation to come to the fore. The etiolation of understanding registers when the power of the understanding ceases to be effective. This etiolation is variously described: as absurdity, as contradiction, as an infinite series or as a constantly repeating loop. Post-Kantian philosophy has made much of these *impasses*: Hegel's negation, Nietzsche's abyss and Heidegger's nothingness are all reflections on the nature and implications of the etiolation of the understanding. Every reader of the *Ethics* is well aware that Spinoza also cultivates moments of incapacity. The demonstrations, by which Spinoza forges his path of thinking, proceed by way of etiolation. The trajectory of the demonstrations amounts to the following: we must go this way (make this connection), if contradiction or absurdity is to be avoided.[11] Spinoza's *Ethics* cultivates such moments, not to dwell on incapacity (which, for Spinoza, is not part of our capacity), but in order to derive an energy of repulsion that forges the path of his thinking. We need the etiolation of thinking for the force of thinking to come into its own. The process of *reductio ad absurdum* involves the manifestation of incapacity – this does not work – and the insistence to adjust one's deportment (formal logic presents this as the set of assumptions from which the *impasse* arises) in order to regain power (to understand once more). But what we must note is that there is no code that tells us what exactly is required in order to regain power. An effective *reductio ad absurdum* always involves a creativity that is not understood by the merely formal presentation of this inference.

We gain a fuller account of the specificity of Spinoza's use of *reductio ad absurdum* if we link his method of thinking to his remarks about the nature of desire. Spinoza explicates the nature of desire by way of the notion of *conatus*. Thus before considering Spinoza's remarks on desire, we must make some attempt to comprehend *conatus*. The latter is the abbreviation commentators employ to capture Spinoza's account of the nature of a capacity. A capacity is a positive power: a productive force. It does not merely react but creates a response to its environment. It is this productive force that Spinoza calls essence. A capacity, of whatever kind, should be regarded

as the *striving* to persevere in being.[12] The effort to maintain one self is not the refusal to change, but creation in response to a decline in power. In this regard it is very important to notice that Spinoza, just before he introduces *conatus*, makes two remarks concerning destruction and what is 'contrary to nature'. He infers that negation *cannot* be part of what a thing is; it is this 'cannot' that enables Spinoza to discern the positive nature of capacity.[13] The 'cannot be', which so many philosophers attempt to read as the automatic working of the law of non-contradiction, is for Spinoza, a creative process: in order for negation to be refused something must be done. It is precisely because of this creativity (which cannot be understood as an automatic reaction) that Spinoza calls *conatus* a power.[14] The law of non-contradiction perhaps formalizes the first moment of *reductio ad absurdum*: it gives us a clean formula for measuring incapacity. But there is no law of logic that tells us what to do to remove the incapacity.

The dynamic of *conatus* can be mapped by *reductio ad absurdum*, but, as such, it remains suspect: it can be dismissed as a logician's invention. For Spinoza it is crucial to ground *conatus* in the concrete reality of human experience. Consequently he distinguishes *conatus* from desire. The latter concerns 'impulses, appetites and volitions' – the crucial characteristic of which is that they all involve varying degrees of consciousness.[15] It is important to recognize that Spinoza defines 'desire' as the *conscious* apprehension of the working of *conatus*. We should not take it from this that there are two kinds of *conatus*: one unconscious and the other conscious. Rather the distinction is between abstract logic and real power. A logic machine can, at best, register its incapacity (the machine freezes with a contradiction or is held in stasis by an infinite loop), but it cannot create a connection that circumvents that which is contrary to its nature. To complete the *reductio*, to infer a solution, consciousness is needed. The activity of consciousness is the very thing that a merely formal presentation of logic neglects. Spinoza is prepared to define desire 'as man's very essence', but only if the definition 'involve[s] the cause of this consciousness' (*Ethics*, III, 'Definitions of the Affects', §1). For it is by including consciousness that *conatus* become a creative force.

The irrefragable concatenation of understanding is, for Spinoza, the construction by consciousness of effective connections; connections forged, in part, through the steady process of retreating from blind alleys. To refuse negation by creation. It is this conscious process of creating viable connections that Spinoza offers as a more adequate account, compared with the concept of will, of the nature of productive force. However, it is most important that we remember that, for Spinoza at least, we do not explain

productive force, we practice it. Conscious construction is the engine that writes the *Ethics*: human power producing circuits which close down the infinite meanderings of the virtual. For Spinoza philosophy does not explain productive force, it uses it.

When one contrasts Spinoza's passion for the power of conscious understanding with Kant's respect for cognition, it is clear that something has happened. While Kant certainly does not abandon understanding, it is noticeable that the fire burns decidedly dimmer. With Kant the energy of cognition is hardly discerned: it does often seem that the most understanding provides is a series of frozen statues that are cut off from the force of production that brought them into life. What has happened? There is in Kant's first move into Critical Philosophy a reverence for understanding, but there is also a location of the issue of genesis (of production) as outside of consciousness: consciousness is a product of transcendental powers. It is certainly the case that Kant himself always insists that the powers that produce consciousness must be delineated from consciousness. Above we noted the strange interrelations Kant sketches between understanding and its genesis. But the readers of Kant have abandoned such circles: post-Kantians seek a force of production that no longer takes its bearings from its product.[16] It is evident that the quest for unconscious productive forces begins with the hesitations drawn in the 'Analytic' of the first *Critique*; but one must be careful not to read these hesitations back into Spinoza.

3. Deleuze: Productive Force and the Unconscious

The Kantian hesitation is taken further in the work of Deleuze. We can see this particularly in his reading of Spinoza and his decision to regard knowledge of the second kind as the fulcrum point of the *Ethics*.[17] Why this fulcrum point is selected is precisely because it seems to support the thesis that we only connect with productive forces on the cusp of consciousness, where understanding fades and the forces implicit in the surrounding darkness vibrate. Knowledge of the second kind can be defined by two principal characteristics. At the logical level it argues for the primacy of relations (rather than identities); at the phenomenological level, it marks the primacy of the affects over the sensations of perception. Let us look more closely at the two aspects of Spinoza's notion of knowledge of the second kind and consider whether it can really be regarded as the fulcrum of his thinking.

Without a doubt one of the chief innovations of the *Ethics* is to propose a new account of the nature of a physical law. Spinoza argues that a law should not be regarded as an assimilation of particulars – the traditional notion of a universal – but marks something that is different in kind: a difference that will never be grasped if we insist on taking our bearings from the particular instances we experience in perception. A law is not gained through the assimilation of particulars because it concerns the relation between particulars. Consequently Spinoza maintains that a common notion (which is the phrase he uses for relation) cannot be comprehended in terms of what it relates: 'what is common to all things . . . does not constitute the essence of any singular thing' (Spinoza 1996: Part II, Prop. 37). But if relations are different in kind from the things we perceive, we must ask how we can gain awareness of them. It cannot be the case that we will learn the ways of the world by induction, for the latter will only ever scramble together the particular ideas given in perceptual consciousness: far from providing a clear idea of what all the particulars have in common we will produce a confusion of differences that have a unity in name only.[18] Spinoza solves this problem by claiming that we do not perceive a relation, we feel it – we first learn of relations through the affects. We feel joy when our body forms an effective relation with another; sadness when our body engages with that which is contrary to it. A relation is not grasped in static consciousness (an image) but is felt in an emotion.

At a primitive level a relation is the intensity of joy,[19] but this has a dynamic: we want more joy, we want to discover more relations. Joy picks up speed: a cascade of ever widening relations such that each whole, or each new relation, becomes, in turn, a part of wider whole.[20] A continuum stretches from, this joy of this particular body forming an effective relation with another body, to the most universal relations that hold between bodies. Spinoza named this empirical practice of the discovery of relations, reason; we now call it science. Spinoza was perhaps the first to show that the currency of science is not the universal conceived from the basis of perceptions, but the differential. The laws of science are not frozen universals but forms of reciprocity that we ultimately articulate using the technique of differential calculus. However, while it is indeed the case that Spinoza's knowledge of the second kind sketches the techniques of modern science, we cannot reduce this aspect of Spinoza's epistemology to simply a first draft of the technological age. Knowledge of the second kind goes further than the laws of physics. If we follow relations through we arrive at what Spinoza calls the attribute. Spinoza's notion of attribute is knowledge of the second kind taken to its utmost point.[21]

The attribute is no longer a specific relation, but the infinity of relations. It is not reducible to the laws of nature, but rather is presupposed by each and every articulation of relations. It is the horizon, or surface, from which all determinations arise; indeed there is no complete determination of the nature of the attribute – it is the cascade of relations, an infinite network, such that each and every determination of a specific relation will always return once more to the network that surround it. No one relation dominates – the attribute is without hierarchy. This is the aspect of Spinoza that Deleuze seizes upon; the attribute is a plane of immanence upon which the intensities (the Spinozian affects) flow; Deleuze takes the Spinozian notion of attribute – which is reached when relations are taken to the limit – and rechristens it the body without organs; 'without organs' precisely because every mode, every determinate organization, cascades into further relations. It is quite clear that we cannot determine the attribute, we cannot specify its ultimate form of organization (we cannot, for example, reduce it to determinate scientific laws): rather it marks the flowing surface of incompletion that all determinations presuppose.

For Deleuze it is the attribute – reached at the limit of knowledge of the second kind – that is Spinoza's key contribution to philosophy.[22] To reach the attribute – this is what the practice of philosophy amounts to. It is a case of taking all systems of representation to the point where they break. Philosophy must move away from identities into relations and then must enact an exacerbation of the interconnection of relations: a blurring that picks up speed to the point where, for Deleuze, productive force emerges – the streaming flow of an unarticulated surface. The philosophical effort becomes a sort of nuclear physics: to reach the moment where mass returns to energy. The closer philosophical thinking can stretch itself in the direction of this point, the more productive it becomes. To be animated by such fission is what Deleuze indicates when he defines philosophy as the construction of concepts.[23]

If this is the heart of Spinoza, then it must be the case that knowledge of the third kind adds nothing: knowledge of the third kind will simply be more of the same. Or rather, knowledge of the third kind must be located as the moment when the exacerbation of reason becomes so intense that it converts into streaming energy. Deleuze informs us that 'the *Ethics* is a river that sometimes flows fast and sometimes slowly' (Deleuze 2001: 112). The advance from knowledge of the second kind to knowledge of the third kind is a question of speed, not a difference in kind. Knowledge of the third kind is defined by Deleuze as 'absolute velocity'.[24] The cascade of relations breaks entirely with the order of representations, to the point of

an unconscious energy, an energy that, Deleuze maintains, Spinoza was driven by in his most inspired flashes of writing. Deleuze even goes so far as to systematize the occurrence of the two paces: the inferences of the propositions must be distinguished from the pure sparking of the *scholia*. In the latter there manifests a chain of volcanic eruptions: the seething productive, but unconscious, force that animates the writing of the *scholia* and so much of Part V of the *Ethics*.[25] Thus for Deleuze knowledge of the third kind is a sort of unconscious inspiration – a force that takes hold of humans such that they become vehicles for a pure becoming no longer held by formations of mass. Deleuze locates knowledge of the third kind as the unconscious energy that erupts if reason – knowledge of the second kind – is taken to the limit. Relations begin when the affects wax and wane alongside the conscious perceptions of the imagination, they end with the pure streaming of an energy no longer articulated by the cloyings of mass. However, the worry that arises from this way of locating knowledge of the third kind is that we lose Spinoza's insistence that there is a difference in kind – that knowledge of the third kind does not concern the nature of the attribute, but the practice of power: the attribute is merely an expression of power and should not be regarded as its definition. In stipulating this difference of kind Spinoza, it seems, is indicating that the nature of productive force is not to be grounded in the attribute. We must not read Spinoza as a phenomenalist: that substance is nothing more than the set of attributes. Nevertheless, for Deleuze, knowledge of the second kind is the basis of Spinoza's philosophy. It is this decision that enables him to present Spinoza's work as an expressionism of the unconscious.

It is quite clear that Spinoza's notion of knowledge of the third kind marks a force that has become productive. However, Spinoza's explicit remarks about the nature of knowledge of the third kind are short and enigmatic. Inevitably the reader will make hypotheses. One hypothesis has been sketched in the middle section of this paper. Certainly concatenations take place at the level of reason, but for the productive understanding to occur it must be the case that concatenations become irrefragable: it is a question of constructing a path, by force of logic, whereby the next step in the chain follows from the current state. It is this construction that is the power of the understanding. It's power resides in the creative use of *reductio ad absurdum* to produce conscious circuits that take forward and change the codes of the present. The most magnificent example of this is the way in which the *Ethics* produces a series of irrefragable connections such that the concept of will is shown to be a pale imitation of the work of affirmation. It is this work of construction that Spinoza names knowledge

of the third kind and that he performs when he writes the *Ethics*. Another hypothesis is offered by Deleuze. The latter manifests a faith that unconscious energy has effectivity[26]; that it has power to alter the present. With this assumption in place there is no need to radically distinguish knowledge of the second and third kind; with this assumption in place, Deleuze is quite right to focus exclusively on the science of relations: to exacerbate them to the point where consciousness collapses. This is sufficient for philosophy to become a productive force. But if we follow this path we will never understand the reverence for the power of conscious understanding that is evident in the writings of Kant and Spinoza.

Notes

[1] 'All judgements are accordingly functions of unity . . . many possible cognitions are thereby drawn together into one' (CPR Smith: A69/B94).

[2] '. . . this completeness of a science cannot reliably be assumed from a rough calculation of an aggregate . . . [but requires] an idea of the whole' (CPR Smith: A64/B89). This initial claim is unexplained and consequently enigmatic. But we are meeting here Kant's first presentation of the principle that cognition always involves a fundamental unity: '[that] every different empirical consciousness must be combined into a single self-consciousness is the absolutely first and synthetic principle of thinking in general' (ibid.: A117, fn). Kant is adamant that the source of this unity is not empirical; rather it is the manifestation of the power of understanding. Consciousness has the extraordinary capacity to not simply gather aggregates but actually understand. It is this which must guide us in any logic of the understanding.

[3] That, for Kant, understanding is not reducible to logical form, is also apparent from the brief sketch of the nature of truth that he offers in the 'Analytic' of the first Critique. It is only when there is understanding that truth occurs and this event cannot be reduced to criteria provided by general logic: '. . . truth concerns precisely this content, it would be completely impossible and absurd to ask for a mark of the truth of this content of cognition, and thus it is clear that a sufficient and yet at the same time general sign of truth cannot possibly be provided' (CPR Smith: A59/B83).

[4] Kant makes the case for the claim that conscious understanding is composed of relations in the 'Analogies of Experience'. For example, the 'Second Analogy' famously seeks to show that an object of cognition is not a frozen identity but an event, and as such, links necessarily to some condition beyond itself: 'the condition under which an event invariably and necessarily follows is to be found in what precedes the event' (CPR Smith: A200–01/B246).

[5] '. . . definite effects are produced in an irrefragable concatenation [irrefragabili concatenatione]' (Spinoza, B. [*c.*1662], *Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione*, Para 61, n. All quotations from this text are translated by the author of this paper).

[6] 'It is of the nature of reason to perceive things truly, namely, as they are in themselves, that is, not as contingent . . . it depends only on the imagination that we regard things as contingent' (Spinoza 1996: II, Prop. 44, Dem. and Corollary 1).

[7] For Spinoza it is of fundamental importance that we do not substitute the contingency of duration for the movement of eternity: 'men . . . are indeed conscious of the eternity of their mind, but that they confuse it with duration' (Spinoza 1996: Part V, Prop. 34, Scholium).

[8] The *Ethics* attempts to explain the nature of affirmation by considering the properties of a triangle (Spinoza 1996: II, Prop. 49, Dem.), but we will only see the real import of Spinoza's geometrical examples if we go back to *Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione*. Here Spinoza considers the example of the connection of a sphere to a rotating semi-circle. It is not a case of blandly asserting that the sphere *follows* from the rotation, we must bring out the fact that the semi-circle really produces the sphere: 'we should observe that this perception affirms that a semicircle rotates, an affirmation that would be false were it not conjoined with the concept of a sphere, or else with a cause determining such motion; that is, in short, if this were a completely isolated affirmation [with no causal connection]' (Spinoza, B. [*c.*1662], *Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione*, para. 72). Spinoza is fascinated by the geometrical method precisely because it provides a magnificent example of a productive force.

[9] '. . . the mind acts according to indubitable laws, and is, as it were, a spiritual automaton' (ibid.: para. 85).

[10] Spinoza defines the nature of activity in terms of adequate ideas: 'Our mind . . . insofar as it has adequate ideas, it is necessarily active' (Spinoza 1996: III, Prop. 1). An adequate idea is one that produces what happens next: it contains affirmations. As we shall see, Spinoza maintains that this concatenation is the productive force of consciousness.

[11] It is important to note that Spinoza, unlike the formal logician, does not take it that absurdity is defined by inconsistency. Absurdity marks what we cannot think. For example, '. . . conceive, if you can, that God does not exist . . . But this is absurd. Therefore, God necessarily exists' (Spinoza 1996: I, Prop. 11, Dem.). The series of links in this demonstration are secured through the understanding recoiling from incapacity (once we understand the term 'God' it is not possible to conceive the negation of the concept – there is no capacity for such a thought: it is from this incapacity that the conclusion is constructed: for the understanding's capacity is that it cannot accept incapacity). The power of the understanding is the construction of a movement away from such collapses in power.

[12] Spinoza 1996: III, Prop. 6 & 7: 'Each thing, as far as it can by its own power, strives to persevere in its being . . . The striving by which each thing strives to persevere in its being is nothing but the actual essence of the thing'. It is essential to realize that here Spinoza is telling us that, what makes a thing the thing that it is, is its capacity (its power to produce). Of course, we also need to say something about what, in broadest outline, a capacity is. Spinoza tells us it is 'the effort to persevere in being'; in other words, the broadest definition of capacity is: to resist that which threatens it (to avoid non-being). But we must note that this resistance is not just a refusal, it is a positive capacity: to create in the face of negation.

[13] Spinoza 1996: III, Prop. 4 & 5. Spinoza starts by considering destruction (absolute negation): this cannot be part of what a thing is (destruction must therefore arise from what is 'external'). This is merely a point of logic: 'This proposition is evident through itself'. Further the proposition is completely without practical consequence. Absolute destruction cannot be thought, felt or smelt: it is completely beyond our capacities. However, what does have practical import is, not annihilation, but the threat of annihilation. What is 'contrary to nature' is no longer absolutely external, but indicates an internal conflict between parts: a weakening or etiolation of our power. Spinoza maintains that this conflict 'cannot be in the same subject'; and it is this refusal that is, in broadest outline, what capacity amounts to. That is to say, the refusal is the positive power that circumvents that which is of a contrary nature.

[14] Spinoza 1996: III, Prop. 7, Dem.: 'the power of each thing, or the striving . . . the power, or striving, by which each strives to persevere in being'.

[15] Spinoza's most important account of the nature of desire occurs in the first definition of the penultimate section – 'Definition of the Affects' – of Part III of the *Ethics*. Here Spinoza argues that we can state that 'Desire is man's very essence'; that is, that desire is the manifestation *par excellence* of human capacity/power. But we can only make this declaration, Spinoza argues, if 'the mind could be conscious of its desire *or* appetite'. Consequently the definition of desire as man's essence must 'involve the cause of this consciousness'. In other words, if we use the word 'desire' in such a way that consciousness is not necessary (e.g. in the twentieth century's habit of talking about unconscious desires) we are not engaging with what Spinoza calls the human capacity. Spinoza does indeed tell us that desire is power, but maintains this is only so if desire involves consciousness.

[16] Deleuze provides an excellent sketch of this exacerbation of Kant's hesitations: 'Kantianism centres on the concept of synthesis which it discovered. Now, we know that the post-Kantians reproached Kant, from two points of view, for having endangered this discovery: from the point of view of the principle which governs the synthesis and from the point of view of the reproduction of objects in the synthesis itself. They demanded a principle which was not merely conditioning in relation to objects [= products] but was also truly genetic and productive' (NP: 48). Deleuze's own work, unhesitatingly, follows this post-Kantian trajectory.

[17] 'The greater part of the *Ethics* . . . is written from the viewpoint of the second kind of knowledge' (EPS: 296). This claim is repeated in Deleuze's second book on Spinoza: 'Most of the *Ethics* is written from the standpoint of the common notions and the second kind of knowledge' (SPP: 118, fn 13).

[18] Spinoza's famous rejection of the notion of the universal occurs in Part II of the *Ethics* (Spinoza 1996: Prop. 40, Scholium 1): 'the human mind will be able to imagine [= perceive] distinctly, at the same time, as many bodies as there can be images formed at the same time in its body. But when the images in the body are completely confused, the mind also will imagine all the bodies confusedly, without any distinction, and comprehend them as if under one attribute'. It is important to stress that Spinoza's rejection of the notion of universal owes much to Hobbes's nominalism: the universal is merely a name for a collection of particulars – it does not pick out any common property over and beyond the set

of individuals. Spinoza, however, does not accept the classical empiricist conclusion that all assimilations of perception are abstractions motivated by practical need, rather than what the data shows. For Spinoza, laws of nature are very real, but are not known through perception.

[19] Spinoza maintains that it is only the joyful affects that teach us how the world works: 'no affects of sadness can be related to the mind insofar as it acts, but only affects of joy' (Spinoza 1996: III, Prop. 59, Dem.).

[20] Perhaps Spinoza's strongest presentation of the cascade of relations is found in Letter 32. For example, 'all bodies are surrounded by others and reciprocally determined to exist and to act . . . it follows that every body . . . must be considered as a part of the whole universe'. (Spinoza 2002: Letter 32, 5th paragraph).

[21] Spinoza presents the second and third kinds of knowledge in the following way: '. . . another third kind, which we shall call intuitive knowledge. And this kind of knowing proceeds from an adequate idea of the formal essence of certain attributes of God . . .' (Spinoza 1996: II, Prop. 40, Scholium 2). It is knowledge of the second kind that can, ultimately, take us to a complete engagement with the attribute; but there can arise from this a completely different kind of knowledge where we are no longer held by the attribute.

[22] It is not unusual for readers of the *Ethics* to notice a correlation between the triad mode/attribute/substance and the three kinds of knowledge. The first kind of knowledge takes its bearing from modes; the second kind grasps the nature of the attribute; and the third kind thinks substance (which Part I of the *Ethics* shows us to be power). *Expressionism In Philosophy: Spinoza* steadfastly avoids this reading. Deleuze maintains that the attribute, and consequently knowledge of the second kind, is central for grasping both the nature of modes and substance: 'attributes are, in the same form, both what constitute the essence of substance, and what contain modes and their essences' (EPS: 332).

[23] 'to arrive at the concept we must . . . arrive as quickly as possible at mental objects determinable as real beings. This is what Spinoza or Fichte have already shown: we must make use of fictions and abstractions, but only so far as is necessary to get to a plane where we go from real being to real being and advance through the construction of concepts' (WIP: 207).

[24] '. . . this part involves the third kind of knowledge, a sort of fulguration. Here it is not even a matter of the greatest relative speed . . . but rather of *an absolute velocity corresponding to the third kind*' (SPP: 112, fn 4).

[25] These various claims are found in Deleuze's essay 'Spinoza and the Three *Ethics*' (ECC: 138–51).

[26] One of the most influential articulations of this faith in the productivity of the unconscious occurs in Jacques Derrida's paper 'Difference'. Here a new age of thinking is outlined that will take its bearing from the thinkers who reject the assumption of stable identities and 'put consciousness into question' (Derrida 1984: 17). In this regard Derrida cites Saussure, Nietzsche, Freud, Levinas and Heidegger. I suggest that Deleuze would delete Levinas and add Artaud; otherwise his historical setting is very close to Derrida's.

Chapter 6

Deleuze's 'Reconstruction of Reason'
From Leibniz and Kant to *Difference and Repetition*

Christian Kerslake

In some remarks in his late work on Leibniz in the 1980s, Deleuze sketched out an intriguing account of what he took to be the main historical 'crises' of reason in modern Western philosophy. As 'the philosopher of the baroque', Leibniz stands at the gateway of an epoch in which 'theological reason is breaking down, giving way to human reason pure and simple. The baroque itself already marks a crisis in theological reasoning – a final attempt to reconstruct a world that's falling apart' (N: 161–2).[1] There is something apocalyptic about Leibniz's philosophical phantasmagorias, with their counter-intuitive yet impeccably logical arguments, constructed with many-hued fragments from the old worlds of theological reason (Neoplatonism, Renaissance thought, Scholasticism) and the new world of Enlightenment, as the first world gives way to the second. If we want to understand this epochal transformation, suggests Deleuze, then we must engage with Leibniz. However, he adds, an encounter with Leibniz has the potential to teach us about more than the history of philosophy.

> These days it's no longer theological reason but human reason, Enlightenment reason, that's entering a crisis or breaking down. So in our attempts to preserve some part of it, or reconstruct it, we're seeing a neobaroque, which brings us closer, perhaps, to Leibniz. (ibid.)

In this essay I will argue that Deleuze's own central philosophical work, *Difference and Repetition*, does indeed participate seriously in a contemporary 'reconstruction of human reason', which moreover can be called *neo*-baroque (or neo-Leibnizian) only on condition that it is understood as profoundly *post*-Kantian. If we are neobaroque, it is because we have discovered the crisis of *human* reason, manifested in the aporias of Kant's critical philosophy.

One could indeed contend that each of the great systems of the rationalists, not just Leibniz's, emerge out of a general crisis internal to 'theological' reason. The systems of Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz by no means dispense with the appeal to God as the founding substance of the material world, but rather begin a process of detaching 'God', as name for the most fundamental substance, from certain of its traditional attributes, for instance those whose source lies in anthropomorphism or revelation. This process perhaps reaches its apogee in Spinoza's identification of God with nature, but as we will see, there are oblique tendencies in Leibniz's notion of God which also continue the process. In rationalism, the theological God becomes transformed into an ontological God, whose essence can not only be thought positively, but whose existence can be known, according to the renewed resources of the Ontological Argument for the existence of God, and from which the principles governing the material world can be deduced. The rationalists attempt to *know God*, to know what God must be *like*. Their great aim is to construct a philosophical absolute that is rationally transparent, but whose founding principle, regardless of the erosion of theology by the Enlightenment, retains the name of *God*. Deleuze suggests that this goal of rational transparency between God and human must be understood through the lens of the notion of *immanence*. A rationally transparent system would not include in it any element which could not be accounted for in terms deducible from the most basic principles in the system, which themselves must be rationally demonstrated to be fundamental. It would allow no appeal to a God of whom any aspect in principle *transcends* the capabilities of our cognition, as such transcendence would vitiate systematic rational transparency. The essence and existence of the God of the rationalists must be explicable solely in basic ontological terms, for instance in terms of its being, substance, causal power, etc. The reduction of theology to pure systematic ontology is the rationalist's means for securing immanence, and abolishing the transcendence of the Absolute.

Despite the intractability of the many internal disputes that arose from within Continental rationalism, it was probably the appearance of Kant's philosophy that dealt the severest blow to the rationalist aspiration to combine the ontological vestiges of theology with the principles of the Enlightenment. Kant objects that, despite its reduction of theological reason to ontology, rationalism remains guilty of the worst vices of Scholastic theology when it posits the existence of entities – for instance, the so-called *God*–which in *principle* can never be detected by human sensibility. For Kant, our cognition is fundamentally finite, in that our concepts, although not 'derived' from sensible impressions, are nevertheless dependent for their

sense on our spatiotemporal situation and our sensibility. Contra rationalism, Kant reveals how the crisis in theology implies a crisis in ontology. Ontological notions such as substance, unity and multiplicity, if put to use without a critical analysis, lead inevitably to contradiction and antinomy. The Copernican turn in philosophy derives from Kant's suggestion that we will 'get farther with problems of metaphysics by assuming that . . . objects must conform to our cognition' (CPR Guyer and Wood: Bxvi), instead of assuming that our cognition conforms to entities taken independently of our encounter with them. Ontological concepts of being, substance, causality, etc., must sacrifice their philosophical priority and submit to a critique which determines the validity of such concepts according to their relation to the spatiotemporal world. Kantian 'critique' (often linked etymologically [through the Greek *krinein*] by commentators to 'crisis') goes on to stake out a newly subtle approach to the idea of a crisis of reason. Kant suggests that there is an *irreducible* theological tendency in human reason which, rather than being eliminated, must be critically understood and put in its place. There may be uses for ontological or even theological concepts, but these uses will not be speculative (but instead practical, religious or aesthetic). No intelligent finite being can avoid the desire to put to unrestricted use the highest concepts of ontology, to undertake speculative journeys beyond space and time with the hope of seeing the world *sub specie aeternitatis*. But such a desire is not capable of fulfilment, and it is this that a critique permits us to recognize, allowing the subject to redirect its ontological impulse into ethics, 'religion' (or what is left of it in Kant), art, and the study of living forms in nature.

The notion of rational transparency or 'immanence' undergoes a corresponding transformation in Kant. In a letter to J. S. Beck of 1792, Kant remarks that a critique can indeed make emerge 'a whole science of Ontology as *immanent* thinking, i.e. a science of things the objective reality of whose concepts can be securely established.'[2] However, a philosophy claiming immanence can no longer begin from the assumption of the unproblematic range of applicability of basic ontological concepts. The concept of God, to take the most pre-eminent example, is deprived by Kant of any immediate relation to existence (the claim of the Ontological Argument), on the grounds that, since nothing is added to a concept by the existence of an instantiation of it, existence cannot be a 'real predicate'. One can no longer deduce the existence of something directly from its definition; whether something exists or not must depend on the evidence supplied by sensible intuition. For Kant the notion of immanence must no longer refer to philosophical systematicity alone, but to the immanent *use* of concepts, in accordance with the restrictions imposed on concepts by the structure

of experience. To use basic concepts such as substance and causality independently of experience is to use them *transcendently*; it is to be under the influence of 'transcendental illusion'. Ontology, carried out in the manner of the rationalists, remains theological, in the sense that it speculates about what is by right beyond human reason, and as such is illegitimate. Kant's intention is thus to rigorously distinguish human reason from theological reason, while recognizing that we will never overcome the lure of the transcendental illusions of theology. For Kant, it is 'critical' philosophy alone that is capable of allotting and securing the rights of human reason.

Nevertheless, insofar as Kant overcomes the crisis in theological reason, he opens up a new, unforeseen crisis, this time internal to human reason. According to a wide consensus reaching across Fichte, Schelling and Hegel to Nietzsche and Deleuze, Kant's attempt to ground the activities of reason in finite, human cognition, failed because he could not find a means of self-sufficiently and immanently securing certainty about the ultimate character of this finite standpoint. As a result of this internal failure, Kant himself had to call once again, in unexpected ways, upon the resources of theological reason. Thus the distinction between theological and human reason was never sealed in as rigorous a way as Kant had wanted, and the 'critical' project never overcame or redeemed the new 'crisis' that it brought out into the open. Kant's restrictions on ontology are crucially waived at important points, so that his critique falls into the kind of transcendental illusion it was designed to avoid. The Copernican turn is left in an unfinished 'critical' (in both senses) state, which many would say continues until this day.

In *Difference and Repetition* and *The Fold*, Deleuze's suggestion is that the crisis of 'human' reason is marked by echoes and reversals of the terms of the first, 'theological', crisis. Human reason continues the process of its collapse because it fails to work through its relationship to theological reason. If Deleuze's neobaroque philosophy appears as a somewhat unusual creature in the landscape of contemporary philosophy, that might be because it is 'uncanny' in the Freudian sense, in that it enacts the reversed repetition of a previous historical event. By making explicit the reversal involved in the ultimate recourse of Kantian reason to theological reason, it suggests that the contemporary crisis in human reason echoes, or rather duplicates in reverse, the earlier crisis of theological reason. What distinguishes Deleuze's strategy from those of the other post-Kantians is his attempt to return to the rationalist response to the first crisis in order to 'work through' the current crisis. If it is true that Kant finds himself forced to turn once more to theological reason, we should make sure that

none of the resources of the rationalist response to the crisis in theological reason have been overlooked. Perhaps critical philosophy can only truly be realized if it purifies itself through a 'repetition' of the original crisis? Deleuze's project is to turn one more bend in the path opened up by the Kantian Copernican revolution, by returning to certain Leibnizian ideas to which Kant himself had been committed in his 'pre-critical' rationalist period, but had abandoned on entering into the critical project. The goal is to persevere with Kant's 'critical' turn by seeking out the critical potential latent in some of the ideas of the 'pre-critical' rationalists. When Deleuze writes of 'a Copernican revolution which opens up the possibility of difference having its own concept' (DR: 50), the theoretical tools he will utilize to put this possibility into effect are Leibnizian. In particular, Deleuze's theory of Ideas, perhaps the centrepiece of his system, reworks the theoretical apparatus that Leibniz devised to deal with the problem of contingency.

The implicit claim in what follows is that the appropriate philosophical context for Deleuze's theory of Ideas in *Difference and Repetition* can be identified by reconstructing some essential steps in the development of ontotheology from rationalism to Kant. Rather than beginning from a textual analysis of Leibnizian and Kantian themes in *Difference and Repetition*, my approach will be 'genetic' in the methodological sense. I will begin by comparing Leibniz's and Spinoza's attempts at a rationally transparent system of ontology, and their respective attitudes to the role of contingency in such a system (Section 1). Although the Spinozist equation 'God or Nature' seems at first sight to fulfil best the criterion of philosophical immanence, it will be seen that Leibniz is sensitive to modal issues in ontology that point towards a richer conception of immanence. This conception, however, can only clearly emerge after Kant's critical turn (Section 2), and Deleuze's critical reformulation of Kantian Ideas in *Difference and Repetition* (Section 3). It turns out (Section 4) that Deleuze's philosophy is best understood as a 'Leibnizianism of immanence' (the words Jean Hyppolite uses to describe Kant's third *Critique*),[3] rather than as a contemporary re-emergence of Spinozism, as it is often taken.

1. Leibniz on God and Possibility

A longstanding enigma in the interpretation of Leibniz has been whether, and if so how, Leibniz argued that not only 'all analytic propositions are true', but 'all true propositions are analytic'. In a letter to Arnauld, he writes

that 'in *every* affirmative true proposition, *necessary or contingent*, universal or singular, the notion of the predicate is contained in some way in that of the subject'.[4] But surely, one objects, all truths cannot be analytic, as most true propositions seem to be contingent, in that they concern existence or reality. In order to sustain the claim that contingent truths were ultimately not synthetic but analytic, Leibniz obliged himself to take account of the range of differences that present themselves between truths of essence and truths of existence. It was necessary to construct new principles, which extended outside the domain of logic, in order to satisfactorily account for the latter. 'In order to proceed from mathematics to natural philosophy, another principle is required . . . I mean the principle of sufficient reason'.[5] Truths which have no purely logical *necessity* require a *sufficient* reason. So while 2 + 2 = 5 is a logical contradiction which for Leibniz strictly gives us nothing to think, it does not appear to be a contradiction for Caesar not to cross the Rubicon; such a 'possibility' is thinkable. It may be ultimately the case that this event is written into the individual notion of Caesar, but, while logical analysis can usually yield its implications in a few finite operations, to discover the necessity of Caesar's decision to cross the Rubicon and march on Rome would seem to require an infinite analysis which, Leibniz admits, would end up drawing in the whole set of contingent realities that not only compose the life of Caesar, but of the world he lives in (starting perhaps from the existence of the river Rubicon between Gaul and Italy). With this move towards the infinite analysis of contingent reality, Leibniz accepts that he must plunge into the 'labyrinth of the continuum', not only because spatial distance and temporal duration, two fundamental characteristics of 'reality', would clearly seem to be of infinitely divisible, continuous composition, but also because contingency itself requires a counterfactual analysis based on situations open to continuous variation.

The principle of sufficient reason is thus the principle that concerns 'real' as opposed to merely logical connections. A likely model for a real relation for a metaphysician would seem to be causality, as this would license him to correlate the existence of apparently contingent facts with logical relations of ground and consequent. However, because Leibniz, like Hume, is suspicious of referring the logical relation of ground and consequent to the real relation of causality (in Leibniz's case because he has general misgivings about substance–substance interaction), the principle of sufficient reason must be realized in another way. This is where the notion of a pre-established harmony is introduced, governed by the *principle of the best.* The real distribution and correlation of substances in the world must be

metaphysically grounded on the question of their possible compatibilities with each other as elements of the same spatiotemporal world, and the criterion for compatibility will be the problematic notion of 'the best of all possible worlds'.

Part of the theoretical fascination of Leibniz's doctrine lies in his attempt to construct a system of rational transparency while at the same time avoiding the gravitational pull of Spinozism. In holding that ultimately all true propositions are analytic, Leibniz would seem to tend towards a complete logicization of reality. Every truth can in principle be derived from the analysis of concepts: 'the nature of truth . . . is always an explicit or implicit identity'.[6] But if God's existence can be deduced from his essence, as the Ontological Argument has it, there is no *a priori* reason why the existent truths of the world do not flow directly from the essence of God, as Spinoza says.[7] In this case, God would have no 'choice' about the kind of world he produces, and would himself collapse into the realm of necessity in such a way that 'he' would not be distinguishable from it (God or Nature). For Spinoza, the material universe does not obey principles different in kind from those of logic and he would see no reason to introduce a principle of *sufficient* reason separate from the ontological rule of necessity. The criterion of sufficiency requires that other alternatives be genuinely possible. Sufficiency for Spinoza would be at best an epistemological criterion. There is no *a priori* reason why any intelligent being should be permanently restricted to inadequate ideas, so there is no need for an ontological principle of sufficiency. It is interesting in this regard to take a glimpse now at how Leibniz first explicitly distinguishes his notion of God from Spinoza's, by arguing for the ontological importance of the concept of possibility.

In 1676 Leibniz presented Spinoza with a proof for the existence of God, based around the notion of perfection, that mirrored Spinoza's own proof in the first few propositions of the *Ethics*.[8] A perfection is something positive and unlimited or independent. Leibniz agrees here with Spinoza that at the root of limited realities there must be unlimited realities (for Spinoza in the opening moments of the *Ethics*, these are called substances). As these are unlimited, nothing can stop them from existing; hence their essence is equivalent with their existence. Now, if perfections are unlimited realities, then any plurality of perfections must be compatible among themselves, as they involve no negation. Therefore absolute perfection (God) is conceivable as the set of all existent unlimited, positive, perfections.[9] Spinoza apparently approved of Leibniz's presentation.[10] In this argument, as in Spinoza's, absolute reality is presented as a pure upsurge of ontological

difference, with no other *reason* for its existence than the ontologically unlimited power of its component perfections.[11]

However, it is surely just this conception of *reason* that troubled Leibniz after his meeting with Spinoza, and caused him to return with a new proof the next morning, 2 December 1676.[12] Spinoza presents the existence of this internally differentiated reality purely in the register of *necessity*. It is important to keep in mind that his argument does not concern the existence of all *possible* perfections, only the existence of *whatever perfections (or unlimited realities) there are*. Possibility has no meaning here at this point. However, as soon as one asks 'why *these* perfections?', Spinoza can give no reason, as it is empty to ask at the absolute level why what is, is, if every perfection must exist simply by virtue of being a perfection. One could infer that although the higher reaches of Spinozist ontology are extremely powerful at the level of form, they can only furnish tautology at the level of content: what is, is. Spinoza does not make God as transparent to us as he would like, because at a crucial point he has to make a non-logical leap. For Spinoza, while there are an 'infinity' of perfections (or attributes), it turns out that we know only *two*, thought and extension. This is due to the ultimately contingent fact that they are *empirically* given in our case. It may be perfectly consistent to reply at this point that perfections can be ontologically infinite, yet numerically determinable (even as two), because one can take 'infinite' simply to mean unlimited. But such a response would still leave it ontologically arbitrary as to why there were ultimately only two perfections. Thus Spinoza leaves an unbridgeable gap between his bare ontological structure (necessarily existent field of infinite attributes) and the need to go on to *specify* something determinate about these attributes, leaving it so that the latter task can only be broached on the basis of contingently possessing a number of them, a fact which itself cannot be explained.[13] Sooner or later, then, Spinoza must face the distinction between logic and reality and introduce a non-necessary, non-logical moment; but this reckoning is placed in abeyance at the fundamental ontological stages of his system.[14]

Leibniz's achievement here is that he glimpses greater potential for rational transparency in the Spinozist proof about perfection, and thinks it has been misapplied. There is a way of conceiving an infinite disparity of perfections, and of keeping them both infinite and really distinct, without having to restrict them to two empirically known attributes further down the line. That is, we can conceive this infinite disparity as composed of *logically possible series*. Now, such an infinite disparity, because of its ideality, can no longer be identified straightaway with God, but rather more specifically with the mind of God. Nevertheless, let us see how far we can get with

Leibniz's theory before appealing to suppositions about the actual character of God. The first thing to say is that as soon as perfections are understood in terms of possibilities, it no longer makes sense to grant existence to each of them. One cannot say that each perfection (now understood as possibility) *exists*, simply because it is defined as unlimited. At this point Leibniz prizes open the difference between logic and real existence: mere logical possibility, although still involving perfection in the sense of independence, does not entail anything about existence.

But our earlier question to Spinoza must now be turned back on Leibniz. Can he deduce principles for actual reality, for existence, from this infinite array of possibilities? Why do some possibles exist rather than others? Why, for instance, the world in which Adam sins, rather than the world of Adam the non-sinner? Leibniz's answer will be: something only exists if it is first of all *compossible* with other things that exist. In other words, at exactly the same moment that Leibniz introduces the dimension of possibility, he also introduces a correlative, *real* dimension to possibility. Compossibility is weaker than logical possibility; something is compossible only *with* something else, and is therefore contingent upon *which* other realities might exist. To exist, therefore, something must not only be possible (non-self-contradictory), but compossible. To explain why something exists requires a counterfactual account of how other realities do not exist, *because* they are not compossible with each other; that is, that they *are* prevented from existing, by some other thing(s).

Nevertheless, the question can clearly be pushed further back, as Leibniz has not only to account for why *a* world might exist, but why this one does. Why is *this set* of compossibilities actualized? Leibniz claims that the criterion for this selection is the 'best' of all possible worlds. When he analyses what 'the best' or 'most perfect' might mean, he states that it is 'that combination of things . . . by which the greatest possible number of things exists'.[15] If A has the potential to be compatible or combinable with more things than B, then A will exist. It follows that the sufficient reason of an existent reality lies in the 'proportion' or 'degree' of potential complexity producible by it. This calculus of compossibility would be the true *ratio* of the world. As Deleuze points out, it is at this point in his theory that Leibniz has recourse to mathematical and geometrical ideas to formulate his solution: 'it is identity that governs truths of essence, but it is continuity that governs truths of existence. And what is a world? A world is defined by its continuity' (LS1). The most perfect, or completely determined, world will be the world which has the greatest quantity of qualitative complexity while simultaneously having the minimum discontinuities. The variables

of complexity and continuity can be conceived as standing in an ultimate differential relation, according to which an ideal curve can be derived which is designated 'the best of all possible worlds'. It is the formulation of this geometrically based combinatory, this calculus of compossibilities, that leads Deleuze to say that Leibniz 'discovers a play in the creation of the world' (DR: 62).

In Leibniz, of course, this play in creation is subordinated to a theological hypothesis. The infinite array of possibles must all eternally subsist in the mind of a God who reflects upon them, 'selects' the best, and then lets them pass into space and time. Being eternal, God's mind can weigh all possible outcomes, and thus judge the potential complexity of each possible series in conjunction with any of the others. Is this theological formulation the only way Leibniz's theory can be conceived? If it is, then we have reached a paradoxical position, because while Spinoza's system requires no transcendent God, yet leaves the intrinsic determinations of the absolute unknown, Leibniz's own position introduces greater rational transparency to the absolute only on the condition of affirming a theology that seems 'baroque' in the pejorative sense. By affirming this transcendent, intelligent God, Leibniz's attempt to improve upon the lack of rational transparency in Spinoza's system seems to end up betraying altogether the goal of philosophical immanence.

An impasse emerges in the rationalist attempt at a philosophy of immanence. In the next section I develop a further paradox: that while the intervention of Kant's critical philosophy may destroy the claims of the rationalists as they conceived them, it also opens the way for the reappearance, on a new post-Kantian plane, of some of the results of Leibniz's critique of Spinoza.

2. Kant's Theory of Ideas

Following Leibniz, the early Kant saw that if there was to be a principle of sufficient reason, it had to function independently of the principle of contradiction; the principle that 'everything must have its reason' must be, in Kant's later critical terms, synthetic. Kant's first metaphysical work, the *New Elucidation of the First Principles of Metaphysical Cognition*, is an attempt to reformulate Leibniz's two principles. What is sought in the principle of sufficient reason is the 'determining reason' for non-necessary (i.e. synthetic) conjunctions between subject and predicate.[16] How does Kant deal with the options left open by Leibniz for providing an ultimate ground

for the selection for existence of 'synthetic' or contingent possibilities? Throughout his philosophical career, Kant will often address the situation formally by simply saying that *synthesis requires a third.* 'Where is the third thing', Kant asks in the first *Critique*, 'that is always requisite for a synthetic proposition in order to connect with each other concepts that have no logical (analytical) affinity?' (CPR Guyer and Wood: A259). Kant's answer as to *what* the ultimate nature of this *tertium quid* is would vary throughout his career but the 'triangular' structure of synthetic *a priori* cognition will remain constant. In the early writings Kant seeks the third thing in the relation between God and world,[17] whereas later time (ibid.: A155/B194) and experience in general (ibid.: A157/B196) are said to be the third things that give us the key to the structure of the 'real'.

In his early works, Kant inherits Leibniz's problematic of compossibility (which he calls 'real possibility'), and takes a new viewpoint on the problem of finding a satisfactory ontological criterion for the 'selection' of reality. Kant recognizes the importance of Leibniz's attempt to formulate ontologically the difference between logic and reality, but he is wary of introducing a miraculous teleology as an external criterion for organizing the play of realities. Kant's innovation comes in his own proof of the existence of God, when he attempts to articulate more profoundly the conditions of the relationship between logical and real possibility. He argues that

> [P]ossibility is only definable in terms of there not being a conflict between certain combined concepts; thus the concept of possibility is the product of a comparison. But in every comparison the things which are to be compared must be available for comparison, and where nothing at all is given there is no room for either comparison or, corresponding to it, for the concept of possibility.[18]

Possibility *itself* depends on a 'material element', a '*datum*', in order to be conceived.[19] Kant calls this the 'real element of possibility' and will develop his proof for God's existence from it. The first move in his proof is to suggest that *it would be not be possible for nothing to exist*, for in that case all possibility would be cancelled. 'There is a certain reality, the cancellation of which would cancel all internal possibility whatever.'[20] Kant admits that it is not self-contradictory to conceive that, to paraphrase Leibniz, there may have been nothing rather than something. Nevertheless, the 'possibility' of the non-existence of all material being undermines the very coherence of the notion of possibility, because the latter is shown by Kant to require *some* related material ground. Consequently, in such

a case absolutely nothing would be left to be thought, and such a 'possibility' is internally invalid.

On this minimal basis, Kant goes on to develop the theological character of this Ontological Argument by suggesting that this irreducible reality he has isolated must be unique, simple, immutable and intelligent, and must therefore be conceived as God. However, it is not necessary to criticize these arguments here, firstly because what is new in Kant's argument is what has just been outlined, and secondly because our main task is rather to understand the destructive impact that Kant's *critical* theory would have on all Ontological Arguments in any case. Although Kant does not explicitly criticize his own version of the Ontological Argument in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (restricting himself to the classical formulation), he must have realized once the critical project got under way that the real result of his early version of the Ontological Argument was not the *de re* impossibility of absolute nothingness, but the conclusion that the 'possibility' of absolute non-existence violates the necessary conditions for the *use* of the concept of possibility. In 'critical' terms, it is an illegitimate, transcendent use of the notion of possibility. Moreover, whereas Kant's early Ontological Argument attempts to deduce the necessity of a certain unconditioned 'given' reality, in the first *Critique* all judgments involving possibility, existence and necessity 'could not be **vouched for** and their **real** possibility thereby established, if all sensible intuition (the only one we have) were taken away, and there then remained only **logical** possibility' (CPR Guyer and Wood: B302n). The transcendental 'I think' is the ultimate source of the objectivity of judgments, but it rests solely on data from sensible intuition. All existential judgments are therefore doubly conditioned, by what is sensibly given and by the existence of the subject itself. As regards the latter, there is no *cogito* which moves from thought to existence; rather the most that one can ever say is that 'I exist thinking' (ibid.: B420).

But it is a curious fact that despite these moves Kant refused to explicitly reject the earlier proof, especially as he had presented his modal proof as the 'only possible' version of the Ontological Argument. Why exclude the strongest presentation of the Ontological Argument from a thoroughgoing critique of that kind of argument? In fact, rather than disappearing after the critical turn, Kant's early Ontological Argument about real possibility goes underground, to emerge at crucial moments in the construction of the critical architecture. His refusal to explicitly reject the argument may be connected with his awareness of a straining in the critical architecture at its outer limits, a tension that was to cause increasing problems as Kant attempted to close his system at the end of his life.

One of the central arguments of the latter half of the *Critique* is that although there can be no proof of the *existence* of God, the formal properties of the *ens realissimum* remain necessary as a *regulative Idea* of reason. As before, Kant argues that all possibility is derivative of an original material ground, elaborating that all negation and limitation in general must be taken as parasitic upon this original positive reality (ibid.: A573–6/B601–4).[21] However, 'it is a transcendental *ideal* which is the ground of the thoroughgoing determination that is necessarily encountered in everything existing, and which constitutes the supreme and complete material condition of its possibility' (ibid.: A576/B604). Because it is unconditioned and therefore cannot be the object of an empirical synthesis according to the conditions of the possibility of experience,

> reason does not presuppose the existence of a being conforming to the ideal, but only the idea of such a being, in order to derive from an unconditioned totality of thoroughgoing determination the conditioned totality, i.e. that of the limited. (ibid.: A578/B606)

Thus if the existence of God can no longer be proved, the form of God is held to remain transcendentally necessary. The intensive character of God also remains, in that 'the representation of the sum total of all reality [is] a concept that comprehends all predicates as regards their transcendental content not merely **under itself**, but **within itself**' (ibid.: A577/B605). This recalls Kant's distinction between discursive concepts, which as genera contain their species 'under' themselves, and spatiotemporal reality, which contains its components 'within' itself as parts within wholes, with the corollary that the intension of concepts cannot be infinite, but space can contain infinite degrees of partition (ibid.: A24–5/B39). While the sum total of reality nevertheless obviously cannot be spatiotemporal in Kant's sense, as 'the original image (*prototypon*) of all things' (ibid.: A578/B606), it does have properties which put it outside the run of discursive concepts. Again, however, this intensive reality must be understood as *transcendental* matter rather than actual, noumenally accessible matter.

But of what use exactly is this 'transcendental substratum, which contains as it were the entire storehouse of material from which all possible predicates of things can be taken' (ibid.: A575/B603), if, according to the *Critique*, we are finite beings who necessarily have to use concepts that are merely 'predicates of possible judgments' (ibid.: A69/B94)? We live in the domain of possibility, and 'real definitions' of our concepts remain out of reach (ibid.: A728/B756f.). This so-called 'material condition of possibility'

seems much more abstract than the other transcendental conditions detailed by Kant (such as the categories). Nevertheless, Kant suggests that the material ground does function in a meaningful way as a regulative horizon concretely guiding our cognition. If concepts are to be thought as 'predicates of possible judgments', while judgments in turn must themselves be synthesized in syllogisms, for those syllogisms in turn to operate in coherent series, we need some kind of guarantee for such conceptual coherence. This is where the ontotheological arguments produced by *reason* become once more vitally important – to guarantee the coherence of the concepts of the *understanding* we use at the level of experience (Kant says that the understanding presents only a 'distributive unity' among appearances, without granting a 'collective unity' [ibid.: A644/B672][22]). As Kant admits in an important passage, '[f]or the law of reason to seek unity is necessary, since without it we would have no reason, and without that, no coherent use of the understanding, and lacking that, no sufficient mark of empirical truth' (ibid.: A651/B680). *Reason* must project a horizon or guiding totality (ibid.: A658/B686) so that the 'analytic unity' of concepts can be used logically, in such a way that higher and lower 'functions of unity' *converge* with each other. Thus here we get a more positive reason for why the *ens realissimum* 'does not signify the objective relation of an actual object to other things, but only that of an *idea* to *concepts*' (ibid.: A579/B607). Ideas, despite the fact they are essentially 'problematic' for empirical representation, play a *necessary* structural role that conditions empirical representation itself, in that they project a backdrop for logically consistent conceptual representation, on which all series of concepts and judgments can converge.[23] Thus although the Ideas are held by Kant to be *merely* 'regulative' as opposed to 'constitutive' like the categories, that does not mean that we can take them or leave them. They in fact *are* constitutive in the sense that they condition experience, and their regulative character has to do specifically with the fact they do not ever actually appear in our judgments of experience (they do not 'signify the objective relation of an actual object to other things') but rather guide them from outside.

While there are of course three Kantian Ideas (self, world and God), it is the third we concentrate on here, because God grounds the other two as the most originary and complete being, and as ground for the community of self and world (ibid.: A254/B310).[24] Kant's way of conceiving this rational Idea of God is through the notion of complete determination. He specifies that 'the principle of thoroughgoing determination says that every thing . . . is determined in respect of all possible predicates' (ibid.: A577n).[25]

The only way to conceive this rational model of complete determination, Kant infers, is to conceive it according to the form of the disjunctive syllogism.[26] The unconditioned, intensive '**All** of reality' is posited as limited, or determined through negation, according to the 'either/or' of the disjunctive syllogism, which allows for a complete determination of a conditioned, derived reality.[27]

Deleuze spells out the kind of disjunction Kant has in mind: 'we see that God is revealed as the master of the disjunctive syllogism only inasmuch as the disjunction is tied to exclusions in the reality which is derived from it, and thus to a *negative and limitative use*.'[28] In a similar way to the Leibnizian notion of an ideal differential relation between complexity and continuity, then, Kant's rational Idea of God is constructed according to a global exclusive disjunction in which the things that exist are determined by considering the sum of what does not exist. Except with Kant there is no trace of a 'play in the creation of the world'. Instead, God is posited as the abstract, positive horizon towards which we move through the continual correct observation of the rule of exclusive disjunction. But why, then, does Deleuze call God the 'master' of the disjunctive syllogism, if the latter only describes the *via negativa* traversed by us in pursuit of complete determination? In fact, Deleuze is right – Kant can only construct the Idea of God as a positive horizon towards which we are *guided* if we assume that God has himself *already* performed a totalizing exclusive disjunction on the world. In fact, we find Kant here subtly eroding the radical result of Kant's critique of the Ontological Argument. There he had declared that the question of the *existence* of God was unanswerable, whereas here he is suggesting that God retains a transcendental function as the *Idea of an always already completed totality*, which means that we must carry on acting 'as if' a God created the world and determined at the beginning what was possible in it.

Has Kant envisaged the only possible form for this necessary function of reason? Isn't there a way of understanding the truth of Kant's requirement that reason have a transcendental horizon, while insisting that the radical finitude of human cognition demands a different conception of that horizon, one that embraces the possibility that there was no original plan to the world and that new, unheard-of configurations can be sought out and produced? As we will see shortly, Deleuze follows Kant faithfully up to his decision to formulate the Idea of God in terms of the disjunctive syllogism, but his distinctive move is to spell out another possible kind of disjunction, *inclusive* rather than exclusive, which is more in tune with

the consequences of the 'speculative death of God' (DR: 109) enacted by Kant's destruction of the Ontological Argument.

Kant himself did not see the fully critical potentiality of his theory of Ideas. Instead, he came to imagine that the critical project as he understood it was a hostage to metaphysical fortune with regard to the actual existence of a totalizing God. His conclusion was that he had to make more of a commitment to the *existence* of a fully grounded non-logical, transcendental structure. His late attempt at a 'system of experience'[29] moved inexorably in the direction of extending and further specifying the power of Ideas; he tentatively attempted to understand 'the concept of experience *as a system in terms of empirical laws* . . . Unless this is presupposed, particular experiences cannot have thoroughly lawful coherence, i.e. empirical unity'.[30] Such a 'system' would surely somehow render accessible the 'absolute condition' of empirical synthesis which Kant has said in the *Critique* could only be regulative.[31] In the *Opus Posthumum*, Kant not only began to give a primacy to collective unity, but proceeded to grant it 'constitutive' validity in what he now called a 'system of transcendental idealism'.[32] He writes of a spatiotemporal 'whole' given *a priori*, and of 'regulative principles which are also constitutive'.[33] However, because of his emphasis on an actually existent totality (something he had rightly thought couldn't be proved in the *Critique of Pure Reason*) these 'principles' are no longer genuinely transcendental conditions, but ontological determinations of reality in the pre-critical rationalist sense.

Eckart Förster has suggested that there is a direct return in the *Opus Postumum* to the structure of Kant's early proof for the existence of God, as the real element of possibility.[34] A material or real condition for the unity of possible experience is indeed once again presupposed as essential – the only difference is that Kant no longer characterizes this fundamental reality as God, but as ether! However, notwithstanding Förster's suggestion and the apparent de-theologization involved in the dissolution of God into ether, it is important to see that Kant resurrects a very traditional Ontological Argument about the necessity for the existence of the sum of all predicates, and overlooks the distinctive aspects of the earlier proof. His move is really retrogressive. He is desperately seeking to provide an ontological guarantee that the coherence of experience indeed conforms to logical representation. He appeals directly to the rationalist triangle of self-world-God as the coordinates of the field of unconditional logical representation. But with this move, the *difference* between the logical and real is finally collapsed.[35] The structure of the real is simply *identified* with the structure of logic.

After having spent so long trying to keep the gap between logic and reality open, by trying to find synthetic *a priori* principles, Kant's appeal to collective unity finally only seems to close the gap between logic and reality.[36] The consequence is that the whole critical project is placed in jeopardy. But we are now finally in the position to see the problem that animates Deleuze's philosophy. How can the critical project be continued and this problem about the status of the Ideas be solved? *Perhaps by taking up again* the problematic of real possibility which Kant overlooked when returning in the *Opus Postumum* to his earlier proof. In other words, we must explore the critical potentiality of the ontological notion of compossibility. Deleuze's original insight is to identify the structure of Ideas with the structure of compossibility in Leibniz, on the condition that Ideas be composed precisely of *incompossible* as well as compossible elements and series. That is, on the condition that God as *ens realissimum*, as totality, is denied.

3. Deleuze's Theory of Problematic Ideas

We have seen how for Kant, Ideas form the regulative horizon of complete conceptual determination. Deleuze's first modification of Kant's theory of Ideas involves an attempt to draw further consequences from Kant's definition of Ideas as 'problematic concepts'. Ideas are problematic not only in the sense that they resist instantiation in experience. They also represent in each case a *specific* problem that serves to orient or provide a theoretical horizon for empirical cognition and action. 'Kant never ceased to remind us that Ideas are essentially "problematic". Conversely, problems are Ideas' (DR: 214). Thus we can say that the problems of the self, of the foundations of naturalism, and of the ultimate foundation of things, are three highest Ideas for Kant, each with its own domain: psychology, physics, and theology. Their problematic 'objects' are never knowable, but it is always necessary for thoughtful research in those domains to circulate around them, to be oriented by them.

To say this much is perhaps to do no more than submit Kant's theory of Ideas to a redescription based around the notion of a 'problematic concept' that he himself provides. However, Deleuze shows that interesting things start to happen when one follows through such a redescription, for one must start to realize the inappropriateness of the model of the understanding that provides Kant with the framework for his conception of reason's posing of problems. There are moments when Kant himself appears

to invoke a different model, as in the preface to the second edition of the first *Critique*, where he talks of how

> reason . . . compel[s] nature to answer its questions . . . Reason, in order to be taught by nature, must approach nature with its principles in one hand, according to which alone the agreement among appearances can count as laws, and in the other hand, the experiments thought out in accordance with these principles. (CPR Guyer and Wood: Bxiv).

In such a conception, empirical knowledge itself must be preceded by the posing of questions, by an interrogation of nature and the world that is both rational and experimental.[37] But then, Deleuze asks, doesn't that mean in turn that knowledge itself perhaps should not primarily be understood as simply involving descriptions of states of affairs according to rules, that it should rather be understood as concerning solutions to problems?

> The fact is that [reason] alone is capable of drawing together the procedures of the understanding with regard to a set of objects. The understanding by itself would remain entangled in its separate and divided procedures, a prisoner of partial empirical enquiries or researches in regard to this or that object, never raising itself to the level of a 'problem' capable of providing a systematic unity for all its operations . . . [it] would never constitute a 'solution'. For every solution presupposes a problem. (DR: 214–15)

Established knowledge, or what permits recognition, is really nothing but the realm of established solutions. But if we take this thought seriously, then we must examine the way we organize the world into problems in the first place. Now is the way in which problems govern our cognitive activity identical to the way in which Kant says we must presuppose a horizon of totality in order to use concepts coherently? Clearly, the notion of 'problem' is starting to contain something more than Kant envisaged in the notion of 'Idea'. Firstly, do not the production of frameworks and structures to articulate problems, together with the testing of these frameworks in experimental settings, often involve the modification and even abandonment of general rules for empirical cognition (whose source is the understanding)? Secondly, it is perfectly possible for a set of disparate problems to govern our various cognitive activities without these problems themselves having the internal requirement of sharing some higher integral coherence with other problems. In fact, the problem of a totality of problems may not be a

well-posed problem. Perhaps Kant's projected unity of Ideas is required as a *telos* only from the standpoint of actual knowledge, that is, from empirical representation. If so, the power of Ideas in Kant remains subordinated to a generalized field of conceptual representation. Kant's conception demands that Ideas be articulated according to the model of a logical calculus, which can inevitably only function by reflecting and expanding upon our already established empirical concepts. While Kant also conceives the ideal collective horizon as a '*focus imaginarius*' (CPR Guyer and Wood: A644/B672), if the imagination is to serve effectively as our 'eyes' in the space of the Idea, it must be allowed to test itself with counterintuitive symbolic relations, in order to escape domination by the rules of empirical cognition. In other words, if Ideas are to be thought primarily as problems then it has to be taken into account that the experimental thinking demanded by problems often involves the redefinition of concepts and terms, the counterintuitive rethinking of the possible relations between them, and the recourse to counterfactual conditionals in the case of facts as well as for conceptual formulations themselves. It involves a radically different process of cognition to that of empirical judgment, which is centred around the activity of recognition. To treat the world as a problem is to do more than treat it as the object of 'experience' in the Kantian sense. We can conclude that Ideas must have a consistency and form of their own *as problems* that stand structurally outside achieved empirical knowledge, 'feeding' and even conditioning knowledge.

It follows that the power of the Kantian discovery of the problematic Idea, rather than leading towards a grounding *ens realissimum* or Idea of God, is instead really camouflaged by the latter notion. If Kant's restriction on knowledge of God signifies a 'speculative death of God', it should also help to undermine the projection of any kind of ontological pre-established harmony between thought and being. The attempt to consistently think the binding force of Ideas thus can avoid the ontological terminus to which Kant himself in the end succumbed. Rather, the world can equally be seen as *transcendentally* ordered according to problems or Ideas which have no actual source transcendent to that world, even if they do transcend the rules of empirical cognition. In other words, might not the deepest transcendental signification of the world be that the world itself is a problem, or an open-ended set of problems, for which the solution has not been prepared in advance?

This is the point to introduce Deleuze's alternative model of inclusive disjunction. Deleuze asks whether we can conceive of a 'disjunctive synthesis' in which the elements of the disjunction are permitted to determine

each other reciprocally according to the logic of the *problem* rather than of conceptual representation. If we no longer expect a unified horizon for problems or Ideas, we are also free to abandon, as simple, pre-given datum, the 'originary reality' with reference to which Kant sought to ground the coherent world of representation. In which case –

> There is no longer any originary reality. The disjunction is always a disjunction; the 'either-or' is always an 'either-or'. Rather than signifying that a certain number of predicates are excluded from a thing in virtue of the identity of the corresponding concept, the disjunction now signifies that each thing is opened up to the infinity of predicates through which it passes, on the condition that it lose its identity as a concept and as self. (LOS: 336)[38]

Enunciated thus, it may appear that Deleuze is leading Kantianism into an abyss, stripped of all its logical and conceptual tools of orientation. However, it is by turning back to the same Leibnizian ideas from which Kant embarked on his voyage of critique that Deleuze lays out the materials for a 'new critique of reason' (LOS: 336). It is only by taking full advantage of the resources of rationalism that the Copernican Revolution can be pushed beyond the theological conception of reason that impedes it at the outer limits of Kant's system.

4. Leibnizianism after the Speculative Death of God

Leibniz imagines that before the dawn of the world God faces an eternal set of logically possible series, from which he must select a subset of series that are not only possible (non-self-contradictory) but compossible – compatible with *each other*. The ultimate criterion for his selection is the notion of the best of all possible worlds, which can be determined ideally through a reciprocal and complete determination between possible series, according to a differential calculus based on their potential contributions to a world with the maximum complexity and continuity. God is not then responsible, for instance, for the sinning of Adam; God is at most responsible for selecting for existence the world in which Adam sins, according to the criterion of the best. This world did not *have* to happen. In other possible worlds, Adam does not sin.

Deleuze sees resources in Leibniz's theory for a reformulation of the 'transcendental substratum', the realm of Ideas, discovered by Kant. As we

have seen, Ideas in Deleuze's sense involve the determination of a problem through 'inclusive disjunction'. Leibniz's theory, because it recognizes a 'play in creation', can show us how this can be understood. Leibniz shows us from the outset that it is the wrong way round to seek an original monadic essence of Adam, dictating either that he must sin or that he must resist temptation. Rather, he says, there are 'several Adams' that are logically possible.[39] More profoundly, Leibniz suggests that in the first place one must conceive of a 'vague Adam' in which no decision is yet made about what Adam will actually be and do. Thus we can say that there is an Idea of Adam, a problem of Adam. But what are its basic elements? Should we simply say that the vague Idea of Adam is made up of possible series, which can be treated as individuals or monads? No, there is a more basic level. Vague Adam is rather composed of a number of *singularities* – to be the first man, to live in paradise, to give birth to a woman from himself, to sin, to resist temptation.[40] Prior to the determination of compossibility according to the principle of the best, it is not so much that Leibniz merely presupposes a distribution of logically possible series; rather he must be understood, according to Deleuze, as presupposing first of all a distribution of the 'pre-individual singularities' which make up the deciding points of difference between those series.[41] It is these that make up the Idea and that indeed make it a *problem*, for a constellation of singularities may branch off into a number of possible *divergent, incompossible* series. In this case, whether the Adam that is selected for existence actualizes either the fourth (sin) or fifth singularity (resistance to temptation) will be of immense importance for the world in which he is selected. Two different 'worlds', two divergent series, issue from the result of that disjunction.

In Leibniz's own scheme, God calculates that the world of the sinning Adam must be chosen and Adam's nocturnal twin, 'good Adam', must be banished for ever. However, the model of the 'vague Adam' indicates the perfect conceivability or rational transparency of the divergent or incompossible series that branch off ideally in forking paths from each ideal conjunction of singularities. 'With Leibniz', suggests Deleuze, 'it seems to us that *in the first place* there is a calculus of infinite series ruled by convergences and divergences' (FLB: 61, italics added). Such an ideal calculus seems quite autonomous from the doctrine of the best, as well as from the theological hypothesis of the selecting God.

In fact it is as if Leibniz's system not only survives, but even only comes to bloom, after the death of God. For if Leibniz's principle of the best is taken instead as a possible solution (albeit a highly generalized and abstract one) nested within a primary matrix of *Ideas*, taken now more strictly in the

Kantian sense as focal horizons for thought, then we are able to step out of metaphysics and into transcendental philosophy. *Without* reliance on a pre-established, designed harmony between thought and world, the world is precisely restored to us *as a matrix of problems*, for which the solutions have not been prepared in advance, but which orient or provide a horizon for the ultimate purposes of our thinking. Problems, vague Ideas, are thus affirmed as the true objects of reason. The 'vague Adam, a vagabond, a nomad, an Adam = x' can indeed be understood as 'common to several worlds' (LOS: 131), but it attains a powerful determinacy of its own at the moment that it is seen as *a problem that frames multiple solutions*, and serves as a witness to an aboriginal 'play in the creation of the world' – that is, of *this* world taken in its openness, a world fundamentally without unity and totality (DR: 62).

In order to make this picture of the internal composition of Ideas clearer, we need to say more about the notion of singularity. Again following Leibniz, Deleuze looks to differential calculus for an adequate formulation of this notion. Take a curve that charts the relations between two quantified variables. At certain points, a difference might be discernible that signifies the occurrence of a qualitative change. The boiling point of a fluid is a good example. Such a sudden 'event' indicates the presence of a singularity. These 'singular points characterising a mathematical curve . . . turning points and points of inflection', can also be characterized as the 'distinctive points' in a series, as opposed to its 'ordinary points' (LOS: 63). For Deleuze, it is these singularities that form the foci of every kind of research and experimentation. In an interview, Deleuze argues that it is merely an idea of general opinion that

> philosophy concerns itself with universals, and that science concerns itself with universal phenomena that can always be reproduced, etc. Consider the statement: all bodies fall. What is important, is not that all bodies fall, but rather the fall itself and the singularities of the fall. If scientific singularities are reproducible – for example, mathematical singularities in functions, or physical singularities, or chemical singularities, etc – fine, and then what? These are secondary phenomena, processes of universalisation, but what science addresses is not universals, but singularities: when does a body change its state, from the liquid state to the solid state, etc.[42]

Singularities should thus not be taken as logical individuals, singular substances or atomic elements, and in fact are in a sense more 'universal' than

the concepts and 'universal laws' that are derived from them. Singularities can be extracted from the particular values they incarnate in any actual differential relation and determined in an ideal form. They can be isolated in their 'free state', because they are independent of any particular value. If there are many types of liquid with different boiling points, varying at different altitudes, they nevertheless each incarnate the ideal singularity, 'boiling point', and it is this which constitutes the basic unit of experimentation.

It is in this way that we can make sense of the peculiar relation of Deleuzian Ideas to Platonic Ideas. On the one hand, events, changes, or singular points have logical priority over essences or logical possibilities, as the latter should really be understood as *solutions* to problems, which in turn themselves are composed of singularities. This is clearly anti-Platonic. On the other hand, Deleuze remains Platonic insofar as he concludes that *it is precisely these events and singularities that are ideal.* The continuity that Leibniz sought in the actual world must be relocated to its proper, exclusively ideal domain – that of problematic Ideas articulating singularities in relation to each other.[43] The ideal continuity Leibniz seeks in the one actualized world is really the characteristic of the horizon of this world, taken in its problematic nature.

The mathematical form in which Ideas find their most precise articulation moreover helps to render it a particular kind of determinacy that is different in kind from that of the concept, which requires that meanings be treated as stable. It helps formalize activities of reason which cannot be articulated in terms of the use of the understanding. This is the context in which we must finally understand Deleuze's notion of disjunctive synthesis, where 'each thing is opened up to the infinity of predicates through which it passes, on the condition that it lose its identity as a concept and as self'.[44] By opening up the problematicity of the world to which a thing belongs, one allows it to alter its identity by determining it in relation to series which are divergent as well as convergent. The fragmentation of the Kantian representational horizon into a horizon of problems allows for alteration in the core definitions of things, so that they can 'differ from themselves' while nonetheless retaining an identity that remains nonconceptual. Leibnizian rationalism thus provides the formal tools for showing precisely how Kantian Ideas should be taken to differ in their very internal structure from the concepts that we use for the purposes of empirical cognition. Here we see the possibility of a new *dialectic of problems* founded on different principles to Hegel's dialectic.[45] Such would be the 'truly sufficient reason' which Deleuze's post-Kantian, 'neobaroque' system promises,

a system of rational immanence more extensive than Spinoza's, which is hampered by its refusal of contingency.[46] Deleuze's system does not just revolve around the affirmation of the differences that make up Spinozist substance. Leibnizian sufficient reason, understood now in terms of the Kantian horizon of Ideas, extends far deeper as it involves not just a brute affirmation of actual difference, but more specifically *the affirmation of incompossible worlds*. Wouldn't such a reconstruction of reason be the final fulfilment of a philosophy of immanence, in which Being would attain a radical internal determination by Thought?

By accepting the notion that both incompossible and compossible series can be affirmed as relevant to this world, we might seem to have lost altogether the Leibnizian notion that compossibility was the key to determining what *exists*. For Deleuze, however, it is rather the case that the existent world should be ultimately framed in terms of the discontinuous *actualisation* or incarnation of problems or Ideas.[47] He thus remains solidly post-Kantian in holding that existence must be framed within a transcendental perspective grounded in finitude. There is no return to rationalist ontology in any substantialist sense. Just as Heidegger suggests that the notion of Being only has meaning at all for a finite being oriented by its own death, for Deleuze, being is always *being-for*, more specifically, for a finite being who is fundamentally oriented by a set of problems. But Deleuzian immanence is ultimately not so much Heideggerian as Hegelian. Each finite being can potentially assume a *being-in-and-for-itself* by becoming aware of the problems that orient it as problems, that is, problems whose solution is *up to it*. This is the moment of self-grounding in Deleuze's system, in which the immanent realization of reason reaches its full, self-reflexive articulation. In this way the Kantian and Leibnizian dimensions of the Idea fuse together in a powerful new version of the post-Kantian absolute. According to the Kantian model, Ideas stand structurally outside possible experience, so that they are problematic *for us*. But the Leibnizian augmentation of transcendental philosophy shows how Ideas are not just problematic *for us*, but are so *in themselves*. For Deleuze, a problem is formed in the first place out of singularities whose organization has not been decided in advance according to a pre-established harmony (Leibniz), but is constituted experimentally by finite beings who are subject to these singularities (Kant). In an important passage, Deleuze remarks that '[t]rue freedom lies in the power to decide, to constitute problems themselves. And this "semi-divine" power entails the disappearance of false problems as much as the creative upsurge of new ones' (B: 15). Deleuze thus synthesizes the Kantian and Leibnizian theories of problems so that problems have being

in-and-for-themselves. The 'vague Adam, a vagabond, a nomad, an Adam = x' is the strange new figure of Kantian autonomy that emerges from Deleuze's 'reconstruction of reason', ultimately bound to its problems not by fate, but by freedom, and the demand never to repeat in a sterile manner solutions that have previously been proposed for the philosophical problems that burden human reason (CPR Guyer and Wood: Avii).

Notes

[1] Cf. Deleuze FLB: 67.

[2] Kant 1999: 398, Ak. 11: 314. ('Ak.' in this and all subsequent references refers to pagination to Kant's *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.)

[3] Hyppolite 1974: 128.

[4] Leibniz 1973: 62.

[5] Ibid.: 206–7.

[6] Leibniz 1989: 31 (Leibniz 1973: 88).

[7] Spinoza 1996: Part I, Prop. 16 and 25.

[8] 'That a Most Perfect Being Exists' in 'Two Notations for Discussion with Spinoza', Leibniz 1969: 167. Cf. Spinoza 1996: Part I, Props. 1–7.

[9] For a detailed presentation of the proof, see David Blumenfeld, 'Leibniz's ontological and cosmological arguments', in Blumenfeld 1995: 358f.

[10] Leibniz writes that 'I showed this reasoning to Mr. Spinoza when I was in the Hague. He thought it sound, for when he contradicted it at first, I put it in writing and gave him the paper', Leibniz 1969: 168.

[11] Readers of Deleuze will recognize this argument as the one presented by Deleuze as the Spinozist contribution to the notion of the 'univocity of being'; cf. DR: 45–52. In *Expressionism and Philosophy: Spinoza*, it becomes clear that the presentation of the proof more closely resembles Leibniz's version of the proof than Spinoza's (cf. the statements on EPS: 78–9). I would suggest that Deleuzian univocity should not be derived straightforwardly from a Spinozist basis. The Spinozist theory of a real distinction between infinite attributes rather serves as a starting model for Deleuze's Leibnizian model of difference in *Difference and Repetition*. This is why it is important to understand the moment of divergence between Spinoza and Leibniz if one is to understand Deleuze. Incidentally, the fundamentally Leibnizian framework within which Deleuze is interpreting Spinoza is apparent from the very title of this book (in French, *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression*). Expression is much more a Leibnizian concept than a Spinozist one. This textual issue deserves a separate treatment and I shall henceforth ignore it to focus on the purely conceptual problematic.

[12] Leibniz 1969: 169.

[13] My argument echoes Hegel's insistence on the determinateness of negation in his critique of Spinoza in Hegel 1955: volume III, 280–90. It is possible to make use of this argument independently of Hegel's general philosophical framework.

[14] In *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, Deleuze pays a lot of attention to this problem. He acknowledges that 'we know of only two [attributes], Extension and Thought, but this is because our knowledge is limited, because we are constituted by a mode of Extension and a mode of Thought'. Nevertheless, he claims, there is another distinction, between God's 'power of thinking' and his 'power of acting' which is 'in no way relative to the limits of our knowledge, any more than it depends on our constitution' (EPS: 118). This 'objective' distinction corresponds to the 'two sides of the absolute' (ibid.). The labyrinthine attempt to exploit this latent distinction in Spinoza is one of the peculiarities of Deleuze's Spinoza book, and it is not echoed to my knowledge in other Spinoza scholarship. All I wish to remark here is that this shows that even in Deleuze's Spinoza, the theory of the real distinctions of substance is relatively insulated from other aspects of Spinozist ontology. Hence it will be all the easier, as I will suggest, to detach it and put it to use elsewhere.

[15] Cf. the passage quoted in Russell 1992: 296, and 'On the Ultimate Origination of Things', in Leibniz 1951: 349.

[16] Cf. Kant, 'New elucidation on the first principles of metaphysical cognition', in Kant 2003: 11, Ak. 1: 392.

[17] Cf. *Lectures on Metaphysics*, Kant 1997: 15, Ak. 28: 52.

[18] Kant 2003: 15, Ak. 1: 395. Cf. the more compact proof in *The Only Possible Argument*: 'Possibility [itself] disappears not only when an internal contradiction, as the logical element of impossibility, is present, but also when there exists no material element, no *datum*, to be thought. For then nothing is given which can be thought' ibid.: 123, Ak. 2: 78.

[19] Ibid.: 123, Ak. 2: 78.

[20] Ibid.: 127, Ak. 2: 83.

[21] 'All negations . . . are mere limitations of a greater and finally of the highest reality; hence they presuppose it, and as regards their content they are merely derived from it', (CPR Guyer and Wood: A575/B603). Note that Kant relates this *omnitudo realitatis* to a '**thing in itself** which is thoroughly determined' (ibid.: A576/B604). The thing in itself is thus not as empty as it is often held to be, as it obtains a formal determination in the argument now being examined.

[22] cf. ibid.: A583/B611.

[23] This horizon, says Kant, must 'direct the understanding to a certain goal respecting which the lines of direction of all its rules converge at one point' (ibid.: A644/B672). While Kant sometimes uses geometrical language to describe the structure of Ideas, in general an Idea is to be thought as projecting a logical world, a *mundus intelligibilis*, of complete representation. Cf. ibid.: A659/B687.

[24] For more detail on Deleuze's interpretation of Kantian Ideas, see Kerslake 2002.

[25] CPR Guyer and Wood: A577/B605, translators note b.

[26] At ibid.: A304/B361, Kant had suggested that the Ideas of Reason, as unconditioned principles of cognition, correspond in form to three types of syllogism, the categorical, hypothetical and disjunctive.

[27] 'The transcendental major premise for the thoroughgoing determination of all things is none other than the representation of the sum total of all reality . . . The thoroughgoing limitation of every thing rests on the limitation of this All of

reality, in that some of it is ascribed to the thing and rest excluded from it, which agrees with the "either/or" of the disjunctive major premise and the determination of the object through one of the members of this division in the minor premise.' ibid.: A577/B605.

[28] Deleuze, 'Klossowski or Bodies-Language', in LOS: 321.

[29] Kant 1987: 398, Ak. 20: 209.

[30] Ibid.: 392–3, Ak. 20: 203.

[31] Cf. CPR Guyer and Wood: A397.

[32] 'Whatever agrees with collective unity is *actual* (*existentia est omnimodo determinatio*, as ontology has it); but to achieve this thoroughgoing determination *empirically* (as is envisaged in the transition from the metaphysical foundations to physics) is utterly impossible. It is possible, however, in relation to the absolute unity of possible experience in general, insofar as the object of this concept contains the One and All of outer sense-objects', Kant 1993: 93, Ak. 21: 586.

[33] Ibid.: 57, Ak. 22: 241.

[34] Förster 2000: 77f.

[35] In other words, Kant is finally dragged in by the gravitational force of Spinozism: see Kant 1993: 214, Ak. 22: 56; ibid.: 251, Ak. 21: 87.

[36] Burkhardt Tuschling has suggested that 'in many respects during the period of more than 15 years spent on the so-called *Opus Postumum* Kant returns to his beginnings, from Hume and Locke back to Newton and, in particular, to Leibniz', Tuschling 1993: 155. But Tuschling elsewhere specifies what he thinks is involved in this return: 'Kant found himself thrown back on the beginnings of his undertaking – indeed to the point of identifying synthetic and analytic unity, the logical and the real relationship between ground and consequence,' Tuschling 1989: 214.

[37] Deleuze continually emphasizes the Kantian distinction between thought and knowledge: cf. PS: 97; NP: 87, 162–3.

[38] The phrase 'disjunctive synthesis' is only introduced in *Logic of Sense* (cf. LOS: 55), but the basic notion is operative in *Difference and Repetition*. The same goes for 'inclusive disjunction'.

[39] The classic discussion is in the first letter to Arnauld, May 1686; Leibniz 1989: 72f.

[40] Cf. Deleuze, FLB: 59–61.

[41] On pre-individual singularities, see DR: 306–8, 349–50.

[42] 'U comme Un', in Deleuze and Parnet 1996.

[43] 'On the continuity of Ideas', cf. DR: 217, 230.

[44] See note 38 above.

[45] After his assault on the dialectic in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze begins to use the term positively to designate the kind of thought that deals with problems. One of the most important nutshell descriptions of the project in *Difference and Repetition* is that it is 'the exploration of the two halves of difference, the dialectical half and the aesthetic half' (DR: 274). I am obviously confining myself to one half in this essay.

[46] On sufficient reason in Deleuze, see NP: 49 and DR: 59–60, 192.

[47] On existence and actualization, cf. DR: 263.

Chapter 7

Transcendental Illusion and Antinomy in Kant and Deleuze

Henry Somers-Hall

Introduction

In this paper, I want to look at the way in which Deleuze's reading of Kant's transcendental dialectic influences some of the key themes of *Difference and Repetition*. As we shall see, in the transcendental dialectic, Kant takes the step of claiming that reason, in its natural functioning, is prone to misadventures. Whereas for Descartes, for instance, error takes place between two faculties, such as when reason (wrongly) infers that a stick in water is bent on the basis of sense impressions, Kant postulates that reason generates illusions internally purely in the course of its natural function. It is these illusions which lead reason into antinomy, as on the basis of these illusions, it is led to posit an illegitimate concept of the world as a totality. Further, for Kant, the antinomies represent an indirect proof of transcendental idealism, as it is only with the additional assumption of the noumenon, as that which falls outside of appearance, that we are able to resolve the antinomies. Deleuze's work on the image of thought clearly owes a great deal to Kant's theory of transcendental illusion, but the connections between Kant's transcendental dialectic and the structure of *Difference and Repetition* go deeper than this. Whereas Kant's problem is that reason generates contradictions when it assumes that the unconditioned can be given to reason, Deleuze's problem is the impossibility of developing a concept of difference within representation. Between these two problems, there are significant structural parallels – in particular, the attempt to think outside the dichotomy of the finite and the infinite, and the attempt to prevent the application of spatio-temporal predicates to the noumenon. The antinomy of representation for Deleuze is the inability of representation to think difference apart from as purely representational or as undifferenciated abyss. As we shall see, Deleuze

gives an explanation of this antinomy in terms of the differential calculus, and the notion of the differential in particular. While these parallels exist between Kant and Deleuze's thought, there are also some important differences. Although the differential is not determined in relation to representation, this does not mean that it lacks all determination. This opens up a possibility not available in Kant's philosophy, that is, a thinking beyond the limit of representation. As we shall see, Kant closes off this possibility by giving reason a heuristic function which in effect reinstates representation. Kant makes this move precisely because the lack of spatio-temporal determinations of the noumenal means for Kant that the noumenal lacks determinations altogether.

In order to explore the use Deleuze makes of the Kantian doctrine of transcendental illusion, this paper will be divided into three main parts. First, we will look at Kant's own theory of transcendental illusion in order to see how Kant understands this misadventure of thought. Second, we will look at how Deleuze takes up this doctrine of transcendental illusion, and in particular how Deleuze's focus on difference changes the role of transcendental illusion. Third, we will look at how the structure of *Difference and Repetition* is influenced by the structure of antinomy, in this case between finite and infinite representation. I want to conclude by looking at some of the problems which emerge in our interpretation of Deleuze if we don't take the notion of transcendental illusion seriously, either by continuing to characterize the virtual in terms of representation, or by taking representation itself to be illusory, rather than simply being the site of a transcendental illusion. Before turning to Kant and Deleuze, however, we shall look briefly at Descartes' notion of error, as this, for Deleuze at least, provides the model of error which Kant's doctrine of transcendental illusion is supposed to replace.

In his chapter on the image of thought, Deleuze explicitly opposes Kant to Descartes. In particular, what interests Deleuze is that Kant, in the transcendental dialectic, argues that reason naturally goes awry if the nature of its relationship to the understanding is not properly recognized. While Deleuze claims that Kant is not the only figure to replace the notion of error as the prime misadventure of thought with a more subtle theory of failure (Deleuze lists, for instance, the concepts of superstition found in Lucretius and Spinoza, forgetting in Plato, and alienation in Hegel), as we shall see, many specific features of Kant's implementation will be taken up by Deleuze. We shall now turn to Descartes' theory of error, which Deleuze characterizes as being based on 'the effects of bodily causes' (DR: 172), external to reason.

1. Kant, Reason and the Antinomies

As is well known, one of the key aims of Descartes philosophy is to discover truths with certainty, and in order to achieve this certainty, Descartes introduces methodological doubt: 'reason now leads me to think that I should hold back my assent from opinions that are not completely certain and indubitable just as carefully as I do from those which are patently false' (Descartes 1996: 12). What is important about this move by Descartes is that it is reason itself which instigates the method of doubt. Whereas classical doubt often related various faculties to each other in order to undermine all of their claims to primacy in the search for truth, Descartes installs reason as the arbiter of the process of doubt itself. The aim of methodological doubt is therefore to create a space for reason to conduct its enquiries into the structure of the world, as 'deduction of one thing from another can never be performed wrongly by an intellect which is in the least degree rational' (Descartes 1985a: 12). If the intellect is incapable of error, however, we have the difficulty of explaining how error can and does occur, particularly given Descartes' contention that we were created by a beneficent and non-deceiving God. Descartes' solution to this central problem of his method is to situate error in the relations between the faculties. In the *Meditations*, it is the mismatch between the large domain of the will, which has no concern over truth, and the smaller domain of reason which leads to error. Likewise, in the *Rules for the Direction of the Mind*, Descartes writes, 'while it is the intellect alone which is capable of knowledge [*scientia*], it can be helped or hindered by three other faculties, *viz*, imagination, sense-perception, and memory' (ibid.: 32). Thus the madman of the first meditation who believes himself to be made of glass (Descartes 1996: 13) is to be explained in terms of 'certain vapours [which] disturb their brain' (Descartes 1985b: 172), rather than any deficiency in the intellect itself. In order to avoid the interference of the faculties, Descartes focuses in large part in the *Rules* on practical techniques to reduce reliance on memory as a faculty external to reason. I need to learn, for instance, 'to run through [a series of inferences] several times in a continuous movement' until 'I have learnt to pass from the first to the last so swiftly that memory is left with practically no role to play, and I seem to intuit the whole thing at once' (Descartes 1985a: 25), and I am advised to practice 'weaving and carpet making, or the more feminine arts of embroidery, in which threads are interwoven in an infinitely varied pattern' (ibid.: 35) in order to allow me to be better able to grasp a complete series of reasonings. Similarly, the *Meditations* begins with a discussion of habit, soliciting the development of

appropriate mental habits which allow the autonomy of reason, and with it, the development of a complete and indubitable philosophy. Once this is done, the Cartesian method proper can be employed, which involves four stages: the rejection of the dubitable, the division of the problem into parts, the ordering of those parts in terms of simplicity, and the enumeration of all features of the problematic (ibid.: 120). Reason thus allows us to systematically order, reorder, and solve problems by making sure they are properly specified, and removing, as far as possible, the influence of the other faculties. While we cannot identify Descartes' conception of reason too closely with that of Kant, where it has a complex position within the architectonics of the critical system, the spirit of Descartes' approach is clearly one of the main targets of Kant's antinomy of reason. Kant's response to the Cartesian method is a form of *reductio ad absurdum*, attempting to show that even given Descartes' careful strictures on the employment of reason, we can be led into error. As we shall see, the antinomies provide an important opening onto the Kantian system as a whole, so much so that Kant would later write that he would have 'started with what I have entitled the "Antinomy of Pure Reason," which could have been done in colourful essays and would have given the reader a desire to get at the sources of this controversy' (Kant 1999: Letter to Marcus Herz, after 11 May 1781) were it not for the demands of providing a systematic account of the critical system as a whole.

The transcendental dialectic occurs after the aesthetic and analytic in the first *Critique*, and deals with the role of reason in our knowledge of the world. It is here that Kant puts forward the view that reason, operating apart from the other faculties, internally generates illusions which lead us into contradiction. Before turning to the antinomies themselves, therefore, we will look briefly at the role of reason in the formulation of knowledge. Kant claims to have shown in the aesthetic and analytic how the understanding takes appearances, and unifies them according to rules (CPR Smith: A302/B359). While the understanding applies to sensibility for Kant, and is therefore able to make judgements about phenomena, this is not sufficient for proper knowledge of the world. Although this provides the foundation for such knowledge, as it stands, we are given a merely fragmentary knowledge of phenomena. What is needed is a further level of unity, whereby these various cognitions of the understanding can themselves be unified into a coherent system of knowledge. It is this second step which is carried out by reason. Reason therefore serves to unify the rules of the understanding according to principles. It is this final step which gives us knowledge, as a coherent set of judgements, about the phenomenal

world. In seeking to unify cognitions of the understanding under higher principles, Kant describes reason's task as '[finding] the unconditioned for the conditioned cognitions of the understanding, by which its unity will be completed' (ibid.: A307/B364). In this case, the unconditioned is the rational ground for the conditioned cognition. In order to illustrate how this functions, Kant turns to the model of the syllogism [*Vernunftschluss*]. We will briefly look at how Kant explicates this connection to the syllogism, as it will become important when we look at Deleuze's description of representation, and its connection to Aristotle.

Kant explains this point in relation to the proposition, 'Caius is mortal' (ibid.: A322/B378). Kant explains that such a proposition could be derived from experience alone, through the understanding's relation to intuition. While such a method would give us a particular fact, it does not give us universality, or totality in our system of knowledge. Instead, reason seeks the condition for this statement; in this case, the condition is, 'all men are mortal'. Presumably, according to Kant's later comments that reason follows a regressive procedure, we could proceed further, and seek the conditions of the statement that 'all men are mortal', thus generating a series of inferences moving towards the most universal. This principle of inference is mirrored by a concept relating to the synthesis of intuitions, which is the 'concept of the totality of conditions for any given conditions' (ibid.: A322/B379). Thus, reason's understanding of inferences is mirrored by an understanding of phenomena. This understanding of reason's function as essentially syllogistic is not held to all that tightly by Kant, and, as we shall see when we come to look at the antinomies, the relation of condition to conditioned can be specified in other ways (in the antinomy we shall consider, it is specified in terms of a past moment being the condition of a present moment). What is important to note is that reason is considered by Kant to be subsumptive in its operation. That is, the relation of conditioned to conditions is like that of a particular to the concept which it falls under. Reason therefore operates according to the model of judgement, a fact which is unsurprising once we recognize that 'reason does not really generate any concept. The most it can do is free a concept of the understanding from the unavoidable limitations of possible experience' (ibid.: A409/B435).

The antinomies show the consequences of reason's attempt to apply to the world this aim of finding the unconditioned. There are three forms of error which reason falls into, depending on whether the syllogistic inference in question is categorical, hypothetical, or disjunctive. The antinomies emerge from reason's employment of the second of these syllogisms: the

hypothetical. Whereas the paralogisms deal with reason's attempt to apply the categories beyond the realm of the sensible itself, the antinomies instead cover reason's attempt to develop a concept of the world as a whole. As we shall see, while this concept appears to be a purely empirical concept, it turns out to be merely pseudo-empirical, actually being beyond any possible experience. In order to accomplish the task of providing a systematic view of knowledge, it is reason which takes up the categories of the understanding, and attempts, by means of a regressive procedure which tries to move from the present conditioned to its conditions, to allow us to conceive of such a totality. As we shall see, it is the task of reason to attempt such a regression through the series of conditions which govern the object, but we fall into error when we confuse this general rule with a cosmological principle that 'when the conditioned is given, then so is the entire series of conditions subordinated one to the other, which is also given (i.e. contained in the object and its connections)' (ibid.: A307–8/B364). This confusion is the antinomy itself, as it is reason's confusion of its task with the presumed givenness of the unconditioned which leads to antinomy, but this general confusion becomes apparent in four specific antinomies. As we are interested in the structure of the antinomies in general, we will only describe here the first of the antinomies, which deals with whether or not the world has a beginning in time. The question of whether the world has a beginning relates to reason's goal of finding the unconditioned for the conditioned, in the sense that the present moment is conditioned by the series of past moments. Accordingly, reason attempts, through a regressive procedure, to think the world as a totality by thinking the unconditioned that conditions the present. The antinomy emerges since there are two ways to specify this unconditioned, which Kant terms the dogmatic and empiricist interpretations of the world. It is this which leads to the antinomy, as it seems impossible to show the superiority of one position over the other. The two different ways of conceiving of the unconditioned of a series depend upon whether we consider the unconditioned to be a first term of the series, which would operate as an intelligible beginning, or, on the other hand, we conceive of the totality of conditions taken together as the unconditioned. The first corresponds to empiricism, the second to dogmatism. While these positions appear rather abstract, they mirror closely the debates between Leibniz and Clark, as Al-Azm's work shows (Al-Azm 1972). Kant himself refers to the dogmatist position as being that of Plato, and the empiricist that of Epicurus. As the antinomies are supposed to arise naturally from reason's activity, however, these figures should be seen as exemplars of the different positions, thereby giving each a wider remit.

We shall move through the arguments themselves quite quickly, as our main focus is on the structural analogues between Kant's formulation and that of Deleuze. Beginning with the argument for the thesis, that the world has a beginning in time, Kant proceeds from the assumption of the opposite in order to generate a *reductio ad absurdum*. Given that the world has existed for an infinite amount of time, an infinite number of things must have happened. An infinite series is by definition, however, a series that can never be completed, and hence, the past (as an *infinite* series) cannot have passed away. As the statement that the past has not passed is contradictory, we thereby assert its contrary: that the world has a beginning. The empiricist antithesis follows a similar structure, first assuming that the world does have a beginning in time, implying that there must have been time prior to that beginning. This time before the world must be an empty time, however, and in such a time, every moment must be identical to every other. In this case, it is impossible for anything to have come into being, since as each moment of time is identical with every other, it is impossible to distinguish a moment when the world would have begun. We are therefore led to the conclusion that there must be no beginning to time (CPR Smith: A426–9/B454–7). While there are objections to both of these arguments, Kant clearly wishes to maintain that the disagreements presented are real and serious, and such that they do not allow reason to 'withdraw and treat the quarrel with indifference as a mere mock-fight' (ibid.: A464/B492). As such, according to Kant's account of the antinomies, by simply following the rules of reason, we are led to contradiction.

On Kant's account, therefore, reason has been led into contradiction not through any interference by bodily causes but by reason's own activity. One possible response to the quandary of the antinomies would be radical scepticism. That is, having shown that reason is incapable of totalizing phenomena without generating contradictions, we could give up on the goal of systematic knowledge. Kant's solution is instead to argue that reason can go awry not simply through error, but also by succumbing to a form of illusion. This illusion will in fact be what Kant calls a transcendental illusion, as it will turn out that this illusion is a condition of the possibility of systematic knowledge. Kant's procedure will therefore be twofold. On the one hand, he will have to show how this illusion is generated. On the other, he will have to show how reason succumbs to this illusion, and how it is possible for reason to function without falling into error. Dealing with the first requirement to begin with, if we return to the question of the world, we can see that this was generated through reason's desire to understand empirical phenomena as a totality. The regression from conditioned to

conditions was therefore 'set as a task' (ibid.: A498/B526) for reason. The need to draw the fragmented cognitions of the understanding together to generate knowledge is clearly a pressing one, and so can be seen as a legitimate goal of reason. Kant argues, however, that if this goal is to be achieved, a further assumption is required on the part of reason. That is, the task of seeking the pure unconditioned itself presupposes a subjective principle. In order to seek the unconditioned, we need to consider, on some level, the possibility of the unconditioned being attained. In fact, for any particular conditioned case, we can recognize that which conditions it, as in the case of a temporal sequence, whereby each moment can be understood as conditioned by the moment which precedes it. Every particular moment therefore has a condition in the preceding moment. In order to apply the principle that we must seek the unconditioned, we therefore make the further assumption that 'when the unconditioned is given, then so is the whole series of conditions subordinated one to the other, which is itself also given (i.e., contained in the object and its connection)' (ibid.: A307–8/B364). As the relation between a condition and that which it conditions is analytic (ibid.: A498/B526), and 'human reason is by nature architectonic' (ibid.: A474/B502), it is natural for reason to approach the conditioned in this way. Thus, it is a condition of the possibility of unifying the fragmentary knowledge of the understanding that such a unity can be given, or in other words, that it is possible to specify the unconditioned. While we need to *think* this notion in order for reason to accomplish its goal, the fact that we must think the unconditioned as given does not imply that the unconditioned actually is given. In this sense, the transcendental illusion is unavoidable. As Kant writes:

> This is an *illusion* which can no more be prevented than we can prevent the sea appearing higher at the horizon than at the shore, since we see it through higher light rays; or to cite a still better example, than the astronomer can prevent the moon from appearing larger at its rising, although he is not deceived by this illusion. (ibid.: A297/B355)

In itself, the transcendental illusion is not necessarily fallacious. Knowledge requires the Idea of a totality, and the necessity of the Idea of a totality makes it appear as if such a totality could actually be given, but as the examples which Kant brings up show, the presence of the illusion can be counteracted by the philosopher, just as the astronomer counteracts his subjective perception of the moon with his knowledge of the broader results of astronomy. This therefore leads us to the second aspect of Kant's

analysis of the antinomies. Given that the transcendental illusion is not in itself an error, what is it that leads us into the contradictions which we find in the antinomies?

We should first note that the recognition of the existence of a transcendental illusion does not seem to resolve the problem directly. Even given the presence of a transcendental illusion, we are still left with two contradicting propositions. In order to diffuse this difficulty, Kant proposes the strategy of highlighting an assumption shared by both the dogmatist and the empiricist. This assumption is that what is referred to by the concept of world are things in themselves.

> If the conditioned as well as the condition are things in themselves, then when the first is given not only is the regress to the second *given as a problem*, but the latter is thereby really already given along with it; and, because this holds for all members of the series, then the complete series of conditions, and hence the unconditioned is thereby simultaneously given, or rather it is presupposed by the fact that the conditioned, which is only possible through the series, is given. (ibid.: A 498/B526–7)

This is because both dogmatists and empiricists, in their conception of 'a synthesis of the mere understanding, which represents things *as they are* without paying any attention to whether and how we might achieve acquaintance with them' (ibid.: A498/B526–7) assume that the totality of things can be characterized in terms of an empirical synthesis which treats them as conditioned by space and time. This characterization opens the way to a possible solution to the antinomies:

> If two opposed judgements presuppose an inadmissible condition, then in spite of their opposition, which does not amount to a contradiction strictly so-called, both fall to the ground, inasmuch as the condition, under which alone either of them can be maintained, itself falls. (ibid.: A305/B531)

We can now return to the antinomy in order to see how this approach works. As we saw, Kant claims that the antinomy presents two possible conceptions of the world. The first empiricist conception sees it as infinite, with all conditions being empirical. The second, dogmatist (or Platonist) conception saw the world as defined as having a definite limit, or an intelligible beginning, leading to a finite set of conditions. If we reject the notion that what is referred to by the understanding are things-in-themselves, then we are given a third possibility; that is, that the predicates 'finite' and

'infinite' are necessarily tied to our empirical understanding of the world. The third possibility is therefore to reject this dichotomy: 'If I had said that the world is either finite or infinite, both statements might be false' (ibid.: A503/B531). This amounts to claiming that we cannot apply the predicates of appearance to the world as it is in itself. Thus, Kant relies on one of the key distinctions of transcendental idealism, that between appearances and things in themselves in order to diffuse the paradox. As the thing in itself falls outside of the world of appearance, it also falls outside of the categories of appearance. Given that the finite and infinite are concepts which apply to appearance, the thing in itself is neither finite nor infinite. The world, as the unconditioned, is therefore neither finite nor infinite, but rather a-finite, or non-finite. Kant characterizes this reinterpretation as a move from the analytical contradictories of transcendental realism to the dialectical contraries of transcendental idealism. It equally shows that a pure empiricism itself becomes dogmatic as, while it attempts to remain within the sphere of the empirical, it does so through the active assertion that the totality is the totality of appearance, thus asserting a positive metaphysics rather than simply bracketing rationalist assumptions.

This leads us to the final point of significance in Kant's treatment of the antinomies. This is that not only do they express the fact that something is problematic in taking reason to be inherently capable of conducting ontology, but furthermore, Kant believes that they provide a proof of his own transcendental idealist position. Thus he writes that:

> If the world is a whole existing in itself, then it is either finite or infinite. Now the first as well as the second alternative is false . . . Thus it is also false that the world (the sum of all appearances) is a whole existing in itself. From which it follows that appearances in general are nothing outside our representations, which is just what we mean by their transcendental ideality. (ibid.: A506–7/B534–5)

Looking back over the account that we have just given, several features will be of special importance to Deleuze's own philosophy. Of primary importance is the distinction between appearance and the thing in itself. We should note that as one of the strictures of transcendental idealism is that thought relates (determinately) to appearance, thought cannot determinately think the thing in itself. Instead, thought posits the noumenon. The concept of the noumenon is in the Kantian system left strictly undetermined, as to determine it through the categories would be to understand it in the same terms by which we understand appearance (this in fact occurs in dogmatism, which falls into error by attempting to think

beyond appearance using the categories of appearance). This does not mean that the noumenon is without significance. In fact, as the concept of the noumenon is the concept of something beyond appearance, even in its undetermined state, it serves to limit the pretentions of sensibility. While this structure will be mirrored in Deleuze's work, it will be understood instead as involving the dichotomy of representation and difference. The notions of the finite and the infinite will also be important for Deleuze, although instead of characterizing that to which thought relates (finite and infinite series of conditions), Deleuze will use them to characterize thought itself (finite and infinite thought). In spite of these changes, the idea of a transcendental illusion will maintain its importance for Deleuze, as will the idea of antinomy, although this antinomy will now be the antinomy of difference.

2. Deleuze, Representation and Difference

Turning to Deleuze, we should begin by noting that his relationship with Kant is ambivalent. *Kant's Critical Philosophy*, for instance, is written as 'a book on an enemy' (KCP: Translator's Introduction), but *Difference and Repetition* recognizes as well that he developed the tools for overturning what Deleuze calls the image of thought: 'for the concept of error, he substituted that of illusion: internal illusions, interior to reason, instead of errors from without which were merely the effects of bodily causes' (DR: 172). The image of thought refers to what Deleuze calls representational thought (a term we will discuss shortly), and in this respect, Deleuze's project bears a similarity to the Kantian aim of overturning the transcendental realist dogma that appearances are things-in-themselves. We can see this by looking at how Deleuze presents his project of clarifying the nature of the event in the *Logic of Sense*. Here, Deleuze claims that 'a double battle has the objective to thwart all dogmatic confusion between event and essence, and also every empiricist confusion between event and accident' (Deleuze 2001: 64). The event is one of Deleuze's terms for that which falls outside of representation, and here we see Deleuze explicating the difficulties of thinking the event using the same categories which Kant uses in formulating the antinomies. To fall prey to the dogmatic confusion would be to posit the event as something like an intelligible beginning, or the unconditioned which grounds the conditioned. In order to think such an idea, however, we need to apply the categories, which are the conditions of the possibility of sensible experience, beyond the realm of the sensible. To think

beyond appearance determinately, using the categories of the understanding, thus involves a category error, since the categories of the understanding only have validity when applied to the spatio-temporal world. Thus, the dogmatist, in characterizing the noumenal in terms of the categories, provides only the thought of essence. The dogmatist attempts to give a positive meaning to a term which for Kant can only have a negative employment as 'a limiting concept, the function of which is to curb the pretensions of sensibility' (CPR Smith: A255/B11). Concepts applied beyond their proper domain would be 'without sense, that is, without meaning' (ibid.: A240/B299). The notion of an event cannot be cognized as an intelligible ground for appearance, as to do so would be to understand the event in spatio-temporal terms. Similarly, for the empiricist, as the unconditioned is simply the totality of the conditioned, the event would have to be thought of as itself a feature of the empirical world. That is, it would have to be thought of as an *accident* within the world, in other words, simply as one property among others. In specifying the concept of the event, therefore, the empiricist has to reduce it to a state of affairs, denying the possibility of a beyond to appearances. Up until this point, Deleuze's analysis proceeds along Kantian lines. The event here seems to operate much like the noumenal in Kant's philosophy, in that it simply cannot be determined according to the categories which apply to appearance. In opposing brute empiricism, it also prevents the simple collapse of the totality into appearance itself. In this first, negative, sense, there is a parallel between transcendental idealism and transcendental empiricism, therefore, to the extent that both of these positions are opposed to what Kant characterizes as transcendental realism. There is, however, a sharp divergence between the two philosophies in regard to the status of the noumenal. Whereas for Kant, the noumenal is purely negative, as it lacks all spatio-temporal determinations, for Deleuze, while it also lacks all spatio-temporal determinations, it does not follow from this that it is completely indeterminate. Thus, Deleuze will give a positive signification to what can only be negatively determined for Kant. Deleuze frequently changes his terminology throughout his writings, and, while the event plays the role of the noumenon in *Logic of Sense*, in *Difference and Repetition*, the same problematic is taken up in terms of the question of difference. There, as we shall see, difference is construed as that which falls outside of representation, with representation taking a somewhat analogous position to transcendental realism in Kant's work.

In order to give a properly sufficient account of representation, a full study of Deleuze's relation to Aristotle would be needed, which would draw us far from our theme of Deleuze's relation to Kant. As an understanding of

representation is key to understanding Deleuze's relation to Kant, however, a brief sketch of Deleuze's characterization of it will be necessary. The 'constituted categories of representation' appear with Aristotle, according to Deleuze (DR: 155). What characterizes this representation is, for Deleuze, the generation of hierarchies founded on the concept of identity. While this allows us to formulate judgements about the world, it operates on the basis of excluding a moment of difference. It does this according to its four aspects of identity, analogy, opposition, and resemblance. In order to see how this is achieved, we can look at how a particular individual is determined. If we take an individual such as Caius, if we want to determine what he essentially is, we can do so by attributing predicates to him. Thus, to begin with, we may assert that Caius is a man. This provides one determination of Caius, but we can go further, by recognizing that the term 'man' can in turn be determined. Thus, a man is a type of animal. In turn an animal is a substance and so forth. While a concept of difference is clearly possible here – man differs from other animals – it is only in relation to this higher genus (the animal) that difference can be thought for Aristotle. That is, if there is not a ground of similarity, the difference becomes too extreme and becomes simple otherness. Thus, the determination of man is based on *identity* of genus. Furthermore, in order to make sure that determination is complete, the difference between man and other animals cannot simply follow a process of division such as that found in Plato. In the Sophist, for instance, the visitor divides things that swim into two classes: those with wings and those which live underwater (Plato 1997: 220b). Such a division clearly does not capture everything which swims. In order to avoid such lacunae, we therefore divide according to *oppositional* differences, such as between the rational and the non-rational, in the case of animals. Once we have these categories, we have to decide whether a given individual belongs to a particular species. While members of the species all differ from one another, their entry into the group is defined by their *resemblance* to the essential nature of the species. Finally, analogy comes in to solve a problem within the representational framework. Determination relies on difference, but each difference must be supported by an overarching identity. This means, however, that the highest genus cannot be determined, as this would require it to have a difference in relation to a genus above itself. Thus, the relations of the elements below the highest genus are not determined in terms of it, but instead through the concept of *analogy* with each other.[1]

This survey of representation has been rather brief, but it should allow us to ask the question, does representation produce a concept of difference?

If we look at individuals, we are clearly faced with differences (Socrates differs from Caius, for instance), but these differences are not *essential* differences. For Aristotle, as there are an infinite number of things, but only a finite number of words, determination has to take place at the level of the species, or the universal. Such individual differences fall outside of the hierarchy as purely accidental, and are therefore erased by the principle of resemblance. Similarly, there can be no concept of difference for the highest term in the hierarchy, the highest genus, as it does not differ in terms of a higher (identical) concept. In terms of what falls in the middle, we do not have a concept of difference, but a difference between concepts in the light of a higher identity. In fact, this lack of a concept of difference seems problematic both at the level of what Deleuze calls the large and the small. Identity seems unable to account for differences in the highest genus, or for differences in the individual. As we shall see, Deleuze does not want to characterize these failings as simple errors, however, but rather as the result of a transcendental illusion which necessarily arises for representational thought, that representation applies to the totality of what there is. The four 'principles' which we discussed in relation to representation are, according to Deleuze, four forms of this transcendental illusion (DR: 334). On top of this, there is another illusion generated by their combination: 'the ultimate, external illusion of representation is this illusion that results from all its internal illusions – namely that groundlessness should lack differences, where in fact it swarms with them' (ibid.: 347). We will now return to Kant to see how these illusions develop.

As we saw, Kant describes the process of reason's search for the unconditioned in terms of syllogistic logic. It operated according to a procedure which attempted to reach the unconditioned through a regression through conditions. Thus, the grounds for the judgement, 'Caius is mortal' was the universal judgement, 'All men are mortal'. As we saw, reason operates according to the model of judgement, and in doing so, relies on the concept of determination as subsumption of individuals under universals. As Deleuze notes,[2] Kant's conception of reason essentially conforms to Aristotle's doctrine of the syllogism, and it is as a consequence of this that reason generates transcendental illusions of representation. Now, if Kant is right, and the role of reason is to search for the condition of the conditioned through a regressive procedure, and this procedure operates according to the structures of syllogistic reasoning, then we will have two simultaneous effects. On the one hand, reason will presuppose the notion of a totality thus giving the illusion that the unconditioned can be given (the result obtained by Kant); on the other, as reason operates according

to the rules of syllogistic logic, this totality will be structured according to its 'four principal aspects . . . in so far as it is the medium of representation' (DR: 37). The illusion thus given will be that the totality of being must be subordinated to the principles of representation. The four internal illusions together aim to show that determination does not require difference. When combined together, however, we arrive at a further, external transcendental illusion. While it seems that we can always in practice find the condition of the conditioned, reason assumes that the unconditioned, as the totality of conditions, can be given. Just as reason totalizes conditions, since these conditions are understood representationally, representation is itself totalized. That is, reason assumes that all thought, and hence the world itself, can be comprehended by the categories of representation. Once reason has totalized representation, we have two ways of thinking the ground of representation. Either we conceive of it as itself representational, in which case, it can no longer function as the ground for representation, or we must conceive of it as a-representational, and as such, as lacking in any determinations whatsoever. Therefore, for reason, at least insofar as it is considered as representational – whatever falls outside of representation is strictly nothing, or, in Deleuze's terms, groundlessness lacks differences. Returning to the question of the event, we can therefore see that for Kant as well as for the empiricist and dogmatist, the event cannot be thought. While Kant may, on Deleuze's terms, give a diagnosis of the reason why the event cannot be thought, the totalizing nature of reason means that the nature of the event must remain undetermined.

3. Kant and Deleuze on the Antinomies

In this third section, I want to move on to look at the way in which the notion of antinomy itself is taken up by Deleuze. In particular, there are two aspects of Deleuze's usage of antinomy. First, Deleuze provides a critique of Kant's own use of the antinomies, arguing that ultimately his failure to understand the noumenon as determinate prevents a move beyond representation. In order to look at this, we will provide what will be a rather schematic account of Deleuze's interpretation of this antinomy as it applies to the calculus. More broadly, we can see that the opposition between the finite and the infinite, and the alternative hinted at by Kant in the antinomies, features strongly in the architectonic of *Difference and Repetition*, as Deleuze attempts to avoid both classical (finite) metaphysics and Hegelian (infinite) dialectics. We must recognize that the antinomical structure itself

cannot be seen as a direct refutation of finite and infinite representation, precisely because, as Deleuze recognizes, Hegelian dialectic itself operates antinomically: '[P]rofounder insight into the antinomical, or more truly into the dialectical nature of reason demonstrates any Notion whatever to be a unity of opposed moments to which, therefore, the form of antinomial assertions could be given' (Hegel 1989: 191).

In spite of this limitation on the scope of antinomical thinking for Deleuze, we should note that the finite–infinite distinction still provides a point of reference that allows us to situate Deleuze's own project.

We will therefore deal with this architectonic issue of the target of the antinomies first. *Difference and Repetition* attempts to provide a way of thinking beyond representation, and in doing so, it opposes two different types of representation. So far, in our descriptions of representation, we have dealt with what Deleuze calls finite representation, which is exemplified by the logic of Aristotle, and also by Kant. When we look at Kant's antinomies, although they operate according to the distinction between the finite and the infinite, we can see that they both operate according to the categories of the understanding. 'Reason does not really generate any concept. The most it can do is free a concept of the *understanding*' (CPR Smith: A409/B435). That is, at heart, both the dogmatist and the empiricist are operating according to the same model of thought: the subsumptive model of judgement. Reason generates different solutions to the problem of the world, depending on whether it assumed the series of conditions to be finite or infinite, but the essential operations of reason are the same in both cases. While such a mode of thought may relate to the infinite (as in, for example, experiences of the sublime), it is essentially characterized by itself being the thought of a finite subject. The second branch of representation is instead what Deleuze calls infinite representation. Infinite representation operates, according to Deleuze, by attempting to incorporate the moments of the large and the small within representation itself. Thus, for instance, Hegel attempts to show that the finite immanently contains the infinite, and *vice versa*. Rather than relying on fixed categories, Hegel instead attempts to incorporate movement into thought itself. The difference between the discussion of empiricism and dogmatism in Kant's philosophy and the infinite and finite forms of representation in Deleuze's philosophy therefore comes down to this: whereas finite and infinite are for Kant two positions understood as differing in content, for Deleuze, finite and infinite characterize two different images of thought themselves. Thus, rather than a first-order antinomy which operates within finite representation, Deleuze will work with a second-order antinomy of forms of representation

themselves.[3] It is this antinomy and its resolution which define the architectonics of *Difference and Repetition* as a whole.

We can now turn to the technical aspect of Deleuze's discussion of the antinomies. On the one hand, Deleuze criticizes Kant's treatment of the antinomies of reason, and on the other, Deleuze provides his own antinomies, formulated in terms of the concept of difference. Deleuze writes that Kant resolves the antinomies 'when on the one hand he discovers within representation an element irreducible to either infinity or finitude (regress); and on the other he adds to this element of pure thought another element which differs in kind from representation (noumena)' (DR: 226). Kant's concept of the noumenon cannot itself overturn representation as the noumenon merely represents the limiting concept of the sensible. As such, the Kantian noumenon only asserts that determinations are representational, and that that which cannot be represented lacks determinations. As the Deleuzian antinomy will be grounded in the question of difference and identity, Deleuze instead argues that it is possible to give a positive signification to the noumenal. As we saw, Deleuze claims that representation cannot formulate a proper concept of difference, as it subordinates difference to identity. This opens the possibility that if a concept of difference could be given which wasn't subordinated to identity (and hence fell outside of representation), we could give a characterization of the non-representational that did not lack all determinations: 'Difference is not phenomenon, but the noumenon closest to the phenomenon' (ibid.: 280). The question which Deleuze will therefore ask is whether it is possible for representation to develop a concept of difference. Since the aim of *Difference and Repetition* as a whole is to show that representation cannot, we can at most sketch the structure of Deleuze's approach to this problem from the perspective of the Kantian influences on its formulation. First, we should note that Deleuze agrees with Kant that '*[t]he entire alternative between finite and infinite applies very badly to difference*, because it constitutes only an antinomy of representation' (ibid.: 332). For Kant, the problem of the world, or the totality of conditions, was badly posed because transcendental realism either assumed that world, as the totality of conditions, was finite or infinite. In fact, the concept of world could not be formulated, as it was conditioned by the noumenon, which as undetermined could not be incorporated into the totality. Instead of focusing on the Idea of world, Deleuze will instead relate the problematic to the notion of difference.

The antinomy of representation is its inability to think difference. Just as the antinomy of reason in Kant's philosophy is expressed in particular antinomies, so in Deleuze's thought, the antinomy of representation

is expressed in the inability of either finite or infinite representation to think the concept of difference at the foundations of the differential calculus. Deleuze's use of the differential calculus allows him to give a positive interpretation to the concept of difference, as noumenon, which therefore allows him to posit *contra* Kant, the possibility of determinations which, while strictly nothing in relation to representation, are yet not strictly nothing.

While a formal study of the calculus would once again take us too far from Kant's own philosophy, we will give a simplified account of the calculus here in order to see how Deleuze uses it to give a positive account of the noumenon. We can begin by noting that the calculus involves the relation of quantities, such as we find in velocity. When we talk of a velocity such as miles per hour, or meters per second, the relation that we are talking about is a ratio of two terms. Thus, the velocity represents the distance travelled in a given time (however many meters in a second). If we want to work out the velocity of something travelling at a constant speed, it is simple enough to find by simply dividing or multiplying both terms of the ratio, thus if we travel ninety miles in two hours, we are travelling at 45 miles per hour. The calculus instead deals with cases where the ratio of two quantities is constantly changing, and this presents a difficulty. With the velocity of the body moving at a constant speed, we are dealing with determinate quantities: the distance travelled in a certain time. When the speed is variable, however, we cannot use this method – measuring a distance would give us an average velocity, whereas we require the specific velocity at a point. The difficulty is that we need to work out the velocity at an instantaneous moment, but as the body does not travel any distance in an instant, the two terms of our ratio, distance and time, would appear to be zero. More generally, this problem relates to any graph or function which relates two variable qualities to one another, and as such, rather than talking of meters per second, we talk of *dy* by *dx*, or *dy/dx*. The antinomy of the calculus can be formulated in more general terms as arguing that *dy* and *dx* must equal zero to capture the change at a point (making the ratio *0/0*), but *dy/dx* must have a determinate value to give the rate of change at that point. In other words, we can see the calculus as employing the notion of instantaneous velocity, the velocity of an object at a point, but velocity seems to rely on the distance covered in a (non-instantaneous) time.

For Deleuze, the fate of the differential in representation highlights the general antinomy of the impossibility of formulating a concept of difference within representation. The contradiction, that the differential must have a definite value, yet be equal to zero, is solved in two ways.

Finite representation gets rid of the notion of the differential altogether, replacing it with the notion of the limit. We no longer see *dy/dx* as a ratio involving infinitely close terms, but instead see it as the determinate value of the limit of a series of approximations of the ratio. As we are concerned with the limit of the series, we need not concern ourselves with whether the differentials themselves actually reach that limit. The approach of infinite representation is instead to understand the ratio as a vanishing. That is, *dy/dx* represents the movement itself of the differential annulling itself while it reaches zero, while still preserving a determinate value. The notion of vanishing which Hegel employs mediates the two moments of the determinate value (that which vanishes), and the *dy/dx = 0/0* (the having vanished). In both cases, according to Deleuze, the concept of difference is either simply removed, or reincorporated into representation. Deleuze's solution instead is to argue that the differential cannot be understood according to the categories of sensibility, and this is why it is not present in the solution to a differential equation, as the solution is given purely in terms of representation. As Deleuze writes, 'neither real nor fictive, differentials express the nature of a problematic as such' (ibid.: 225).

For Deleuze, the differential provides the possibility of a positive account of difference. As we saw, the Kantian noumenal operates purely as a limiting concept, preventing the pretensions of sensibility from applying beyond their legitimate ground. This was the problem with the dogmatist, for whom the noumenal was characterized in terms of the categories. If Deleuze wishes to give a positive characterization of the noumenon, it must be a concept which relies on none of the concepts of representation. In order to achieve this, Deleuze turns to the differential. In particular, in relation to *x* and *y*, *dx* and *dy* are strictly nothing. When combined with one another, however, they generate a determinate value, as both *dy* and *dx* equal zero, but *dy/dx* has a determinate magnitude. The symbol *dx* is therefore completely undetermined, fulfilling the Kantian criterion that the noumenal lack all determinations. When *dx* is combined with *dy*, however, the ratio that they form is determinable – that is, it provides a function through which the gradient, as a determinate number, can be found for each point on the curve. It is this feature of the differential which allows it to fulfil the requirements of his concept of difference. In other words, the fact that *dy/dx* must equal *0/0* representation (as it is velocity at an instant), despite the fact that it gives rise to representable results (determinate answers) shows that the differential must have both a determinate and non-representational value. Kant's concept of the noumenal had to be free from all determinations of sensibility. As such, it remained undetermined.

Deleuze's concept of difference remains free from all representational determinations. This is why, 'in relation to x [which for Deleuze here signifies representation], dx is completely undetermined' (ibid.: 219). Lacking all determinations of representation does not leave difference undetermined, however, precisely because each term is determinable in relation to each other. The differential provides the possibility for an understanding of difference which falls outside of representation.

The differential therefore plays the role for Deleuze of giving the noumenal a positive signification, and this generates a number of differences from Kant. To begin with, while reason internally generates transcendental illusions, it does so as a by-product of its unification of the fragmentary knowledge of the understanding. The fact that the noumenon has a purely negative role for Kant, as defining the limits of sensibility, means that ultimately, according to Deleuze, representation is not overturned by Kant.

> To the extent that this pure thought remains undetermined – or is not determined as differential – representation, for its part, is not really overcome, any more than the propositions of consciousness which constitute the substance and the details of the antinomies. (ibid.: 226)

What Deleuze means by this is that since the problematic element of representation, the noumenon, is not determined, Kant has no choice but to retain the dichotomy of determination as representation and the non-representational as undetermined. This is why the problematic element is thought as undetermined – that is – undetermined according to the principles of representation. A corollary of this is that, taken up in the wider setting of *Difference and Repetition* as a whole, the problem is always understood in terms of the solution within representation. Deleuze's characterization of the differential instead tries to steer a line between on the one hand maintaining its determinacy, while on the other, not resorting to any spatio-temporal terms in its determination. It is for this reason that Deleuze opposes the reading of the differential as infinitesimally close to a particular term put forward by Leibniz, as this infinitesimal still maintains the grain of sensibility within it. By doing so, he hopes to accept Kant's strictures on the determinations of the noumenon while opening up a space beyond representation.

The positive determination of the noumenon instead allows Deleuze to posit a 'sub-representative element' (ibid.: 226) that allows us to characterize the problematic. This in turn allows us to set up the monism–dualism

of Deleuze's dichotomy problem–solution, or virtual–actual. In this regard, we need to note two interrelated features. First, representation is not itself illusion.[4] Rather, 'representation is a site of transcendental illusion' (ibid.: 334). As we saw in the analysis of Kantian reason, representation has a tendency to totalize itself. That is, as representation systematizes knowledge, it presents the illusion that the given is entirely representational. While it totalizes itself, it therefore cuts itself off from its genetic conditions (which for Deleuze are differential, and therefore sub-representational). This is inevitable, as in any particular case, a representation can be related to another representation, and so it appears that representation can provide a complete determination of the world. Representation fails to recognize the reality of the non-representational, but this error cannot be resolved by a simple inversion. Perhaps the simple dualism does not hold, however as recognizing determinate differential and genetic conditions of representation must inevitably change our understanding of the nature of representation itself, and its categories such as negation.[5] Just as we found with Kant, however, we should note that the recognition of a transcendental illusion as a transcendental illusion does not remove it, and for this reason, philosophy must always beware of the sedimentation and the incorporation of the concept of difference within representation.

Conclusion

While this study of some of the relations between Kant and Deleuze has been brief, it has allowed us to see that Kant's study of transcendental illusion and the antinomies plays a vital role in the architectonic and argumentation of *Difference and Repetition.* In particular, the debate between finite and infinite representation is formulated by Deleuze as an antinomy. There are some important differences, however. In particular, Deleuze's antinomy does not involve two arguments which directly contradict one another, and in fact it could not do. Hegel is the great exemplar of infinite representation, and as is known, his method itself proceeds antinomically. Thus, Deleuze's argument itself relies on the reality of a form of difference outside of representation, in some ways inverting the structure of Kant's antinomies. The rejoinder of infinite representation, therefore, is simply to deny the reality of such a form of difference. Luckily, Deleuze does not simply rely on the tools available within the Kantian system, and indeed, aligning him too closely with Kant risks, for instance, occluding the whole domain which exists between pure virtuality and actuality, thus depriving

Deleuze's account of it's genetic ambitions. It does allow us to see that while the term 'transcendental' in transcendental empiricism may be contorted by the influence of other members of Deleuze's philosophical retinue, such as Spinoza, Nietzsche and Bergson, it still retains something of its Kantian origins.

Notes

[1] As Deleuze notes, the concept of analogy proper in fact emerges in scholastic metaphysics.

[2] 'Understanding judges, but reason *reasons*. Now, following Aristotle's doctrine, Kant conceives of reasoning in a syllogistic way' (KCP: 18).

[3] It is for this reason that the problem of Deleuze's interpretation of the calculus is badly posed if he is interpreted as siding with modern (finite) interpretations against Hegel, even if the modern interpretation considered is that of hyperreal numbers. Duffy, for instance, makes this error:

> Deleuze . . . establishes a historical continuity between Leibniz's differential point of view of the infinitesimal calculus and the differential calculus of contemporary mathematics thanks to the axioms of non-standard analysis which allow the inclusion of the infinitesimal in its arithmetisation; a continuity which effectively bypasses the methods of the differential calculus which Hegel uses in the Science of Logic to support the development of the dialectical logic. (Duffy 2006: 74–5)

[4] I am thinking in particular of Peter Hallward, and, for example, his claim that 'Deleuze's fundamental idea, in short, is that if being is creativity, it can only fully become so through the tendential evacuation of all actual or creaturely mediation' (Hallward 2006: 2). Grier, in her study of transcendental illusion in Kant, shows that a similar error has also often been made in interpreting the transcendental dialectic, leading to the equation of transcendental illusion with transcendental realism. (See, in particular, Grier 2001: chapter four). Statements by Kant such as the following provide strong evidence for her reading: 'The transcendental dialectic will therefore content itself with exposing the illusion of transcendental judgements, and at the same time take precautions that we are not deceived by it' (CPR Smith: A298/B355). Grier argues that the failure to distinguish between illusion and deception in Kant's account generates the interpretative error.

[5] In fact, Deleuze does argue that concepts such as negation do not have a proper place in representation, properly conceived. In arguing this point, Deleuze relies on another branch of post-Kantian thought, the intuitionist mathematics of Griss. Intuitionism follows Kant in arguing that mathematical objects are not simply given all at once, and tries to draw the consequences from this. Brouwer, the founder of the school, argues, for instance, that we cannot prove a proposition simply by proving that the negation of that proposition is false, as to do so would be to presuppose a form of mathematical Platonism, whereby the

proposition to be proved pre-exists the proof itself. The most we can say, on Brouwer's account, is that the negation of the proposition is false, thus leaving the truth value of the proposition indeterminate. Griss goes further than Brouwer's constructivism by arguing that we cannot talk about mathematical objects which do not exist (as in propositions such as 'the square circle does not exist'). In order to remove the concept of negation from mathematics, Griss tries to formulate the concept of difference in terms which do not rely on negation. Thus, instead of the inequality of two numbers being defined in terms of negation, they are defined as being 'apart' from one another. Similarly equality is not defined as the negation of apartness, but instead by the theorem that 'if every real number c that is apart from a is also apart from b, then a = b' (Heyting 1956: 94). Deleuze cites this example approvingly (DR: 294), but further argues that Griss' work itself was limited by a failure to understand the nature of the problematic (DR: 327). Deleuze's criticism of Griss therefore echoes his earlier criticisms of Kant.

Chapter 8

Transcendental Idealism, Deleuze and Guattari, and the Metaphysics of Objects

Michael J. Olson

The critical injunction inaugurated by Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* has been widely interpreted and pursued in the development of both analytic and continental philosophy as a rejection of the misguided speculations inherent to theoretical metaphysics itself. We will argue that the famous 'Copernican Turn' should not be taken as a rejection of theoretical metaphysics in favour of a more modest and psychologistic philosophical program, but remains at its heart fundamentally metaphysical. If the limitations of knowledge articulated in transcendental idealism hinge on Kant's distinction between things in themselves and things as they appear in thought (and this is of course a central distinction separating Kant from Leibniz), the issue at hand is not at all foreign to metaphysics, but can indeed be seen as the central question of general metaphysics: what is it to be a thing? The distinction between things in themselves and things as they appear in thought calls into question the pre-critical metaphysics of objectivity not by bracketing the metaphysical nature of the question in order to secure the practical results of Newtonian science, but by deepening the inquiry. If Descartes, Locke, Berkeley, and Leibniz contest the substantiality of objects – do the objects of thought reliably refer to mind-independent material reality? – Kant defers the question of the nature of substance in order to question the conditions of the emergence of substance in objects – how does an object come to be an object?

Although Kant's own articulation of the conditions of objectivity has resulted in a *de rigueur* association of critical philosophy with anti- (or at least deflationary) metaphysical positions, recognizing the legacy of a critical philosophy based essentially on the questioning of the grounds of the objectivity of objects will allow us to better understand the relationship between contemporary attempts to articulate a sophisticated philosophical materialism and the tradition of transcendental thought.[1] By casting

Kant's critical philosophy as a meditation on nature of objectivity in general, we propose to indicate the ways in which even those contemporary thinkers most opposed to the subjective finitism of Kantian critical philosophy (Deleuze is no doubt the front-runner here) continue to work within the philosophical rubric established by the first *Critique*. And so I will argue that the return to classical metaphysical questions in twentieth century French philosophy can be productively understood and furthered not only as a return to pre-critical philosophy, but as a robust engagement with the metaphysical grounds of the emergence of objects, which has all along been a motivating concern of the Kantian project.

After briefly arguing that the possibilities of transcendental philosophy in its concern for the constitution of the objectivity of objects are not exhausted by the subjectivism of Kantian idealism, the bulk of the essay will be devoted to analysis of what we see as the site of one rearticulation of the transcendental analysis of objectivity: Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus*. Although this text does not explicitly address the question of the metaphysics of objects, we argue that the passive syntheses of desire articulated there can be extended in their scope to provide an account of the production of objectivity that is at once transcendental and materialist. We will conclude the essay by noting the ways in which this materialist metaphysics transforms the familiar transcendental framework of Kantian criticism. In the end, then we will produce out of Deleuze and Guattari's text a transcendental materialist response to what Kant considers the highest question of metaphysics: what is an object?

1. Kant and the Question of the Object

We will first address the issue of the centrality of Kant's concern for the objectivity of objects in order to establish that transcendental philosophy (in it's Kantian manifestation, at the very least) is not necessarily bound to a metaphysics of subjectivity. We will begin by referring to some of the central sections of Kant's critical writings that treat the objectivity of objects in order to develop a sense for his concern for the metaphysics of objects, and will then argue that Kant's final, critical account of the subjective constitution of objects can be separated from the more fundamental question of the conditions of the possibility of the production of objects as objects. This will indicate both that critical idealism, far from rejecting metaphysics in the name of epistemology, remains inseparable from an investigation of objects as such and, more importantly for contemporary

philosophy, that this transcendental engagement with metaphysics is neither exhausted by nor inextricably bound to the central tenets of Kant's subjective idealism.

Before proceeding to the problems of the first *Critique*, we will refer briefly to the lectures on metaphysics Kant gave during the critical period. A reading of student transcripts of Kant's metaphysics lectures from the beginning of the 1780s through the middle of the 1790s, which became available starting only in 1968,[2] provides an interesting view of Kant's understanding of the relation between transcendental idealism and traditional metaphysics. In order to frame the metaphysical motivations we would like to recover from the first *Critique*, we will first make a few comments about these lectures. Ontology, Kant maintains throughout his lectures on metaphysics, is a systematic and *a priori* account of the nature of beings or objects in general.[3] The first and highest concept of the science of metaphysics in Kant's mind is, then, not possibility, as Wolff and Baumgarten maintained, but the concept of the object as such. And we cannot write off Kant's remarks in these lectures as non-critical reflections on the prevailing Leibnizian-Wolffian metaphysics of his day; Kant in fact calls our attention to the continuity of ontology (and metaphysics more broadly) with his own critical philosophy when he remarks in the introduction to his 1794/95 metaphysics lectures that 'Transcendental philosophy is also called ontology and it is the product of the critique of pure reason' (Kant 1983: 949). The metaphysical propaedeutic provided by the *Critique of Pure Reason*, in other words, provides the philosopher with the proper training to begin a suitably grounded investigation into general metaphysics, whose most important undertaking is to understand the objectivity of objects with reference to the transcendental conditions of the emergence of objects as objects in the field of knowledge. The position repeatedly presented in these lectures runs against the sentiment, popular in the reception of Kant from the eighteenth through the twentieth century, that transcendental idealism intends to supplant metaphysical pretensions with 'empirical realism' or, worse yet, a ill-considered faculty-psychology. Rather, the *Critique of Pure Reason* attempts to ground metaphysics in the systematic principles of reason in order to avoid the intractable disputes of the history of dogmatic metaphysics and unambiguously determine the scope of a genuinely scientific metaphysical investigation.

Metaphysics, which Kant understands to be the science of the principles of reality, cannot be carried out with reference to experience precisely because it describes the unconditioned ground of experience, and so must be a science of pure concepts. Human knowledge, however, can never be

extricated from experience, and so metaphysics must be prevented from devolving into the mere groping at concepts:

> This situation yields, however, just the very *experiment* by which, indirectly, we are enabled to prove the truth of this first estimate of our *a priori* knowledge of reason, namely, that such knowledge has to do only with appearances, and must leave the thing in itself as indeed real *per se*, but not known by us. (CPR Smith: Bxx, emphasis added)

The distinction between objects of appearance and things as they are in themselves, introduced here in the B Preface as the experimental apparatus that organizes the first *Critique*, offers Kant's opening, but not his final, engagement with the question of the constitution of objects. If the modern rationalists and empiricists take the problem of establishing the metaphysical character and epistemological grounding of the relations between objects as their central concern – with suggestions as wide ranging as Leibnizian pre-established harmony, Malebranchean occasionalism, and Humean psychological associations offered as solutions – Kant recognizes that the more fundamental question of the constitution of the object itself must be broached before the possibilities of its relations – whether to other objects or to thought – can be robustly analysed. Taking a cue from Berkeley Kant famously insists that we can have no experience of objects as they are in themselves, but only insofar as they appear in thought. Thus, the distinction between noumena and phenomena – a distinction that appeared already a decade earlier in the 'Inaugural Dissertation'[4] – is mobilized as a way of problematizing what an object is in the first place. The noumena/phenomena distinction was earlier used to distinguish between the metaphysical objects of pure thought and the empirical objects of experience, but when Kant in the first *Critique* modifies the opposition in order to indicate that objects of experience are not unaffected by their subjective representation, the question of just what an object of experience is becomes central. For a metaphysics rooted in divine creation the nature of an object cannot be terribly vexing: an object is something created by god, and *ens creatum*; its unity and coherence proceed from its divine creator. Without the divine constitution of objects on the one hand, and without immediate access to objects themselves on the other, Kant is forced to account for the ground of the existence of objects as we experience them. By insisting that things in themselves cannot be known, and so cannot immediately communicate their unity as distinct objects in the first place, Kant raises the question of the subjective constitution of the objectivity of objects.

Kant of course addresses the mechanism of the emergence of objects as objects, and more importantly the objective legitimacy of this emergence, in what he perhaps rightly claims to be the most difficult and the most important section of the *Critique*, the Transcendental Deduction. The necessary task of the Deductions is to establish an 'explanation of the manner in which concepts can thus relate a priori to objects' (CPR Smith: A85/B117). The objects to which the *a priori* uses of the categories are applied, however, are only constituted as objects after this same application has been accomplished, so in his attempt to describe the emergence of objects as objects Kant has recourse neither to the objects as they are in themselves – by the terms of his experimental exclusion of noumena – nor to objects as they appear in experience – for it is precisely the genesis of the objectivity of these objects that is in question. In order to account for the most basic concept of philosophy, a concept that had gone more or less uninterrogated in the history of modern philosophy, Kant recognizes the inability of both German rationalism and British empiricism to ground the most fundamental concept of metaphysics and so suggests the transcendental solution.

'Transcendental', in Kantian terms, is of course most generally taken to indicate an inquiry concerned with the subjective conditions of the possibility of experience or knowledge. More rigorously, though, Kant explains what he means by the term by saying: '[The propositions of a transcendental philosophy] contain nothing but the rule according to which we are to seek empirically for a certain synthetic unity of that which is incapable of intuitive representation a priori' (CPR Smith: A720/B749). Transcendental philosophy begins by recognizing the insufficiency of experience to explain or ground its own possibility. The world as it appears is not the ultimate philosophical court of appeal precisely because it is unable to ground its own appearance in the mere fact of its existence. That is, we will never attain a rigorous metaphysical understanding of objectivity by reflecting upon or abstracting from empirical facts. Transcendental philosophy, then, posits a set of operations or syntheses that subtend empirical experience and generate the objectivity of objects of experience. It is because the transcendental positing of these syntheses can be neither witnessed in nor verified by the facts of the world that a Deduction is needed. The *a priori* syntheses that transcendental philosophy posits as independent of experience must be protected from the charge of dogmatic assertion. This fundamental gesture of transcendental philosophy – the positing of genetic operations unavailable to empirical verification – also problematizes the possibility of maintaining the distinction between dogmatic and critical metaphysics it is intended to delineate.

Of course it is not as simple as that. The transcendental syntheses posited and legitimated in a transcendental argument are not themselves objects and so Kant is by no means dogmatically claiming to have access to the same objects that occupy the Leibnizian or Lockean analyses. We must nonetheless maintain that the principles of the spontaneous activity of the transcendental unity of apperception are indeed asserted by Kant in something like a dogmatic manner – the important difference being that while Leibniz takes himself to be describing metaphysically real objects, Kant is describing the operations of the pure, spontaneous activity of the knowledge of real objects. If dogmatic metaphysics attempts to describe objects without reference to the mediating activity of thought that constitutes these objects as objects in the first place, then Kantian criticism, precisely in order to explain the emergence of these objects as objects through the mediation of thought, cannot help but assert its unmediated access to the *a priori* synthetic activity that makes the empirical consideration of objects as objects the thought that it is. That is, rather than asserting immediate access to objects as they are in themselves, transcendental philosophy asserts its immediate access to the syntheses that make objects objects in the first place.

We can see in outline that Kant's transcendental idealism is a prolonged – and as Heine would have it, terroristic[5] – confrontation with the nature of objects as such. This realization should not, however, be taken as a philosophical end in itself. It rather reveals an opportunity to take up the Kantian project in a way that can productively engage with its assets while rejecting its liabilities. We think that an unwillingness to separate Kant's proposed solution to the problem of the genesis or emergence of objects as objects from the robust and philosophically productive transcendental framework he constructed in the course of elaborating his solution does us a great disservice. The pure spontaneity of the transcendental ego that Kant posits as the animating kernel of his transcendental idealism, around which his attack on dogmatic metaphysics is organized, as we have briefly indicated, is itself bound up in a more complicated form of dogmatic metaphysical assertion. Instead of rejecting the larger transcendental armature, though, it will be more productive to acknowledge and embrace the dogmatic positing of non-empirical syntheses necessarily contained in this kind of transcendental argument. If we can see that critical metaphysics cannot ultimately and completely ground itself, are we not then free to consider alternative collections of *a priori* syntheses? That is, Kant directs transcendental philosophy in a particularly subject-centred direction by positing subjective syntheses as the ground of the objectivity

of objects. However by positing alternative operations – for example, the unconditioned productivity of nature, as Schelling does in his *First Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature* (Schelling 2004) or the three syntheses of desiring-production Deleuze and Guattari develop in *Anti-Oedipus* – the humble, epistemological inclinations of Kantian thought can give way to a form of thought that combines the sophistication of the transcendental structure with an axiomatic materialism we deem necessary and that Kant would reject as dogmatic. In Kant's response to the impasses of early modern philosophy we can see how that dogmatism has been shifted away from a description of the nature of objects themselves and onto the transcendental activity that grounds the emergence of those objects as objects.

Although transcendental philosophy often appears to be essentially tied to the subjective principles of Kantian epistemology it is clear, first, that within Kant's writings themselves there remains an overarching concern for the ontological nature of the object as such and, second, that nothing within the structure of transcendental arguments themselves necessitates their limitation to their explicit Kantian employment. We will now turn to a very different philosophical context in order to see how Deleuze and Guattari inherit Kant's concern for the transcendental production of the objectivity of objects and replace his ideologically charged subjectivism with a politically motivated materialist metaphysics. This materialist repetition of the Kantian problematic will indicate, in the end, the positive political potentials that lie dormant in the subtle dogmatism of transcendental philosophy.

2. Desiring-Production and the Constitution of Objects

The forgoing discussion of the ontological concerns of critical idealism has suitably established the separability of the transcendental framework of that thought from the highly subjective dogmatic kernel of its specifically Kantian articulation. We will now turn to the introductory chapter of Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus*, 'The Desiring-Machines', to see how a transcendental account of the metaphysical constitution of objects can be carried out without relying on the centrality of the spontaneity of the subject. Deleuze and Guattari's development of the idea of desiring-production, we will see, offers an overtly materialist metaphysics of the process of production of the real without abandoning the transcendental framework created by Kant. While Kant places the transcendental unity of

apperception and the synthetic operations of the Deductions at the heart of his transcendental architecture, Deleuze and Guattari replace the primacy of subjectivity with the synthetic connections, disjunctions, and consummations of desiring-machines.

Before reconstructing the descriptions of the machinic constitution of objects offered in *Anti-Oedipus* we must first acknowledge the interpretative pressure we are applying to the text. Deleuze and Guattari take as the two organizing poles of the text the psychoanalytic account of individual desire, action, and neurosis and the Marxist analysis of the socio-economic determination of collective or political desire and activity. Mediating the influence of Marx and Freud presented considerable difficulty for much of French philosophy in the twentieth century because of the apparently opposing claims in these traditions regarding the primacy of social and individual experience respectively. The stated goal of the text, then, is to produce a philosophical description of the ultimate unity of the these two traditions in the concept of desiring-production,[6] which 'is one and the same thing as social production' (AO: 32). This task is carried out in the text, as one might expect, with analyses of individual desire and socio-political formations on the basis of their common root in desiring-production. Our interpretation of the concept of desiring-production departs from the specific philosophical and social context of *Anti-Oedipus* by setting out to extend Deleuze and Guattari's analysis of machinic production in order to see how it not only has produced the subjects of psychoanalytic and capitalist control, but how it additionally provides an account of the constitution of objects. We insist that this extension is justified by the text insofar as the concept of desiring-production is determined from the beginning to undercut the divisions between nature and industry, man and nature, and the self and the non-self (AO: 2, 4–5). If the elimination of these distinctions serves to unify the genesis of the individual and the social, it no doubt at the same time sets the stage for the unification of the process of the production or genesis of both subjects and objects, which is to say that it also undercuts the distinction between subject and object in the name of production. As Deleuze and Guattari write:

> man and nature are not like two opposite terms confronting each other – not even in the sense of bipolar opposites within a relationship of causation, ideation, or expression (cause and effect, subject and object, etc.); rather they are one and the same essential reality, the producer-product. (AO: 5)

With these brief remarks serving as an initial justification of this extension of desiring-production perhaps we should turn to our understanding of the machinic production of the objectivity of objects as producer-products.

The first and central chapter of *Anti-Oedipus*, 'The Desiring-Machines', lays out the metaphysics of machinic production that Deleuze and Guattari will utilize throughout the rest of the text to develop a 'schizoanalysis' of contemporary social and psychological situations and patterns. The language of this chapter is accordingly fitted to the twin objects of its eventual analysis, Freud and Marx, and as such can at times obscure the wider relevance of the concept of desiring-production that it describes. The concept of desire at work here must first be clearly distinguished from a subjective understanding of desire according to which an individual desires some thing, x, that she lacks. Such an understanding centred on the driving force of lack, Deleuze and Guattari remind us, is inextricably bound to an idealist metaphysics that cannot but fail to grasp the positive production that their materialist analysis is attempting to uncover. If desire is not, then, a desire for some absent thing – that is, if desire is not a negative movement toward a state of complementary totality – it must instead be seen as a purely positive production. And if this positive model of desire is not to lapse back into a repetition of the idealist model, the object of desire cannot be essentially different than or removed from the seat of desire itself, which leads Deleuze and Guattari to claim that '[d]esire is a machine, and the object of desire is another machine connected to it' (AO: 28). Desire is not a subject's desire to satisfy its needs or fill its lacks; desire is rather a machine, a non-personal mechanism of production. We clearly need now to flesh out their understanding of the term machine.

Most importantly, and also most generally, Deleuze and Guattari explain that 'Everything is a machine' (AO: 2). And so if 'desire is a machine', as we just saw, and 'everything is a machine', then an understanding of the metaphysics of *Anti-Oedipus* requires the realization that in this text desire is given a highly expanded scope: desire is not properly human and nor is it proper to life; *everything* is desire. Psychological and social life are determined by machines of desire, but so are ordinary physical objects. I am composed of desiring-machines, this table, my coffee are composed of desiring-machines. 'Everywhere *it* is machines', they say, 'real ones, not figurative ones: machines driving other machines, machines being driven by other machines, with all the necessary couplings and connections' (AO: 1). This passage does not simply reiterate the previous statement that everything is a machine; it sharpens and expands the point. It is not precise enough to categorically state that everything is a machine. Here we read

that it, id, *ça*, the unconscious, is everywhere composed of machines. The unconscious is not, however, my unconscious or your unconscious; it is an unconscious that precedes the distinction between subject and object, it is everything that precedes, subtends, and produces subjects as subjects and objects as objects. The table and the coffee are determined by the processes of 'the' unconscious – 'What a mistake to have ever said *the* id' (ibid.) – just as much as human individuals and communities are. We must first see that we are working with an entirely non-anthropomorphic concept of desire. Our question persists, however: what exactly is a machine?

In the ordinary sense a machine is a component in the process of production that, given a certain material and energetic input, transforms the given material and prepares it for the next stage of production (consumption is of course not removed from the process of production but is really just another stage in the process) through the expenditure of energy. Thus, a table saw rips rough lumber down to size by drawing on labour-power and electricity and prepares it to be squared and refined at the planer. When Deleuze and Guattari discuss desire as a machine – that is, when they discuss desiring-machines – they have something very similar in mind. A desiring-machine – as opposed to a technical or ordinary machine – is a component in the process of production that operates by connecting to a flow of material or energy provided by another desiring-machine, transforming that material by drawing off energy, and passing the transformed material on to another desiring-machine as a new flow. The important difference between the regimes of technical production and desiring-production is this: the product of technical production is a specific kind of object, the commodity, and a specific kind of subject, the subject of capitalism; desiring-production, on the other hand, produces objects and subjects as such. Already with this preliminary explanation we are getting ahead of ourselves. A machine (whether a technical machine or a desiring-machine) is an agent or active component of production, but the way a machine contributes to the process of production can only be understood with reference to 'all the necessary couplings and connections' (ibid.) that constitute production as a process.

Just as the Kantian account of the subjective constitution of the objectivity of objects through the activity of the transcendental ego proceeds by a series of specific and interrelated syntheses, the process of the production of objects by desiring-machines is by no means simple or homogeneous. 'Desire', Deleuze and Guattari explain, 'is the set of *passive syntheses* that engineer partial objects, flows, and bodies, and that function as units of production' (AO: 28).[7] We have here the clearest indication of the relation

between desire and machines in *Anti-Oedipus*. If everything is both desire and a machine, this is because machines are inseparable from the set of syntheses that relate them. Desire is not, then, identical with machines, but is the active, productive syntheses of desiring-machines. Desire, in this case, is not a human activity being subreptively misapplied to non-human agents and then varnished with a claim to have advanced the cause of a non-anthropomorphic metaphysics. Desire on this model is the articulation – the organization, disorganization, and reorganization – of the process of machinic production. This articulation is effected by three syntheses that, although analytically separated and logically ordered, are in the process of production always overlaid and simultaneous. The three syntheses that articulate the objects of the world are the synthesis of connection, disjunction, and consumption or consummation.

Objects are not themselves desiring-machines, but are produced through the synthetic relations between desiring-machines, and so the process of desiring-production must begin with a series of connections between these machines. The first or 'productive synthesis, the production of production, is inherently connective in nature: "and . . ." "and then . . ."', Deleuze and Guattari explain, 'This is because there is always a flow-producing machine, and another machine connected to it that interrupts or draws off part of this flow (the breast – the mouth)' (AO: 5). The binary quality of the connective synthesis, the way in which one machine provides a flow or supply of material energy that is interrupted, transformed, or drawn off by a second, does not indicate that machines are either flow-machines or interrupting-machines. The interrupting-machine in one binary connection is immediately connected to a third machine in relationship to which it is now the flow-machine. Returning to our previous lumber example, we can see that the table saw interrupts or transforms the flow of lumber supplied by a logging-machine and at the same time, in a second binary connection, acts as the source of a flow of rough-cut lumber that is differently interrupted by its connection to the planer. Using their preferred organic example Deleuze and Guattari write:

> The machine produces an interruption of the flow only insofar as it is connected to another machine that supposedly produces this flow. And doubtless this second machine in turn is really an interruption or break, too. But it is such only in relationship to a third machine that ideally – that is to say, relatively – produces a continuous, infinite flux: for example, the anus-machine and the intestine-machine, the intestine machine and the stomach-machine, the stomach-machine and the mouth-machine,

> the mouth-machine and the flow of milk of a heard of dairy cattle ('and then . . . and then . . . and then . . .'). (AO: 39)

At its most basic level production is the connective synthesis of a series of desiring-machines, which explains why the connective synthesis is also referred to as the productive synthesis and the *production of production.* And this production would be severely limited if the binary connection established between two desiring-machines exhausted the connective or productive possibilities of those machines, and so the connective synthesis leads beyond itself, which is to say that it produces what Deleuze and Guattari call anti-production as an integral component of production itself. That is, the connective synthesis produces a second, disconnective or disjunctive synthesis.

This second passive synthesis, the synthesis of disjunction, remains fundamentally productive despite the fact that its product is a disarticulating or anti-productive one. At the same time that desire produces connections between machines and thereby sets productive flows of energy in motion it also produces a resistance to these connections, and if these connections are the basis of production, then this resistance must be recognized as a moment of anti-production. The fact that desiring-machines are organized or articulated by the connective synthesis already indicates that these machines can also be disconnected or disorganized. Deleuze and Guattari flesh out this activity of disconnection, which appears as a resistance to organization, by linking it to what Artaud calls the body without organs. Although the resistance produced in the body without organs makes it appear as if desiring-machines are primordially isolated, unconnected, and disorganized, we must recognize the way in which this illusion of the primacy of disconnection and anti-production over connection, organization, and productivity is produced by the more fundamental productivity of the connective synthesis.

As we said earlier, the productivity of the connective synthesis would be curtailed if the connections it established were permanent and unchanging. In order to increase its productivity – that is, in order to increase its capacity to create binary connections between machines – desiring-production also severs the connections established by the first synthesis. These disconnections serve to increase production by allowing for the creation of new synthetic connections between previously unconnected machines. Thus, the series of binary connections between the logging-machine and the table saw and the planer can be severed such that the rough-cut lumber-flow of the table saw can be alternatively connected to a

joiner rather than a planer or the rough-cut lumber-flow can be connected directly to a home construction machine to produce a quaintly rustic aesthetic. In any case, if the first series of connections coupling (the wood to the table, saw to the planer) was not disconnected, these alternative series of productive connections could not be achieved.

The resistance to or disarticulation of productive connections is not, however, the only function of the disjunctive synthesis. Desire, as we have seen, produces an active resistance to its connective syntheses, and in doing this is produces a specific site on which this resistance is carried out. This site, the so-called body without organs, resists the articulation and organization of desiring-machines but also maps the series of connections that it resists. By mapping or recording the connections that it is produced to interrupt, the activity of the body without organs appears to shift. In the act of recording the syntheses it resists 'the essential thing is the establishment of an enchanted recording or inscribing surface that arrogates to itself all the productive forces and all the organs of production, and acts as a quasi cause by communicating the apparent movement . . . to them' (AO: 13). When the body without organs records the series of synthetic connections between machines it makes the reorganization or different articulation of these series possible. As connections are recorded with a view to their eventual disruption '[m]achines attach themselves to the body without organs as so many points of disjunction, between which an entire network of new syntheses is woven, marking the surface off into coordinates, like a grid' (AO: 13). It is on this grid that the disjunctive organization of connections is carried out. This machine could be connected to that one *or* that one *or*... The disjunctive creativity of the recording surface of the body without organs causes it to appear to be the source of the connective productivity and obscures the more fundamental role of the production of production that creates the body without organs as a site of resistance in the first place. This is the source of the traditional conception of desire as lack: things are originally separated and desire to be secondarily connected to or unified with their complements. This account falls prey to the 'miraculating' function of the body without organs and fails to see how the anti-production of the disjunctive synthesis is both itself a product of connective syntheses and is an agent in the broader activity of desiring-production.[8]

The twin syntheses of connection (and . . . and . . . and . . .) and disjunction (or . . . or . . . or . . .) slide into and feed off each other in the process of the production of production, but we have not yet made any discernable progress in our attempt to understand how desiring-production produces the objectivity of objects. The final synthesis will indicate how

the first two syntheses are consummated in the production of objects, which are nothing other than the consumption of the products of these syntheses. So now we turn to the third and final passive synthesis of desire, the synthesis of consumption or consummation.[9] Just as the connective synthesis produces the body without organs as a resistance to and recording of the proceeding connections, the third synthesis, which Deleuze and Guattari also call the synthesis of conjunction, is produced out of the disjunctive synthesis. As desire moves beyond the production of connections into that of disjunction it produces a tension between organization and disorganization, between connection and separation, *and . . . and or . . .*, and it is this tension that serves as the material for a conjunctive synthesis. The conjunctive synthesis binds a desiring-machine in its connection to another machine with that desiring-machine's simultaneous separability from the second machine and possible connection with a third, forth, or fifth. The conjunction of the collection of actual and virtual connections of a given desiring-machine produces in this moment an object as object. That is, a conjunctive synthesis constitutes the objectivity of an object as the collection of connective possibilities that organize and reorganize the desiring-machines that determine that object as the specific object that it is. Objectivity is the product of the synthesis of the connections and disjunctions of an array of desiring-machines.

Connection operates as a grammar of *and . . . and . . . and . . .*, disjunction as an *or . . . or . . . or . . .*, and conjunction synthesizes these two as it proclaims: *so it's . . .* . The synthesis of a series of connections and disjunctions produced around a specific desiring-machine constitutes the identity of an object, the characteristics of which are determined by the specific connective possibilities of the machines that compose it. Returning to our lumber example, this time focusing on the tree that supplies our initial flow of lumber. We can see that the tree functions, or can function, as a nesting-machine for animals that connect to it in the forest, a food-machine for fungi and bacteria that would feed of it were it to die, a timber-flow for the logging-machine, and so on. No one of these connective possibilities alone constitutes the tree as the object that it is, but when all these possibilities are synthesized we can see in the multiplicity of the machinic functions that objective character of the tree: *so it's* a tree. It is not the set of properties predicated of the tree as substance that determine the series of binary connections of which it is capable. It is rather the series of connections and disjunctions into which a desiring-machine enters that produce the tree as phenomenal object. This is how desiring-production constitutes the

objectivity of objects. An object is the product or residuum of the synthesis of a set of actual and virtual connections and disjunctions of a desiring-machine in relation to an array of other desiring-machines. The object produced in this synthesis is no doubt a strange object, to paraphrase Deleuze and Guattari's subjective formulation, one 'with no fixed identity, wandering about over the body without organs, but always remaining peripheral to the desiring-machines' (AO: 17). But of course this object is also a very plain object – an object like any other – because we fail to notice this process of production because it operates in the non-phenomenal realm of transcendental production. The identity of objects is not premised, on this model, on the transcendent unity of its substantial essence or on the transcendental unity of apperception that synthesizes it as a correlative objective unity. It is instead the product of a multiplicity of actual and virtual connections, the multiplicity of which is not reduced to a unity in the conjunctive realization that it's a . . . The objectivity of the object, which is to say its identity as an object, is not the centre of gravity in its productive connection with other objects; rather the identity of object is the orbit of the connections and disjunctions possible for a set of desiring-machines. By way of summary Deleuze and Guattari offer:

> Let us trace it along a first path (the shortest route): the points of disjunction on the body without organs form circles that converge on desiring-machines; then the subject [and we would add, the object as well] – produced as a residuum alongside the machine, as an appendix, or as a spare part adjacent to the machine – passes through all the degrees of the circle, and passes from one circle to another. This subject [or object] is not at the center, which is occupied by the machine, but on the periphery, with no fixed identity, forever decentered, defined by the states through which it passes. (AO: 21–2)

We see in this passage just how extraneous the object as object is to the process of desiring-production. It is a mere spare part or excrescence of the productive syntheses of desire that constitute it. On the phenomenal level of an object experiencable as such the object is cut from the productive activity responsible for its genesis. And we will now flesh out how this distance is the site of the distinction between the transcendental and empirical levels or regimes of Deleuze and Guattari's analysis in order to see how they are taking up and crucially modifying Kant's attempt to account for the conditions of the possibility of the objectivity of objects.

3. Conclusion: A Materialist Transformation of Transcendental Philosophy

The result of the operations of desiring-production that we have just reviewed is not an account of how a certain type of objects, desiring-machines, relate to each other in the form of substantial predication, causality or reciprocal determination. The syntheses of desiring-machines do not simply creatively describe the manner in which subjects and objects relate to each other on an empirical level. These syntheses are Deleuze and Guattari's attempt to articulate the process of the production of objects in general, not this or that object, but the objectivity of objects. That is, we have here an example of a transcendental materialism. To substantiate this claim we must differentiate desiring-machines from ordinary objects in order to see how the former serve as the transcendental condition of the possibility of the latter. As we describe the transcendental structure of desiring-production, however, we will also see that the character of the traditionally idealist transcendental structure is altered by the materiality of desiring-machines. The examples that we have used to explain the passive syntheses of desire are without doubt phenomenal examples that elide the distinction between desiring-machines and objects. Although everything is a machine that does not mean that all desiring-machines are objects. That is, machines operate at both the empirical and the transcendental level, or in what Deleuze and Guattari call the regimes of technical production and desiring-production. This presence of the transcendental condition in and among the conditioned objects is a necessary consequence of the materialist pressure exerted on the transcendental framework. Deleuze and Guattari explain, 'Production as process overtakes all idealistic categories and constitutes a cycle whose relationship to desire is that of an immanent principle' (AO: 5). If the idealism of the traditional conceptions of desire is to be overcome, the separation between desire and the object that it lacks must be eliminated by making the object of desire immanent to desire itself, by understanding desire as the simultaneous production of itself and its object. A similar instance of transcendence must be addressed in Kantian transcendental philosophy. As long as the principle of determination of the phenomenal world is noumenally separated from the historical and natural world it produces, that world will remain ideally and ahistorically constituted by a quasi-divine transcendence. So if Deleuze and Guattari are to take up transcendental thought in a materialist way, the transcendental condition – what we have been referring to as the dogmatic, ungrounded kernel of transcendental philosophy – must be

immanent to the world it conditions. This is the first and most important materialist deformation of the Kantian use of the transcendental: the transcendental is now immanent to the empirical.

But how is the immanent relationship between desiring-machines and the objects they constitute transcendental? It appears as if the analysis has slipped into something like a physicalist causal account of the, admittedly complex, relation between things. A brief consideration of the infinite multiplicity of desiring-machines will indicate the necessity of the transcendental framework in understanding *Anti-Oedipus*. There are in Deleuze and Guattari's explanation no fundamental or atomistic desiring-machines: 'every machine is a machine of a machine' (AO: 39). If every machine or moment of production is itself composed of further machines and further moments of production, then there can be no ultimate unity at the heart of production. 'Unity' is always a product, a product of the infinite multiplicity that subtends its existence. Deleuze and Guattari explain:

> It is only the category of multiplicity that, used as a substantive and going beyond both the One and the many, beyond the predicative relation of the One and the many, that can account for desiring-production: desiring-production is pure multiplicity, that is to say, an affirmation that is irreducible to any sort of unity. (AO: 45)

There is on this account no unity. Objects and subjects that appear to have a certain 'unity' or identity only do so by obscuring the multiplicity of desiring-machines that determine them. The identity or coherence of objects – that is, the objectivity of objects – emerges only when the pure, productive multiplicity that constitutes that identity as a product retreats. The objectivity of the tree we have been discussing can be further analysed to see the way in which it is itself composed of a series of desiring-machines or objects (branches, leaves, proteins, organic molecules, etc.). And this additional series of machines, which, as objects, have a certain produced identity, is itself produced by the activity of another desiring-production. There is no ultimate objective constituent of the material world, but the world is nonetheless materially constituted. To prevent an infinite regress that might invoke a Thomistic theological return, the metaphysics of desiring-production employs a transcendental distinction. Whereas the Kantian distinction separates the phenomenal and noumenal spheres, Deleuze and Guattari's transcendental materialism – since it is not organized around a loosely phenomenological subjectivity – distinguishes between the spheres of production and product. Returning to the

definition of transcendental philosophy, we saw earlier that this account of desiring-production does not give us the strictly empirical rules through which the 'unity' of empirical objects as such is produced, and so remains fundamentally transcendental.

This transcendental differentiation between the pure activity of production and the relative passivity of the product does not repeat the transcendent subjectivism of its Kantian precursor, however. The severity of the division between the phenomenal and noumenal realms is guaranteed by the transcendence of the transcendental unity of apperception from the phenomenal world it determines. We have already seen, though, that Deleuze and Guattari replace this transcendence with the immanence of the condition in the conditioned. Pure productivity, desire, the transcendental condition of the objectivity of objects, is not separated from its products. Products are themselves productive, that is, objects are not stable, self-identical entities; they are always partial objects or producer-products. Deleuze and Guattari explain this by saying that the whole, the transcendental principle in their analysis, is itself another part among the objects it determines. This transcendental materialism accounts for the whole of objectivity but does not totalize it; 'rather, it is added to [the objects it determines] as a new part fabricated separately' (AO: 46). The transcendental materialism contained in Deleuze and Guattari's concept of desiring-production does not neutrally account for the totality of objects in its transcendence from those objects, it unifies the objectivity of objects as a transcendental productivity immanent to them.

And now we turn to the political and ethical stakes implicit in our earlier realization that the dogmatic animating kernel of transcendental philosophy can be changed or replaced without eliminating the transcendentality of the larger structure. If, as we have seen, transcendental thought must be organized around a productive principle that is not itself provided by that transcendental structure, then how does one choose one particular dogmatic kernel? Deleuze and Guattari see clearly the politico-ethical dimension of this necessary moment of transcendental philosophy.[10] Since transcendental philosophy is one machine-object among others we are returned to a question posed in the opening pages of *Anti-Oedipus*: 'given a certain machine, what can it be used for?' (AO: 3). Deleuze and Guattari's development of the concept of desiring-production in the following chapters of that text show us what this new transcendental materialism can be used for when it is connected to the discourses of psychoanalysis and Marxism. What remains to be worked out is what political and ethical effects are produced when this machine is applied to the metaphysics of objectivity.

Notes

[1] The last half-century of philosophical thought has seen a series of concerted and ongoing efforts to elaborate a satisfactory materialist position. Among the texts contributing to this project we would specifically identify: Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Alain Badiou, François Laruelle, and Louis Althusser.

[2] For an excellent history of these lectures see Karl Ameriks and Steve Naragon's 'Translator's Introduction' to Kant 1997. References to Kant's lectures will refer to the Prussian Academy edition: *Kant's Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 28, 1st half (Kant 1968); vol. 28, 2nd half, 1st part (Kant 1970); vol. 29, 1st half, 2nd part (Kant 1983). Citations will refer to volume number and page number.

[3] See in Kant 1997, for example, Mongrovius' notes from Kant's 1782/83 lectures at 29:784, Vigilantius' notes from the lectures of 1794/95 at 29:960, and the Pölitz notes from the 1790/91 lectures at 28:543.

[4] Immanuel Kant, 'On the Form and Principles of the Sensible and the Intelligible World [Inaugural Dissertation]' in Kant 2003: 373–416.

[5] 'If, however, Immanuel Kant, the great destroyer in the realm of thought, far surpassed Maximilian Robespierre in terrorism, the two, on the other hand, had certain similarities, which invite us to compare them' (Heine 2007: 79).

[6] AO: 31–2. Deleuze and Guattari invoke Wilhelm Reich here asking, 'why do people still tolerate being humiliated and enslaved, to such a point, indeed, that they actually want humiliation and slavery not only for others but for themselves?' The failure of Reich's analysis, however, lies in the separation he maintains between the rationality of social production and the irrationality of desire. To overcome this failure, then, Deleuze and Guattari must produce an explanation that is at the same time social and individual, that is, that synthesizes the insights of both psychoanalysis and Marxism without subordinating one to the other.

[7] We should not be misled by the designation 'passive'. These syntheses are labelled passive, following Husserl, in order to mark that they are not part of the intentional activity of a phenomenological subject. These syntheses are indeed active, but the agent of this activity is desire in the expanded sense already discussed, not human consciousness.

[8] Deleuze and Guattari's dogmatic insistence on the positive or productive nature of desire is shown in this analysis to be more than a stubborn rejection of a traditional understanding of desire. Their productive model of desire can account both for the articulation of the phenomenon of desire in all its manifestations and the genesis of the traditional misunderstanding of desire as negative from out of the miraculating function of the body without organs. This is a prime example of the way in which what we have referred to as the dogmatic kernel of transcendental frameworks is not ***merely*** dogmatic in the sense of an unreflected assertion. The lack of a critical ground for such a dogmatic kernel does not at all impede the rigor of the philosophical thought it inaugurates.

[9] The French word *consummation*, as Deleuze and Guattari's translators point out, means 'consummation (as of a marriage); an ultimate fulfillment or perfection; and consumption (as of raw materials, fuel or products)' (AO: 18n). The final synthesis is then both the consumption of the products of the previous syntheses and the consummation or result of their productivity.

[10] Heidegger also notes this dimension of the metaphysics of objects, though he does not locate it specifically in the structure of transcendental thought. He writes:

> The answer to the question 'What is a thing?' is different in character. It is not a proposition but a transformed basic position or, better still and more cautiously, the initial transformation of the hitherto existing position toward things, a change of questioning and evaluation, of seeing and deciding; in short, of the being-there (*Dasein*) in the midst of what is. (Heidegger 1969: 50)

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(See Note on Abbreviations and Translations Used.)

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