Deleuze's Critique of Hegel: Answering the Charges of Stephen Houlgate

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Abstract

For Hegel, within the category of Being, difference is portrayed as diversity of the species of different beings, whereas for Deleuze Being *is* difference. Hegel's assertion that negativity is an immanent quality in the determination of Being, that it is innate in the very essence of Being, is turned around: Deleuze asserts that the negative is the product of existence itself, a post facto determination not found in Being as such. Deleuze presents an intriguing and novel alternative to Hegelian negative dialectics, and this alternative is a new interpretation of difference and its role in ethics and ontology. By presenting Deleuze's ethical-political position, and in providing Stephen Houlgate's criticism of it, this will give us the opportunity to present the scaffolding of Deleuze's ontology as it bears directly on a critique of Hegel's conceptual difference. I argue that Deleuze's affirmative difference is a more feasible means of understanding the real conditions of experience than Hegel's logic of negation.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

It is not so much that French philosopher Gilles Deleuze harboured a special enmity against Hegel: more toward a “history of an error,” a bankruptcy in the understanding of difference through an intransigent and seductive appeal to negation. The notion of the underprivileged position of the Other and difference-as-negative has pervaded and occupied much of French postwar thought, but perhaps most concretely in Deleuze where the altercation is brought forcibly back into the history of philosophy. In this meticulously organized attack, Deleuze’s strategy is to enlist a plenum of allies to challenge the predominance of the Hegelian tradition. Rather than pit one philosopher or philosophical doctrine against another to perform a crude synthesis, Deleuze instead relies on a more dynamic technique endemic to his view of philosophy as a fluid series of stylistic encounters and as a process of concept creation. Above all, Deleuze is a philosopher of immanence, and although Hegel may be viewed in this light as well, Deleuze will assert that his affirmative philosophy of immanence is closer to what Spinoza had in mind. The primary occupation of philosophy, says Deleuze, is concept creation. This view, as will become manifest, allows for both a philosophical and non-philosophical understanding of philosophy, a philosophy as both imbued with, and a creative engine of, concepts. This emphasis on the invention of concepts rather than a fixed complicity with them as rigid installations in any philosophical attempt to ground an *Urdoxa* will elucidate the divide between the Hegelian and Deleuzian projects, where the negative concrete fixity of the former is emended to by a positive freedom of a difference in itself of the latter.

Although the charges Deleuze levels against Hegel are numerous, each requiring their own special analysis,¹ we must restrict ourselves to the issue of difference while employing a rather cursory contextual overview of these ancillary charges. It is our contention that the issue of the reformulation of empiricism forms the central nexus of Deleuze's critique of Hegel, without which the other charges would be little more than a scattered constellation of commentaries lacking rigour and profundity. The emphasis we place on this issue is supported by the motif of what is at stake in this debate: the role and character of difference in metaphysics, and difference in general. Without carefully examining this issue of difference as either affirmative or negative, the remainder of Deleuze's criticisms have very little purchase in the domain of a truly thorough and satisfying Hegel-Deleuze debate.

Essentially, Deleuze's critique will span the gap between two generations of French interpretation of Hegel. Deleuze will criticize Hegel on the basis of logic and epistemology. Deleuze's vision of Hegel as it appears in his 1962 text, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* gives a caricaturized portrait of Hegel, and it will not be until his later opus in 1969, *Difference and Repetition*, that he will undertake a more even-handed and sober critique.

Let us reiterate that Deleuze himself would not be concerned about feeling responsible for "strengthening" his critique of Hegel, for he is inventing a way out. However, let this be our task. What would happen if we set Deleuze's ontological critique against Hegel's? How can we make it more rigorous? We are called upon to keep

¹¹ And it is to either the credit or discredit of this rather ambitious undertaking to not only trace the contours of the Hegel-Deleuze problem, but to suggest certain emendations to strengthen Deleuze's critique of Hegel. As Brusseau notes, somewhat tongue-in-cheek, to enumerate the flaws commentators have spotted throughout what can be deemed Deleuze's careless interpretations of Hegel would "be a book in itself." See James Brusseau, *Isolated Experiences: Gilles Deleuze and the Solitudes of Reversed Platonism*, p. 23.

particular questions in mind: What hinders or weakens Deleuze's critique of Hegel? What would strengthen it? It is precisely our return to Hegel's *Logic* that Deleuze must address, and it is precisely in *Difference and Repetition* where this critique is engaged.

Ostensibly, our aim is not only demonstrate how Deleuze's theory of forces in his more encompassing theory of transcendental empiricism functions as a stand-alone critique of Hegelian metaphysics, but to defend Deleuze against the powerful criticisms of noted Hegel scholar, Stephen Houlgate. It is no exaggeration that the entire exposition presented here is built on and around these criticisms of Deleuze's understanding of Hegel, and we hope to demonstrate where we feel that Houlgate's arguments against Deleuze does not portray a complete appreciation of Deleuze's own inventive point of view. Moreover, our aim is to render more accessible Deleuze's theoretical aims that may have been lost in the polemical and at times tempestuous climate of interpreting Deleuze. We hope, by a sober and modest exposition that connects Deleuze's critique to the particular movements in Hegel's metaphysics, that a broader understanding of the whole will result.

It is essential that we here sketch out the problem field prior to fully embroiling ourselves in the oft times insurgent or outright frustrating theoretical connections and disparate terms between the two thinkers under our care. This difficulty is further compounded by a flurry of sometimes vitriolic and polemical critics on either side of this debate, to which end it is our hope that we may clear the simooms of rhetorical dust and give charitable attention to the arguments both Hegel and Deleuze warrant, respective of their differing projects. And although we are almost called upon to write an apologia on behalf of Deleuze—indeed a less recognized figure in the history of philosophy—we will

not engage in an overt and insulting palliation of Hegel scholars any more than we will of Deleuze scholars. To this end, however, it is to the Hegel scholars' charges that we must answer.

The prejudice against or indifference toward Deleuze's critique of Hegel among Hegel scholars is due in part to two major problems: one *historic* and the other *thematic*. The historic dimension of this problem concerns a lack of coherent and rigorous understanding of Deleuze's critique of Hegel, including the terminological nuances and neologisms Deleuze himself imports and utilizes in his philosophical enterprise. The thematic dimension centers on Deleuze's increasing silence on the issue of Hegelianism and lack of a thoroughgoing critique of Hegel in terms of the *Logic* rather than the *Phenomenology of Spirit* that has limited or compromised his position as a suitable critic of Hegel, and so therefore does not satisfy the keen demands of Hegelian scholarship and criticism.

The strategy we will employ is threefold. In the second chapter we will furnish the readers with the main ideas that grant Deleuze his methodology for a critique of Hegel encapsulated by two major claims, thereby also giving a survey of his terminological creations and how these differ (conceptually and in application) from Hegel's. In chapter three, we must field the critical objections made by Houlgate who has three major criticisms with Deleuze's (mis)handling of the Hegelian project. And lastly, in chapter four, we will bring Deleuze's critique on Hegel to bear on the specific issues of conceptuality, difference, the virtual-actual couple, and empiricism, we will bring by way answering Houlgate's criticisms of Deleuze. In sum, the method will take form as thematic exegesis, exposition of critique, analysis and assessment. The structure of this

thesis is limited precisely to Deleuze's two most important criticisms of Hegel in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, followed by Houlgate's three counter-claims in relation to the two initial claims, and finally what we have isolated as four major theoretical areas that function to answer Houlgate's three criticisms and bolster the two initial Deleuzian claims made in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*.

The two most salient terms we hereby retain as essential to our discourse are what Deleuze means by *transcendental empiricism* and the process of *immanence*. It is our contention that these two key terms in Deleuze's oeuvre will not only open up a robust and fecund means of critiquing the Hegelian system, but will also serve in framing Deleuze in his appropriate historical context in relation to the history of philosophy.

Methodological Problems

If we are to approach the sophisticated and thorough Hegelian system with a handful of criticisms, we cannot perform this task carelessly, nor can we approach it with anything less than a high degree of fairness and modesty. That is, we cannot conclude that Deleuze's critique is correct, that it successfully overturns a philosophical system as powerful and systematic as Hegel's. It would be rash of us to make such an assumption, for the very root of any frustration we feel before the towering monolith of Hegel's system is based on his undeniable rigour and the methodical composition of this system. What frustrates us about Hegel is this: not only is his system nearly impregnable to refutation, but that for the most part Hegel had already within the elaborate construction of his system anticipated most of the objections we could conjure against it. It is indeed a high stakes poker game where Hegel sees all your cards even before setting down a bet.

And any serious philosophical attempt to refute Hegel shows just how imposing and formidable a figure he remains in the history of philosophy.

“Like other closed systems of thought, Hegel’s philosophy avails itself of the dubious advantage of not having to allow any criticism whatsoever.”² Adorno continues by enumerating the two principal methods of criticizing Hegel which, when borne out, fail for what we may deem inherently dialectical reasons: firstly, criticism of the component and constitutive aspects of Hegel’s philosophy disregards criticism of the whole, and secondly, criticisms of the whole (in an effort to reduce Hegel’s philosophy to a manageable set of explanatory maxims for easier cross-examination) are too unmediated and abstract.³ Therefore, the Hegelian two-pronged strategic defense against the invasion of criticism is to rely on the part and whole method: take issue with the part, lose sight of the whole, and vice versa. It is to this charge made by Adorno that contemporary philosophy must respond so that we do not find ourselves, in Foucault’s words, at the end where Hegel waits for us.

If we are to hold Deleuze accountable for a not merely proximate critique, he will need to invent a means to avoid the whole-part paradigm of the Hegelian system that resists such crude frontal assault. And, indeed, if Deleuze’s *explicit* claims against Hegel are to be taken seriously, we are obligated to force him to be as rigorous as possible, to be honest and meticulous about exactly *what* his grievances are, and *how* he is going to defend his claim contra Hegel. Otherwise, who is Deleuze but another insurgent taking pot shots at Hegel, making brazen and cavalier claims without suitable rigour to

² Theodor Adorno, *Hegel: Three Studies*. Trans. Shierry Weber Nicholson (MIT Press:Cambridge, 1999) 2.

³ Ibid 2.

substantiate them? Or just as damning: another philosopher whose reading of Hegel is horribly mistaken, sloppy and reactionary?

Perhaps it is to Deleuze's credit that he does not find himself locked in a direct slugfest with Hegel, that he invents this new way around and away. However, these inventive methods for either getting beyond or forgetting Hegel—and we here suspend the question of how successful these methods may or may not have been, for this may be contingent upon how we define success: in either predominantly Hegelian or non-Hegelian terms—will not serve as satisfactory measures of criticism or suitable answers for core Hegelian scholars. It would be simple—and perhaps unfairly facile—for Hegelian scholarship to regard Deleuze's method of indirect critique as weak and unrigorous...An instance of Caligula tossing spears into the English channel, collecting the sea shells as booty and symbol of triumph, and declaring that all of Britannia is conquered. In sum, a false critique, hesitant to tackle the serious philosophical issues head on against the most crafty, meticulous, and intimidating of philosophers.

In a sense, Adorno's work on Hegel may be critical enough to "bring back" Deleuze's critique to the "master's table." It is not that Deleuze needs to be "redeemed" to a position which he had not initially or subsequently sought for his own philosophical project, but it just may serve as a constructive bridge that may span the incredible and still perplexing distance between Hegel scholars and the ambitious contributions made by Deleuze. This almost brazen task of reconstructing Deleuze's critique as a frontal assault no doubt portrays a certain double inequality: 1. A revisionist enterprise performed in Deleuze's name is a forcible attempt to place Deleuze in the type of critique he sought to

avoid; 2. That to do this assumes that Deleuze must be “clarified” or thrust into a recognizable position contra Hegel to appease the demands of Hegel scholars.

However this is parceled out, no reconstruction is possible that would be both fair to Deleuze’s philosophical aim to not directly confront Hegel on his own terrain *and* satisfy the demands of prevalent Hegel scholarship. But yet it is our task to illustrate Deleuze’s critique so that it may be viewed more fairly, especially insofar as both Hegel and Deleuze employ similar terminology and are both dealing with the most salient and fundamental philosophical issues. This operation may appear to blunt or misdirect Deleuze’s intentions, but we feel that it still must be conducted as an experiment, even if this means that we are forcing a meeting between Deleuze and Hegel neither would endorse. One of the most persistent problems that we face is that of language: although Hegel and Deleuze share many recognizable metaphysical terms, the ways in which they are articulated radically differ in nuance and application. If we cannot fully overcome this problem, we can at least aim for approximations or overlapping instances that will make our operation at reconstruction as amenable and charitable for both thinkers being rounded up in this relation. As Hardt states, “we find that Deleuze often poses his project not only in the traditional language of Hegelianism but also in terms of typical Hegelian problems—the determination of being, the unity of the One and the Multiple, and so on.”⁴ Hardt’s argument that to compare Hegel and Deleuze in such a fashion misses the point, so we will rather contend that an argument of his type evades a certain responsibility on the part of Deleuzians to perform a rigorous critique of Hegel, and that it merely acts as an apologia for Deleuze’s perplexing silence on the issue of Hegelianism

⁴ Michael Hardt, *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy*, (University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, 1993) xi.

as his career advanced. The other option is to rather bring Hegel into the Deleuzian circle of ontology and ethics: a circle with no truly distinct division between the two.

Our method will entail a patient analysis of Deleuze's major theoretical contributions that seemingly conflict with the Hegelian program. By delineating what Deleuze means by Difference, Being, and Thought, as well as to illustrate how his development of these classical terms in metaphysics figure into his two main puissant strategies aimed at destabilizing Hegelianism (transcendental empiricism and counter-actualization), the debate between Deleuze and Hegel will emerge in its clarity. Once this has been performed, we may then indicate the problematic areas in Deleuze's critique and suggest ways in which it can be strengthened. We already have a host of problems that require our attention viz. Deleuze's critique of Hegel: how does Deleuze modify empiricism despite his deep engagement with rationalism? Does he give ample textual evidence against Hegel, or is his view merely dismissive and laden with anti-State slogans? Is Deleuze merely romanticizing difference? How does his metaphysics carve itself off from a more epistemological reading? Can Deleuze's transcendental empiricism, which he only mentions in full within *Difference and Repetition*, truly answer the charges Hegel lays at the feet of scientific empiricism? These, and other questions will emerge as we negotiate our way through the thicket of Deleuze contra Hegel.

Chapter 2: Nietzsche and Philosophy, Round One of Deleuze Contra Hegel

Nietzsche and Philosophy is one of Gilles Deleuze's earliest and most polemical assaults against Hegelianism wherein he works out, in the spirit of the French "Nietzsche revival", his own philosophical aims. Although the text is not primarily against Hegel, the critique of the Hegelian dialectic is a predominant feature. One great merit of the text is Deleuze's own appropriation of Nietzsche's typology of forces, *ressentiment*, the true nature of critique, will to power, and eternal return, all of which become part of Deleuze's philosophical toolkit and serves as a critical pivot against Hegelianism. However, it is also perhaps the most controversial of Deleuze's texts in terms of his claims on Hegelianism. We will not at this time address criticisms that Deleuze's interpretation of Hegel in this key work is a facile misreading or that he conflates the Hegel of the *Logic* with the Hegel of the *Phenomenology*. What is immediately essential is that we present Deleuze's "case" against Hegel and identify the problems that form the very nexus of this debate. Ultimately, the core features of this debate will concern the nature of Being, Thought, and Conceptuality. Firstly, that the "movement" of Hegel's Being cannot, by the process of negation, truly be internally differential and affirmative as a concept. Secondly, Deleuze will claim that Hegel's conception of thought is a dogmatic image of thought, and that such methods of negative determination in thought cannot produce new ways of thinking. In short, the problems Hegel poses are formed on the side of what Deleuze will view as the reactive dogmatic image of thought that does not know how to truly interpret and evaluate existence. It follows from this assertion that a badly posed problem will lend itself to baggy or deficient concepts. Deleuze will not

reproach Hegel's "concept" of being improperly transcendental, but he will not agree that negation is the true immanence of the determination of Being.

Hegel may be a false revolutionary, for he assumes that the revolution has already happened, and the false glamour of the negative that masquerades as a revolutionary critique merely reiterates all the gains made of a prior revolution that had inaugurated what was, in his day, the system of established values. Hegel appears merely to give these values a metaphysical backing, a coherent system within which they fit, all to justify existence in accordance to the aims of Church and State. If he had engaged in *true and total* critique, according to Deleuze, he would have both *challenged* rather than reiterated established values through evaluation, and would have formulated his critique affirmatively rather than rely on a principle of negative determination to interpret phenomena. In sum, Hegel would not have relied on simply making a catalogue of symptoms, but would have truly engaged the most crucial task of philosophy: to question all known values and to create new concepts. If what we have just said is inflammatory, then the task will be to demonstrate the meticulous process by which Deleuze will justify his own attack against Hegelianism. This culminates in perhaps one of Deleuze's most devastating assessments of Hegelianism: "The being of Hegelian logic is merely 'thought' being, pure and empty, that affirms itself by passing into its own opposite. But this being was never different from its opposite, it never had to pass into what it already was. Hegelian being is pure and simple nothingness."¹ This statement serves as a capstone to Deleuze's critique of Hegelianism, and contained within it are the two major claims we will herein present and elaborate: that Hegel's understanding of Being moved

¹ Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. Trans. Hugh Tomlinson. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983) 183.

up to contradiction does not take under consideration the affirmative and internally differential character of Being, and that his thought *of* Being is too dogmatic. Both of these claims function as demonstrating Deleuze's philosophical commitment and, more importantly, as signifying two salient problems which are a culmination of all the subset of problems Deleuze has in reference to Hegelianism. We will first provide a summary of Deleuze's main ideas and then consider how these particularly signify a critique of Hegelianism. Let us retain that we are first considering Deleuze's *ethical-political* viewpoint, and that in the fourth chapter we will consider how his ontology provides the framework for his view.

Deleuze wants to demonstrate the importance of Being as difference, and he aims to do this by elaborating a theory of forces. This theory of forces will prove essential in his critique of Hegelianism. The major Deleuzian ideas that we will present are as follows: genealogy as a non-dialectical way of posing the question of Being, the theory of forces (which details the importance of the body as a mode of Being's expression as a Being of the sensible), the role of chance and necessity in the eternal return, and the importance of transvaluation and the new image of thought as the outcome of genealogical inquiry. In these claims there is some overlap and reiteration, which, owing to a crossover of themes in Deleuze's critique of Hegel in terms of Being and Thought may be pardonable insofar as they compose a delicate critique with a dual nuance. That is, the will to power is one such theme that is repeated in both claims, but with slight differences that merit their separation despite their collaborative congruity to the overall critique of Hegel that Deleuze has in mind.

Rather than to take issue immediately with Hegel within the bounds of the particularities of his metaphysics, Deleuze returns to the art of posing the question of Being differently, i.e., in a non-dialectical way. Deleuze lauds the Nietzschean method of genealogy for expressing and posing the nature of the question of Being, and doing so without giving the same high degree of primacy to Thought as Hegel appears to. To pose the question differently, to investigate the underlying forces and the ordering principle of the will that expresses these forces precedes our thinking of Being, and rather motivates us to ask the question of Being without being complicit with an inadequate image of thought. This is essential in Deleuze's proposal for a new image of thought which, in sum, means to view Being or "the real" differently. However, before any assertions can be made on the notion of Being, the genealogist must perform the most critical task of posing the question without resting upon certain assumptions of Thought such as identity, recognition, judgement and analogy which traffic in the representation of Being as afforded by the privileged status of Thought. The art of genealogy in getting at the very heart of the question of Being is not the type of phenomenological investigation that attempts to ground a presuppositionless science, but is of a different order: an examination of forces and of the will.

Genealogy "does not deny essence; it makes it depend, in each case, on an affinity of phenomena and *forces*, on a coordination of force and *will*. The essence of the thing is discovered in the force which possesses and is expressed in it, it is developed in the forces with affinity for this first one, endangered or destroyed by the forces which are

opposed in it and which can take hold of it.”² Genealogy, as method, is not concerned with categorical Being *per se*, but with the forces that express it, and the will that appropriates it. It goes beyond asking “What is Being?”, by asking a more “transcendental” question of *what forces express Being?* and *What will appropriates this Being?* In response to the question of which force expresses or which will appropriates, it is the will to power that answers—either negatively or affirmatively depending on its *quality*. The will to power is what wills, interprets the forces and their qualities, evaluating on the basis of *nobility* or *baseness*, rather than *good* and *evil*, *useful* and *not useful*. The question of essence that asks “what is...?” of Being is insufficient to gain purchase on the true *pluralist* essence of Being. In its place, genealogy offers “which one?”, interpreting and evaluating forces to apprehend Being as the *being of the sensible*. It is this question of “which one?” that exposes to us the sense of the thing in its true import, by its true genealogical link to the forces that appropriate the thing.

The importance of genealogy is precisely in measuring the value of origin and the origin of value.³ As such, its method must appreciate each instance positively and uniquely—that is, without recourse to negativity. According to the genealogical method, the origin of value is the will, and the value of origin is the force that is expressed in the thing being evaluated. As Deleuze states: “Willing is the critical and genetic instance of all our actions, feelings and thoughts... We must not be deceived by the expression: *what the will wants*. What a will wants is not an object, an objective or an end,”⁴ for these ends and objectives are only *symptoms* of the will, and to record the will as having objectives of this nature is to rely on negativity, as a privation. Thought can only *conceptualize*

² Ibid 77.

³ Ibid 2.

⁴ Ibid 78.

Being, and this thought is itself a *symptom* of forces rather than that which motors these forces. A conceptualized Being renders the true sense of Being as dependent upon external causes to fulfill it when, according to Deleuze, Being is internally differential and complete in itself due to the forces that it contains, and the will that expresses these forces in relation. “What a will wants is always its own quality and the quality of corresponding forces.”⁵ And so, when we consider particular individuals whose thinking is a manifestation of what they are willing, the “which one?” question is still at the very heart of even this question, for the demands upon this first question is that it be “answered not by *examples* but by the determination of a *type*. And, a type is in fact constituted by the quality of the will to power, the nuance of this quality and the corresponding relation of forces: everything else is symptom.”⁶ It is not the mania to recover contents, to provide particular examples to questions of “what is Being?” that will only be assimilated under a categorical form, as a negative determination of this content in relation to its form and everything that this example is not, but rather the seeking of the *type*. “What *type* of Being?” is the question that interprets the forces and their qualities as being either active or reactive. Therefore, the will does not want objects, but types, and this is to say that the will wants to interpret the qualities of forces in relation. This *typology* will factor strongly in a further discussion of forces and what Deleuze will later unveil as the *dramatization of the idea*. Genealogy (as the art of problems) evaluates values, and evaluations “in essence, are not values but ways of being, modes of existence of those who judge and evaluate, serving as principles for the

⁵ Ibid 78.

⁶ Ibid 79.

values on the basis of which they judge.”⁷ Evaluation concerns *types*, as either high or low, noble or base. These types, “*high* and *low*, *noble* and *base*, are not values but represent the differential element from which the value of values themselves derives.”⁸ Values originate from somewhere, and this notion of origin is precisely what genealogy aims to evaluate.

Ostensibly, genealogy is a positive critique. This critique is inseparable from an act of creation. What is a true positive critique? True critique engages its object in terms of *value*.⁹ In order to make a study of value in any truly rigorous and penetrating manner, it is of the highest importance that one utilize that which is best suited to understanding and measuring values: that of genealogy. What seems to have inhibited a rigorous genealogy of values is the assumption that values originate in our image of Thought as something transcendent, that rationality is the seat and judge of value. This assumption denies that values could be of a higher type, outside or beyond rationality, and so to critique values *rationally* will always assume that values have their true origin in Thought, and this presents the limit of any critique of values. What genealogy aims to achieve is a critique of values that is not subject-centered, that can analyze values beyond the limitations of our conceived rationality. The Nietzschean style of genealogy rejects absolute, reactive, or utilitarian values or means by which those systems evaluate phenomena. Genealogy as an interpretive and evaluative art, is the ground for positive critique insofar as the “differential element is both a critique of the value of values and the positive element of a creation.”¹⁰ To propose that values reside “outside” rational

⁷ Ibid 1.

⁸ Ibid 2.

⁹ Ibid 1.

¹⁰ Ibid 2.

Thought does not imply that they are sequestered in a supersensible realm, but manifest in concrete form as *active* or *reactive* in the material conditions of *things*. Genealogy allows one to truly evaluate values as a whole without falling into valuation in general, for to employ established values to study values will bear the marked bias of the values utilized. There is a limitation in studying the value of goodness, for example, if one's method for testing what is the good is that of goodness. Genealogy has to transcend values in order to study them properly, to critique values where they have been transcendently installed in Thought. Otherwise, no positive, active and creative critique of values can emerge, but rather we are left with the method of evaluating values that Deleuze will call dogmatic and reactive: "Critique is not a re-action of *re-sentiment* but the active expression of an active mode of existence; attack and not revenge."¹¹ Genealogy must begin with a presuppositionless evaluation of forces and will: two concepts that are muddled when morality (false or reactive critique) sets upon them for study.

Since a genealogy of values undertakes to critique all known values without this procedure being limited by the values it seeks to explore, genealogy is the art of interpreting the sense of something as a manifestation of forces in relation: "We will never find the sense of something (of a human, a biological or even a physical phenomenon) if we do not know the force which appropriates the thing, which exploits it, which takes possession of it or is expressed in it."¹² Both Deleuze and Nietzsche call for a materialist conception of sense and value by the particular perspective of forces themselves. According to Deleuze, the problem with a non-genealogical exploration of

¹¹ Ibid 3.

¹² Ibid 3.

sense and value is that its field of study is dominated by recourse to metaphysical dualism wherein essence is opposed to existence. The problem of interpreting Being in terms of essence is that this assumes that Being does not become, that it is not in perpetual movement;¹³ and the problem with interpreting on the side of existence is that we only gain access to mere representations of static things that are already overcoded by transcendent values and imbued with final causes. And so the genealogist rather relies on a strategy where phenomenon and sense replace the metaphysical duality of existence and essence. What underlies this dualism of essence and existence is the relation of forces.

What is force? “All force is appropriation, domination, exploitation of a quantity of reality.”¹⁴ Force is what gives Being its expression, its *sense*. By defining its sense, we can determine its value according to a typology of *active* and *reactive*. In terms of the movement of forces in Being in its perpetual state of becoming, an interpretation of forces allows us to assess what forces appropriate Being (Being’s affinity) at any given time, for “the history of a thing, in general, is the succession of forces which struggle for possession”¹⁵. Forces, as such, cannot be empirically measured, and they do not rely on quantifiable measure in terms of number; that is, forces are determined by their *quality in relation* and their *quantity of reality*. Moreover, an interpretation of forces is not merely an enumeration or catalogue of properties that would only be a presupposition of static quiddity, but is the study of the senses with which an object expresses itself. Even when in consideration of a seemingly static object, “the same object, the same phenomenon,

¹³ Hegel’s Being does become, but it only does so through negative determination. Deleuze wants to posit another kind of becoming, a Being that becomes through affirmative, internal difference.

¹⁴ Ibid 3.

¹⁵ Ibid 3.

changes sense depending on the force which appropriates it.”¹⁶ Sense in the object is multiple, and depends on the quality of forces that appropriate it at any given time. This plastic principle asserts that Being can change senses depending on the relation of forces within it, and is not static but rather pluralist: a philosophy of perspectivism: “Pluralism is the properly philosophical way of thinking, the one invented by philosophy; the only guarantor of freedom in the concrete spirit, the only principle of a violent atheism.” Since this pluralism pertains to all Being, there is “no event, no phenomenon, word or thought which does not have a multiple sense.”¹⁷ Sense depends on the forces that appropriate the event, object, word or thought. Each object possesses a multiplicity of senses depending on the relation of forces, and how this object is articulated at any given time. Moreover, if objects are always in a state of becoming, it follows that their sense must also reflect this perpetual transition by being a multiplicity. Without the pluralist interpretation of objects as sense-expressions of force, how could there be any true becoming at all?

Forces are either *active* or *reactive*. Forces can be considered in terms of quantity and quality, but in a radically different way than traditional metaphysics articulates the matter: “Forces have quantity, but they also have the quality which corresponds to their difference in quantity: the qualities of force are called ‘active’ and ‘reactive’” but the problem that emerges is that of how to measure or interpret forces.¹⁸ The genealogist is predisposed to perform this action, for the “art of measuring forces raises the whole question of interpreting and evaluating qualities.”¹⁹ Following from this relation of quality and quantity, quantity “*itself is therefore inseparable from difference in quantity.*

¹⁶ Ibid 3.

¹⁷ Ibid 4.

¹⁸ Ibid 42.

¹⁹ Ibid 43.

Difference in quantity is the essence of force and of the relation of force to force. To dream of two equal forces, even if they are said to be of opposite senses, is a coarse and approximate dream, a statistical dream in which the living is submerged but which chemistry dispels.”²⁰ Differences in quantity are irreducible to equalization, and quality is that which in quantity cannot be reduced to equality: “Difference in quantity is therefore, in one sense, the irreducible element *of* quantity and in another sense the element which is irreducible *to* quantity itself. Quality is nothing but difference in quantity and corresponds to it each time forces enter into relation.”²¹ It is by “affirming chance we affirm the relation of *all* forces. And, of course, we affirm all of chance all at once in the thought of the eternal return...Chance is the opposite of a *continuum*...The encounters of forces of various quantities are therefore the concrete parts of chance, the affirmative parts of chance and, as such, alien to every law.”²²

The relation of forces requires some principle to express their relation in objects, and that principle is the will to power, conceived either negatively or affirmatively. Since, in Deleuze’s view, forces are always in relation to one another, and the will to power is the differential element that makes their genealogy possible, the will to power manifests itself in forces as a capacity to be affected. Forces are affected by other forces, be they inferior or superior: “This capacity is not an abstract possibility, it is necessarily fulfilled and actualized at each moment by the other forces to which a given force relates.”²³ The will to power is determined and determining insofar as it is the genesis of forces and its quality is determined by the relation of these forces, thereby rendering both the will to

²⁰ Ibid 43.

²¹ Ibid 44.

²² Ibid 44.

²³ Ibid 62.

power and forces as coextensive. That is to say, the will to power is the motoring instance of these forces set into relation, but also the change in its quality depends on the relation of forces and how they appropriate a thing to grant it sense. Although the will to power as a motor is what brings these forces into relation, it is the subsequent relation of these forces that alter the character or property of this motor. If reactive forces triumph in the body, appropriating it and subtracts from its active force the power of going to the limit, then the will to power in that instance is a *will to nothingness* (will to power in the negative sense). If, on the contrary, active forces appropriate the thing and the thing goes to the limit of its powers (dependent on how “sensitive” it is to being affected, its capacity), then it is a manifestation of the will to power in the affirmative rather than negative sense. This capacity for being affected is not passive, for these *affects* are *internally* constituted by the relation of forces within a body. The will to power “manifests itself as the sensibility of force; the differential element of forces manifests itself as their differential sensibility.”²⁴ And, all sensibility “is only a becoming of forces...The will to power manifests itself, in the first place, as the sensibility of forces and, in the second place, as the becoming sensible of forces.”²⁵

If existence is enjoyment, productive, creative, and *dramatic*, then we are playing a game of chance. In Deleuze’s view, Being is not a rigged outcome of qualitative negative determination, but rather that its own becoming affirms chance. Chance and necessity both entail risk, and both form moments in this game, or drama, of existence: “The game has two moments which are those of the dicethrow—the dice that is thrown

²⁴ Ibid 63.

²⁵ Ibid 63.

and the dice that falls back.”²⁶ This takes place on two tables: earth and sky: “these two tables are not two worlds. They are the two hours of a single world, the two moments of a single world, midnight and midday, the hour when the dice are thrown, the hour when the dice fall back.”²⁷ This dicethrow “affirms becoming and it affirms the being of becoming.”²⁸ The principle of the dicethrow is the affirmation of chance, i.e., becoming, and necessity (affirming the outcome of becoming). Some instances of chance produce unsavoury results, just as some instances of becoming may prove disastrous, but the trick is to affirm chance right from the beginning--not hedge bets and rig outcomes by throwing the dice until a desired outcome is produced. The rigging of chance is the domain of Thought insofar that the way in which we think Being has a desired outcome in mind according to particular transcendent ideals of Truth and Good. When Being is determined by all that it is not, moved up to contradiction, we are rigging the outcome of chance becoming and not affirming what Being can become. Instead, by creating the fiction of opposition, the game of chance is muted by a projected and desired outcome, and the determination of Being begins its linear descent toward such outcome (in Hegel’s case, the actualization of the self-identical in the concept). To affirm chance is to affirm the fortuitous nature of existence, not the “facts” of Thought’s programmed development of Being, a mere conceptuality of Being rather than an openly immanent Being of becoming.

The importance of this discussion of chance is precisely a keystone in how Deleuze wants us to understand Being: its constitution as being grounded on fortuitous encounter that does not rely on conscious Thought, that the very expression of Being is

²⁶ Ibid 25.

²⁷ Ibid 25.

²⁸ Ibid 25.

dependent upon the quality of the will that expresses forces in relation. There is no reliable way to predict what Being will become precisely because it never becomes *something*: it is always in a state of becoming without cease. This is why, according to Deleuze, we can only interpret the actualized symptoms of the Being of becoming, understanding only the sense Being expresses in its constant fluctuation.

The necessity that results from the chance of the dicethrow is not preprogrammed *destiny*, but the combination produced by chance. Since chance is to be understood as a multiplicity, and this multiplicity is a unity, then “there is only a single combination of chance as such, a single way of combining all the parts of chance, a way which is like the unity of multiplicity, that is to say number or necessity.”²⁹ Worse yet is to begin at the table of chance with an end in mind, a desired outcome, a desire to, say, declare a victory in proving through rigged encounters the triumph of an absolute spirit. The necessity is precisely not knowing what Being will come to be, but to affirm that it is always becoming.

This game of chance and necessity is the true sense and power of becoming, the true unity of multiplicity—the necessity of the outcome and the multiple senses this dicethrow can express. And so:

for the couple causality-finality, probability-finality, for the opposition and the synthesis of these terms, for the web of these terms, Nietzsche substitutes the Dionysian correlation of chance-necessity, the Dionysian couple chance-destiny. Not a probability distributed over several throws but all chance at once; not a final, desired, willed combination, but the fatal combination, fatal and loved, *amor fati*; not the return of a combination by the number of throws, but the repetition of a dicethrow by the nature of the fatally obtained number.³⁰

²⁹ Ibid 26.

³⁰ Ibid 27.

This new conception of chance and necessity readies us to the particular use Deleuze makes of Nietzsche's eternal return.

To think the eternal return is to think differently the combined two moments of the dicethrow: affirmation of necessity as the result of the dicethrow, and the return of the dicethrow itself. That is to say, what has *become* as a result of chance is not a final state; it becomes again, always in a process of becoming. Not only must what has become affirm what it has become in accordance to the necessity of the outcome, but it once again plays at the game of chance and becomes something else. With dice back in hand, becoming returns and happens all over again. What will the being of becoming become next? Only the next cast of the dice knows. It is the stochastic nature of becoming and the cycle of return of the eternal return that combine to produce true differences, and thereby constitute Being as a Being of Becoming rather than a static Being of the self-identical. Chance and necessity are not oppositions, and neither are chaos and cycle: they are both moments of the dicethrow. Like Thought and Being, they are coextensive within their multiplicity.

The problem of becoming furnishes us with an ancient problem: how can the present pass? "The passing moment could never pass if it were not already past and yet to come—at the same time as being present. If the present did not pass of its own accord, if it had to wait for a new present in order to become past, the past in general would never be constituted in time, and this particular present would not pass."³¹ The eternal return is the answer to the problem of *passage*.

The eternal return is *not* the return of the same, but of the different: "It is not being that returns but rather the returning itself that constitutes being insofar as it is

³¹ Ibid 48.

affirmed of becoming and of that which passes. It is not some one thing which returns but rather returning itself is the one thing which is affirmed of diversity and multiplicity.”³² That is to say, “identity in the eternal return does not describe the nature of that which returns but, on the contrary, the fact of returning for that which differs...a synthesis of double affirmation.”³³

“Because it is neither felt nor known, a becoming-active can only be thought as the product of a *selection*. A simultaneous double selection by the activity of force and the affirmation of the will.”³⁴ What performs this selection is the eternal return, and the eternal return grants the will a practical rule: “*whatever you will, will it in such a way that you also will its eternal return*”; “It is the *thought* of the eternal return that selects. It makes willing something whole. The thought of the eternal return culminates from willing everything which falls outside the eternal return, it makes willing a creation, it brings about the equation ‘willing = creation’.”³⁵ The only way that this willing creation can happen is if there is a critique of all known values, a transvaluation, a retirement of the old image of thought. It is through this critique that the base values are expelled and only the noble ones are retained and are permitted to return. It may seem that this principle is only masquerading as an *ought*, but in fact this is exactly the scene where the necessary principle of eternal return as cosmological and physical principle and eternal return as ethical and selective thought merge, denoting the passage or mixture of the *ought* and *is*: the reason why it is unwise to attempt a separation between ontology and ethics in the work of Nietzsche and Deleuze. If there is a separation between ontology

³² Ibid 48.

³³ Ibid 48.

³⁴ Ibid 68.

³⁵ Ibid 68-9.

and ethics, it is merely a fold, the crease of the eternal return that straddles both milieus. In a sense, Deleuze is calling for a more transcendental ethics, a valuation that goes beyond Thought, which is precisely why ontology is an ethics and vice versa.

The second ethical selection performed by the eternal return is the production of a becoming-active. That is, reactive forces do not return, but are culled by an active negation. This active negation is a power of affirmation insofar as it affirms the joy of destruction. Whereas the first selection is the thought of the eternal return that wills all that is outside this thought (the not-yet known), the second selection is that of selective being, “for the eternal return is being and being is selection. (Selection = hierarchy).”³⁶ Transvaluation is the first stage of counter-actualization. It is the reversal of values, a point when negation is transformed into an affirmative power (the active destruction of the incomplete nihilism by way of its completion). What remains, says Deleuze, is to analyze the relationships between negation and affirmation in the will to power, and the will to power’s relationship to the eternal return. “The eternal return is the being of becoming. But becoming is double: becoming-active and becoming-reactive, becoming-active of reactive forces and becoming-reactive of active forces. But only becoming-active has being.”³⁷ The problem is this: how can the becoming-reactive not have being? By the principles of the will to power and the eternal return, it is not difficult to regard the contradiction a being of becoming-reactive would present. Deleuze says:

The eternal return would become contradictory if it were the return of reactive forces. The eternal return teaches us that becoming-reactive has no being...the being of becoming cannot be fully affirmed without also affirming the existence of becoming-active. The eternal return thus has a double aspect: it is the universal being of becoming, but the universal being of becoming ought to belong to a single becoming. Only becoming-

³⁶ Ibid 71.

³⁷ Ibid 71.

active has a being which is the being of the whole of becoming. Returning is everything but everything is affirmed in a single moment.³⁸

And so:

the complete formula of affirmation is: the whole, yes, universal being, yes, but universal being ought to belong to a single becoming, the whole ought to belong to a single moment.³⁹

Why do we need a new way of thinking? “For a long time we have only been able to think in terms of *ressentiment* and bad conscience. We have had no other ideal but the ascetic ideal. We have opposed knowledge to life in order to judge life, in order to make it something blameworthy, responsible or erroneous.”⁴⁰ Therefore, Deleuze believes it necessary to free philosophy from this type of perceived nihilism, to foster a new way of thinking that redirects the metaphysical focus and poses questions toward a transmutation of values. The negative nihilism that has motored the metaphysical gains of Hegel has--in Deleuze’s estimation--rendered the notion of the will a dangerous ideal, one to be constrained by reason, or to be made useful for the ego subject. In a reversal, Nietzsche discovers in the will a reason to rejoice, an affirmation of life. For it is only the will—which had in one direction willed its own nothingness through the constitution of a transcendent plane—that is capable of dissolving bad conscience, and to expel the negative in one final moment of nihilism: an active nihilism. This is the meaning of transmutation: willing as creating. This is the result of the dice throw, its tragic outcome:

The tragic does not even fight against *ressentiment*, bad conscience or nihilism...We have not understood that the tragic is pure and multiple positivity, dynamic gaiety. Affirmation is tragic because it affirms chance and the necessity of chance; because it affirms multiplicity and the unity

³⁸ Ibid 72.

³⁹ Ibid 72.

⁴⁰ Ibid 35.

of multiplicity. The dicethrow is tragic. All the rest is nihilism, Christian and dialectic pathos, caricature of the tragic, comedy of bad conscience.⁴¹

And, indeed, the willing that performs the transmutation does not *oppose* what it overcomes and transmutes (for opposition is the logical style of the reactive), but rather this overturning comes about through the natural predisposition of forces in their relation *and* as an effect of dynamic movement. The “revolution” of eternal return (the wobbly wheel or cycle that facilitates chance becomings) is the affirmation of everything that can bear its return. That which cannot bear the return is culled by the motoring principle of eternal return: difference. Whatever ejected from the centrifuge of eternal return cannot affirm its difference for the heavy spirit of revenge (*ressentiment* and negativity that denies life) causes the negative to be expelled. It is only in the fluctuating vortex without stable center where the lightness of play and creation can occur; all else is too heavy and so sinks to the depths and does not return. To elaborate further as to why Deleuze thinks a new image of thought is necessary is to already run dangerously close to his critique of Hegelianism. It is for this reason that we leave off at this point to consider the two specific claims Deleuze makes against Hegel, and how a theory of forces will figure prominently in creating the requisite arsenal in arguing against Hegelian metaphysics.

Deleuze claims that Hegel’s *Being* cannot, by the process of negation, truly be internally differential and affirmative as a concept. However, even before we can discuss Deleuze’s critique of Hegel, it must be made clear exactly what “Being” Deleuze has in mind. Deleuze’s use of Being is not Hegelian, nor is it Heideggerian. Rather, Deleuze’s use of Being pertains to the virtual-actual distinction based on his theory of forces. Deleuze is taking issue with the Hegelian formulation of “Be-ing as Think-ing.” For

⁴¹ Deleuze 36.

Hegel, all differences in Being are determined according to an overarching, teleological principle or master plan that negates all the minute differences in order to confirm the final identity of Being. Therefore, even if it may be said that Hegel's Being has dynamic internal difference, this difference still relies on teleology, and teleology cannot truly admit of an affirmative differential Being. Deleuze's alternative formulation of Being may appear monstrous, for the forces that express Being are intense and singular, not relying on our thought to determine the outcome of their fortuitous encounter. It is here that the *genealogy* of the question of Being reveals the *geology* of Being: the virtual "milieu" brings together a concatenation of forces by chance, much like how lava churns beneath the earth's crust and spews forth in new ways that radically alter the surface. It is for this reason that Deleuze views true difference as being forged in a much "deeper" or properly transcendental milieu, whereas he criticizes Hegel for only regarding conceptual differences.

Deleuze begins by attaching a particular significance to how the question of Being is to be posed and so asks how the question of Being is to be posed in such a way that the domain of the question asks more than what may be commonly supposed as the proper way of ontological questioning. The problem, as Deleuze sees it, is that the question of Being has its start in rational Thought. If the question of Being is posed beginning with rational Thought and its way of understanding Being, then this strategy risks only producing an image or representation of Being that is complicit more with how Thought understands Being than how Being actually is. Deleuze will effectively employ a double

strategy: he will first repose the question of Being, and then utilize his theory of forces to demonstrate his own critique of Hegel's conception of Being and Thought.

Deleuze takes issue with Hegel's method of questioning, a method that eventually leads Hegel to give definitive and qualified content to the notion of Being. As an initial move, Deleuze will build and structure his argument against Hegel on how the question of Being ought to be posed without submitting itself to the method of the negative dialectic. Essential to the way in which this question is posed, Deleuze assesses and critiques the source of contradiction that opposes being and becoming, the one and the multiple, and essence and appearance. Deleuze contends that this style of questioning is inherently of a nihilistic character.⁴² He claims this precisely because the negative dialectic can only give content to Being through what it is not; that is, the character of difference in Being is reduced to mere diversity rather than the differential in itself inherent in its modes of expression.⁴³

According to Deleuze, Hegel's dialectic poses in "bad" questions insofar as they are too vague, relying on the strategy of negative determination to produce "facts" rather than interpretations. Deleuze views the Hegelian dialectical method of inquiry into Being as both too broad (that is, the question of Being suffers the ignominy of abstract generalization when it is reduced to a program that seeks to determine the solution of the question itself by recourse to negative determination), and too narrow a corridor of inquiry (for it relies on grounding singular facts gained by negative determination rather than the interpretation of sense). "It is undoubtedly a blunder to cite something beautiful

⁴² Ibid 76.

⁴³ Deleuze's proposition that difference can and should be understood affirmatively is not altogether novel. Jacques Derrida's seminal essay, "Différance", asserts an internal differing as well, but Derrida relegates this to the level of language and avoids mapping this internal affirmative difference to ontology, whereas Deleuze's contribution is to push this notion of difference into the ontological.

when you are asked ‘what is beauty?’ But it is less certain that the question: ‘what is beauty?’ is not itself a blunder.”⁴⁴ Deleuze questions the very legitimacy of the dialectical mode of questioning. It is, in his view, an attempt to establish essence, to banish the problem of becoming from that of Being which would otherwise present the dialectician with Being as a continuum of becoming without cease, thereby rendering the question of Being in pluralist way. Deleuze does not necessarily abandon the search for “essence” *per se*, but suggests that the very question of the essence of Being is in dire need of reformulation:

For *essence is merely the sense and value of the thing*; essence is determined by the forces with affinity for the thing and by the will with affinity for these forces. Moreover, when we ask the question ‘what is it?’ we not only fall into the worst metaphysics but in fact we merely ask the question ‘which one?’ in a blind, unconscious and confused way.⁴⁵

In Deleuze’s view, the traditional question of essence only grounds a categorical thought of Being, and so fails to grasp that which truly gives rise to Being’s quiddity *as such*.

What is at stake in this claim is precisely the status of difference in ontology. For Hegel, the difference of Being is manifest as diversity of the species of different beings beneath the category of Being, whereas for Deleuze difference *is* the nature of Being. For Deleuze, Hegel’s Being is inadequate precisely because it relies on a synthesis of the categories of quality and quantity in order to determine Being’s content, thereby not assessing the truly affirmative difference of forces and will that Deleuze asserts gives Being its expression. Hegel’s Being cannot be affirmatively differential because Being is determined by what it is not, and so is moved up to contradiction (*Aufhebung*), and Deleuze feels that this method of pitting *something* that is against *something that it is not*

⁴⁴ Ibid 76.

⁴⁵ Ibid 77.

is a fiction precisely on the grounds that if Being is internally differential, it a) is always different in itself and so cannot be the exact opposite of something else that is also different in itself, and b) Being is always in a state of becoming, and so cannot be statically *something* that can be opposed to *something else*. If Being is internally differential, it follows that it can determine itself without being opposed to something external to it. Affirmative difference is “inseparable from essence and constitutive of existence.”⁴⁶ This difference provides a new form of hierarchy that grants a more profound understanding of Being than the dialectic, which is not to say that the dialectic does not have its own profundity as we will remark on below. As such, this *perspectivism* rejects Hegelian unity, for Being (as always in a state of becoming) can never be resolved into a static unity. Although a pluralist interpretation of Being as the expression of forces appears to be anti-Hegelian,⁴⁷ it is not Deleuze’s intention to create a flat and static image of Hegelianism as an “enemy”, but rather to produce a more viable alternative, and hence his claim that Being is difference. In fact, Deleuze’s conception of Being *includes* Hegel’s conception of Being as a special case, as its own reactive image. The significance of this “inclusion” is precisely Deleuze’s unwilling to repeat a dialectical procedure wherein he positions Hegel’s system merely as an opposition to his own. This would only bring Deleuze back into Hegel’s system, confirming Hegel’s view by moving Hegel’s system up to opposition—the very strategy Deleuze wants to avoid.

⁴⁶ Ibid 9.

⁴⁷ Ibid 8; “Anti-Hegelianism runs through Nietzsche’s work as its cutting edge. We can already feel it in the theory of forces.” Note here the position of force in Deleuze’s ontology compared to Hegel. In the *Logic*, force is not discussed until the section on essence, and even then is spoken only in terms of the negative, as a moment toward the self-identical. Deleuze accents his theory of forces with the Nietzschean will to power, which will later complement what Deleuze says about intensity in *Difference and Repetition*.

For Deleuze, Being is not a stable, the “what is” but a mode or expression of its own becoming. Being is not a unity, but a multiplicity. For this pluralist assertion to hold, Deleuze must prove that Being is not universalizable, but that it expresses itself as a multiplicity of sense. For this to be successful, Deleuze must engage in a serious and convincing critique of Thought. In addition, he must provide a convincing account of how Being is better expressed as sense rather than its unity as essence and existence. To do this, he will critique Thought’s apprehension of Being as too limited and abstract, and charge Hegel for not honouring a commitment to explain the real conditions of experience beyond Kant’s formulation in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. For Deleuze, the real conditions of experience cannot begin and end in Thought, but must be grounded elsewhere. This is precisely why Deleuze must carefully outline his theory of forces.

Forces do not depend on the faculty of thought, but rather are pre-conscious. They relate to pre-individual singularities and intensities by way of a *dramatization of ideas*. Forces are not negative thought determinations, but rather, negative thought determination is a symptom of forces in relation and their expression. Whether this is effectively an attempt to undermine Hegel’s system, wherein Thought determines the quality of Being, is not to be construed as something seditious, but in a sense that is more literal—and in fact, a reversal. This “undermining” is not Deleuze’s *denial* of Hegel’s contribution as erroneous, but rather a warning that Hegel’s conception of Being is *not complete*, that Hegel under-mined the concept of Being by not going deep enough. For Deleuze, the expression of force and its concrete manifestation in Being are inseparable, which is to say that Thought’s tendency to think Being, to believe that negative determination is the unity of Being’s essence and existence through a synthesis of the

categories of quality and quantity, is a symptom of forces in relation. In this sense, Hegel's concept of Being does not go "deep" enough into the matter insofar as he does not seriously consider the relation of forces that constitute the expression of Being. What Deleuze takes issue with is that "Hegel wanted to ridicule pluralism, identifying it with a naïve consciousness which would be happy to say 'this, that, here, now'—like a child stuttering out its most humble needs."⁴⁸ This means that, according to Deleuze, Hegel could not admit to a Being *of* the sensible because he was already committed to an image of thought that was concerned with proving the unity of Being. However, the benefit of a pluralist philosophy is that it solicits our ability to weigh or evaluate the value of different senses of one thing to engage in the act of interpretation rather than to rely on alleged facts. Being is not static and indifferent, but rather has a deep affinity with the forces that appropriate it, the sense it expresses. Essence, for Deleuze, "will be defined as that one, among all the senses of a thing, which gives it the force with which it has the most affinity."⁴⁹

In Hegel, quality originates in thought as negative determination, but in Deleuze's theory of forces "the genesis of qualities itself presupposes a (relative) genesis of quantities...The fact that the two geneses are inseparable means that we can not abstractly calculate forces. In each case we have to concretely evaluate their respective quality and the nuance of this quality."⁵⁰ Deleuze views Hegel's reliance on qualitative determination as a strategy that attempts to achieve a reactive equality and equilibrium in Being. The reduction of qualitative differences to equality is a program that denies differences as "a part of the more general enterprise of denying life, depreciating

⁴⁸ Ibid 4.

⁴⁹ Ibid 4.

⁵⁰ Ibid 44.

existence and promising it death...where the universe sinks into the undifferentiated.”⁵¹ It is here that Deleuze and Hegel will agree, for Hegel too wants to improve upon Kant. Hegel’s solution to avoid sinking back into the undifferentiated is through the labour of the negative of thought, thereby negating this undifferentiated thing-in-itself. However, this is where the agreement ends, for Hegel’s solution can only admit of a *conceptual* difference (difference as the labour of thought), whereas Deleuze forwards a *non-conceptual* difference; i.e., an affirmative difference (difference without relying on the labour of thought).

Deleuze opposes the reduction of difference to the question of the One and the Many, for that opposition only tends toward the equalization of existence into a stable unity. The problem with mechanism (tending toward equality) and finalism (tending toward equilibrium) is that these modes of thought only view existence on the side of reactions. The thermodynamic law is one example where all differences are reduced to a harmonized “sum” and all differences are cancelled out. “The mechanist idea affirms the eternal return but only by assuming that *differences in quantity balance or cancel each other out between initial and final states of a reversible system. The final state is identical to the initial state which is itself assumed to be undifferentiated in relation to intermediate states.*”⁵² Standing above this entire nihilistic process is the patriarch of cancelled differences himself, Hegel, the metaphysical thermodynamic guru: “The thermodynamic idea denies the eternal return but only because it discovers that differences in quantity only cancel each other out in the final state of the system...In this way identity is posited in the final undifferentiated state and opposed to the

⁵¹ Ibid 45.

⁵² Ibid 46; my emphasis.

differentiation of the initial state.”⁵³ The connection to Hegel is explicit: undetermined Being “begins” in a world of empty empirical “thises” and through a successive series of qualifying determinations becomes what it is at the “end” as a unity of its existence and essence. However, throughout, Being’s difference is subsumed by a negative dialectic to base its identity by absolute exteriority, as extreme extension based on contradictions in order to give full content and form to its concept. Being’s quantity of reality dwindles along with its difference to being a matter of mere numerical order, and so Being loses all its power of self-differentiation in this “zero-sum game”. This bespeaks of a presupposed telos to the process of becoming right at the moment of absolute equalization and harmonized unity, for “we fail to understand the eternal return if we make it a consequence of an application of identity...The eternal return is not the permanence of the same, the equilibrium state or the resting place of the identical. It is not the ‘same’ or the ‘one’ which comes back to the eternal return but return is itself the one which ought to belong to diversity and to that which differs.”⁵⁴

Deleuze critique of Hegel’s idea of the determination of Being by Thought is that this method can only produce a *representation* of Being for Thought, i.e., the Notion. The genealogical method of questioning reveals that representation is overcoded by transcendent values and final causes, and that Being is determined by forces and will. It is because of this method that Deleuze posits the Being *of* the sensible: through an interpretation of forces, Being can express itself as a multiplicity of senses, as *difference*. But are the forces Deleuze depend on themselves a repetition of dialectical opposition?

⁵³ Ibid 46.

⁵⁴ Ibid 46.

Are not the types *active* and *reactive* symptoms of an oppositional structure where the dialectical result is the Being *of* the sensible? Is pluralism itself dialectical?

This internally differential concept of the will is non-dialectical, for the dialectic relies on thought determinations to produce the identical instead of the affirmatively different. But is this form of the pluralist will still in itself a hidden form of dialectic? “Pluralism sometimes appears to be dialectical—but it is its most ferocious enemy, its only profound enemy.”⁵⁵ There is a quality of the will that contains dialectical negation (the will to nothingness), but there is another quality of the will beyond this that consumes or transcends this type: the will to power. The non-dialectical negation that results from a total critique destroys this other will completely, without reserve or recuperation, and clears the way for creation. It is a form of dialectic without the third term, without the possibility of reconciliation or compromise. Dialectical negation, on the other hand, only performs a partial destruction, salvages what it can use and brings it into the third term to form its unity of thesis-antithesis-synthesis; in other words, *reactive negation*. Active negation by way of total critique is always in a state of becoming, always razing its past and forging anew, whereas negative dialectics wants to encumber itself with more cultural debris, more transcendent values, more archaic phantoms of Church and State, thinking all along that this is the path to the “salvation” of life as a unity *for* Thought.

Negative dialectics is ‘profound’ because it is weighted down by a gravity in an attempt to form its transcendent plane rather than one of true immanence. Hegel’s version of immanence (an immanence of the labour of negativity), in the Deleuzian view, is a staged version of immanence, which is to say that the negative determination of Being

⁵⁵ Ibid 8.

operates by analogy and representation, all under the order of a transcendent plane. True Immanence is a frightening thought, for to affirm it means this: values and the origin of these values need to be seriously questioned, there is no transcendent refuge, no God in the sky (violent atheism), and no identity: only pure and affirmative difference as the expression of an immanent Being of becoming. For Deleuze, becoming—not dialectical negation—is the true expression of Being as an *event*. According to Deleuze, true events happen on the surface, not in the muddy depths of an inverted image of thought. It is the way of reactive man, the reliance upon a reactive image of thought, that cheapens the will, makes it a form of representation. It is the essentially reactive character of man that subordinates the will to the willing of particular objectives.

The passivity of Being is the quality of reactive forces that adapt to the limitations imposed upon it outside the body. It is in this way that Being, if negatively determined by absolute exteriority, is a passive body insofar as it *reacts* to all that it is not. And, since the dialectic depends on this form of negative determinations from *outside* causes (Being's relation to Nothing, Determined Being in relation to the undetermined, etc.), the dialectic is a reactive instrument of passivity and negativity. The will to power in the dialectic is negative quality, and the forces that inhere within it are those of the triumphant reactive sense.

The will to power is grievously misunderstood when it is thought of as a striving toward some particular end. By “making the will a will to power in the sense of a ‘desire to dominate’, philosophers see this desire as infinite; making power an object of representation they see the unreal character of a thing represented in this way; engaging the will to power in combat they [“reactive” philosophers] see the contradiction in the

will itself.”⁵⁶ Willing is made to will something, an object, and the contradiction arises when what is willed cannot be achieved, or that when the objective is completed, the will reposes in the fatigue of completion. This is the reason why the dialectical will becomes tired: it believes to have achieved its objective, that there is nothing more left to will, and so languishes in the power of having achieved this objective. However, this character of the will presents us with only the *representation of power*, a mere appearance of power. When the will is conceived as wanting power rather than feeling power, the will is cheapened: objectifying power in this way renders it representational, a mere appearance. So, the will to power is an entirely new conception of the will: rather than abiding by established values, it creates new values; rather than being set upon by contradiction, it is willing that liberates us from limitation; rather than the suffering of the will that brings us to recognize if we fall short of what objects we desire, willing is joy—and precisely joy because willing has no limit, and is allied with joy. This joy is that of true and total critique: the transmutation of the negative and the joyful destruction of all known values: “Critique is destruction as joy, the aggression of the creator. The creator of values cannot be distinguished from a critic: a critic of established values, reactive values and baseness.”⁵⁷

The dialectical will always wills *something*, and what it wills is always tempered by limitation that leads to what Deleuze alleges is the false unity of subject and object by way of an *internalization* of this limit. When the dialectical will seizes upon the question of Being, the character of its willing produces a limitation, some form of contradiction in the world, in order to say what Being is not, and so therefore to incorporate this

⁵⁶ Ibid 83.

⁵⁷ Ibid 87.

negativity as a means of defining the identity of Being. It is for this reason that “the concept of the Overman is directed against the dialectical conception of man, and transvaluation is directed against the dialectic of appropriation or the suppression of alienation.”⁵⁸ What is this dialectic of appropriation? What is being appropriated, and by what process of negativity is this appropriation occurring? The dialectical will is the will of the thinking subject that appropriates its reality by determining Being through thought. However, what the dialectical will appropriates is not the forces that express Being, its expression of sense, but rather what Deleuze will dub mere symptoms. When the dialectical will appropriates a symptom, it thinks its work to be completed, that the Being to be appropriated is finally determined, negating all alienating instances that separate Thought and Being. But the theory of forces does not submit to the dialectical enterprise, for “in its relation with the other the force which makes itself obeyed does not deny the other or that which it is not, affirms its own difference and enjoys this difference.”⁵⁹

Although the nature of forces is that they are either dominating or dominated, the dominating force is not negatively determined by another force that is dominated, for the dominating force has the character of domination prior and subsequent to its relation with a dominated force. What the relation between dominating and dominated force provides is the object of affirmation: a dominating force, when in relation to a force that obeys, recognizes its own dominating power as an object of affirmation and difference. The quality of forces is retention of singularity even when put into relation: “Inferior forces do not, by obeying, cease to be forces distinct from those which command. Obeying is a

⁵⁸ Ibid 8.

⁵⁹ Ibid 8-9.

quality of force as such and relates to power just as much as commanding does.”⁶⁰ That is, in contrast to negative determination, the initial term that enters into a dialectical relation does not lose its status of being unique. The quality Deleuze advocates is one of differentiation where no third term of synthesis is produced as a result. Forces that obey and command retain their qualities of obedience and command, but are affected nonetheless by their relation. That is, the only way an active force can change its quality is if reactive forces divide it from its power, from what it can do. If forces were to resolve into a unity, an equilibrium, there would be no reason to speak of forces other than a causal factor with a teleological end to the body as a resolved tension, a kind of inert and indifferent *ataraxia*. This is the key component in the internal differentiation of the object; composed of forces that retain their qualities, it is their tension that produces the object. Without this tension, there would be no body. If forces are resolved into a unity, the meaning of the body, and equally Being, becomes an abstraction rather than the pure expression that it is. “Inferior forces are defined as reactive; they lose nothing of their force, of their quantity of force, they exercise it by securing mechanical means and final ends, by fulfilling the conditions of life and the functions and tasks of conversation, adaptation and utility.”⁶¹ Let us take this formulation of a theory of forces into a particular moment in the dialectic, that of the Master-Slave.

This formulation of a theory of forces strikes at the heart of Hegel’s Master-Slave dialectic insofar as the Master would not depend on the Slave to affirm his mastership any more than the slave would require a master to be determined as slavish. The dialectic imposes a fiction on the will to power, making it negative, but the negative:

⁶⁰ Ibid 40.

⁶¹ Ibid 40.

is not present in the essence as that from which force draws its activity: on the contrary it is a result of activity, of the existence of an active force and the affirmation of its difference. The negative is a product of existence itself: the aggression necessarily linked to an active existence, the aggression of an affirmation.⁶²

Hegel's assumption that negativity is an immanent quality in the determination of Being, that it is innate in the very essence of Being, is turned around: Deleuze asserts that the negative is the product of existence itself, a post facto determination not found in Being *as such*. Moreover, as Being continues to become as multiplicity, this becoming is co-relative with dialectical negation, but dialectical negation is never the true motor of becoming. The negative is a symptom of forces in relation and not installed before their entering into this relation. This view of the dialectic charges it of mistaking effects for causes, of getting at the meaning of existence in a retrograde fashion. All the dialectic can interpret from its standpoint of negativity are the symptoms of forces, and it is this unilateral view that analyzes only the negative effects upon which it bases its values. The Master and Slave do not need, contrary to the negative dialectical version, to pass into one another or forge a compromise; the Master can destroy the slave in an act of final aggression and make this destruction of the Other an object of self-differentiating affirmation. It is the willful destruction of the Other who attempts to divide power, to limit what active forces can do, and it is the Master's affirmation that does not recognize the imposition of this fiction of internalized limitation. The Master will go to the limit of his own power and destroy the Other that obstructs him without seeing the Other as a dialectical opposite, nor recognize that a limit has been achieved, for according to the theory of forces, becoming is infinite and so no *real* limit exists beyond that which

⁶² Ibid 9.

Thought imposes upon itself. This is the lesson of the affirmative version of the will to power.

Contrary to a conception of the will as that which wants concrete goals at the expense of an Other, the will to power only wants to affirm its own difference, to enjoy its being different: "In its essential relation with the 'other' a will makes its difference an object of affirmation."⁶³ The pluralism of sense, the unbounded will, culminates to form an entirely new conception of reality. "It is sufficient to say that dialectic is a labour and empiricism an enjoyment. And who says that there is more thought in labour than enjoyment?"⁶⁴ Affirmation has its own new consequence for thinking: the thought of the new, a creative and active thought that is embraced at the moment of affirmation. The affirmative only wants to affirm itself. In contrast, it is the labour of the dialectic that seeks to install these fictions of contradictions everywhere in order to substantiate the necessity of the negative, and from this it distributes its hierarchy of negative values that deny life. However, a theory of forces also has its own version of hierarchy, but it is of a positive and differential character: "The empirical feeling of difference, in short hierarchy, is the essential motor of the concept, deeper and more effective than all thought about contradiction."⁶⁵ The "dialectical will" is too weak to sustain a truly internal concept of difference, and so it seeks to annul differences, to banish or assimilate them by the labour of the negative. The dialectical will "is an exhausted force which does not have the strength to affirm its difference, a force which no longer acts but rather reacts to the forces which dominate it—only such a force brings to the foreground the negative element in its relation to the other. Such a force denies all that it is not and

⁶³ Ibid 9.

⁶⁴ Ibid 9.

⁶⁵ Ibid 9.

makes this negation its own essence and the principle of its existence.”⁶⁶ It is by this method of absolute exteriority that true difference is consigned to the realm of error, of naïve consciousness, as not conforming to the image of thought that seeks to extract negative determinations from the real. It is a heavy reliance on contradiction as the principle motor for determining the meaning of existence that forms the core of slave morality: “the abstract thought of contradiction then prevails over the concrete feeling of positive difference, reaction over action, revenge and *ressentiment* take the place of aggression.”⁶⁷ From here, Deleuze’s attacks against Hegel’s dialectical formulation of the will in terms of the Master-Slave relationship begin to multiply: “The famous dialectical aspect of the master-slave relationship depends on the fact that power is conceived not as will to power but as representation of power, representation of superiority, recognition by ‘the one’ of the superiority of ‘the other’”; “What the wills in Hegel want is to have their power *recognized*, to *represent* their power...*The slave only conceives of power as the object of a recognition, the content of a representation, the stake in a competition, and therefore makes it depend, at the end of the fight, on a simple attribution of established values*” and “Underneath the Hegelian image of the master we always find the slave.”⁶⁸ The dialectic is the power wielded by the slave, the one who wills these contradictions by putting them into play and accusing life only to redeem it in the outcome of the labour of the negative.

In Deleuze’s view, the slave and the dialectician are types or “dramatic personae” who do not have a good sense of power. For them, power is always external, always a possibility to be actualized. Hence, this is why the Slave needs the Other, needs to be

⁶⁶ Ibid 9.

⁶⁷ Ibid 10.

⁶⁸ Ibid 10.

recognized to make this power something real for him. The Master knows that power is inseparable from Being itself, is completely internally constituted. To rely on external representations of power is to react to a lack of power in the self, to admit that Being is not full enough. It is the Master that knows that Being is full and immanent right from the start, imbued as it is with forces in relation and a will that acts as its principle.

Life, says the Slave, is innately tragic, and it is up to Thought to ease suffering, to make life whole by a process of negative determination. Everywhere the Slave is beguiled by contradictions that necessitate resolution in order to assuage this feeling of suffering. It is the fault of existence that these contradictions exist, and it is the task of Thought to resolve these contradictions to attain an end to suffering, to attain stable unity between its Thought and its determined Being. To do this, the Slave must accuse life, sentence it as guilty, and then go about reforming it—under the reactive demands of Thought itself. However, the Slave can only see the negative effects of existence, contradictions everywhere, and not the forces that undergird life itself. The Slave lacks the affirmative power of the will to see in existence anything more than contradiction and opposition as the source of suffering, and his sight is trained by the labour of the negative to see nothing further than this:

The dialectic proposes a certain conception of the tragic: linking it to the negative, to opposition and to contradiction. The contradiction of suffering and life, of finite and infinite life itself, of particular destiny and universal spirit in the idea, the movement of contradiction and its resolution—this is how tragedy is represented.⁶⁹

This dialectical representation of tragedy models itself upon the formulaic process of justifying life by accusing it, by thrusting Being on its way of despair, uprooted from its “animal primitivity,” through constant individuations and alienation, finding opposition

⁶⁹ Ibid 11.

everywhere, and finally resolving and reconciling itself with a universal will and therefore unifying its essence and existence. Faced with this “false” conception of the tragic, the true essence of the tragic is pluralist affirmation for it makes everything an object of affirmation. The new alternative to defining life through limitation, contradiction and opposition, i.e., negatively, entails that we must find “for each thing in turn, the special means by which it is affirmed, by which it ceases to be negative...The tragic is not to be found in this anguish or disgust, nor in a nostalgia for lost unity. The tragic is only to be found in multiplicity, in the diversity of affirmation *as such*.”⁷⁰ Tragedy is an aesthetic phenomenon of joy, “not a medical phrase or a moral solution to pain, fear or pity.”⁷¹ The Master-Slave relationship is a question couplet that needs to be reposed in this light. It is not to ask “what is Master?” or “what is Slave?” but rather: “Who wills himself Master? Who wills himself Slave? Who wills the active? Who wills the reactive?” This sets the stage for the dramatization of *types* for a genealogist to study, and it is Thought itself that enacts this drama.

Dramatization is the concrete material manifestation of *will* in objects. It is not a particular person or group of persons that can be attributed as the “who”, but dramatic personae, dramatic roles played by persons. Dramatic personae and conceptual personae are masks, but we are the masks and the “actors” are the will and the forces that motor our becoming. The will adopts the mask in accordance to the quality of forces. It is an odd premise, for this is to state that forces inhabit the body and give life to the conscious “I” that speaks and thinks that it is the scene of action. Not only does this presume that the thinking subject is empty and static without forces that allow for its movement, but

⁷⁰ Ibid 17.

⁷¹ Ibid 17.

this temporal present in which the thinking subject resides is equally hollow, a mask for an infinite past and infinite future.

It is in this *dramatized* world—be it either negative or affirmative—that two ideas of Being compete: Hegel’s Being that defines itself through contradictions and the internalized limit, and Deleuze’s Being that is determined from a more transcendental milieu of sense, by way of the virtual-actual distinction. Hegel’s Being is of the order of negative determinations, and Deleuze’s Being is the basis of a pluralist empiricist joy and affirmation of a difference that cannot be reduced to a unity. “Hegel interprets existence from the standpoint of the unhappy conscience but the unhappy conscience is only the Hegelian version of the bad conscience,”⁷² the means by which life is accused in order to be justified, existence placed under a universalizing power, a unity to give this existence meaning. It is in this way that life is denied in order to be justified. A Hegelian may not feel comfortable with this somewhat dire reading. For Hegel, focusing on existence itself is an incomplete idea, for despite locating the grounds for all existents, these grounds being themselves existents, there is still the question of some overarching plan or design that gives these interconnections between grounds and consequents meaning beyond mere relativity. It is not that life, for a Hegelian, is denied outright, but that it remains as an incomplete process in the working out of the Idea.⁷³ However, as we stated above, Deleuze is also not interested in merely focusing on existence. Rather than to focus on essence, Deleuze wants to retire the opposition entirely instead of attempting to perform an act of synthesis. It is in this way that neither Hegel nor Deleuze want to focus entirely on one at the expense of the other, but it is Deleuze’s argument that we can forget the

⁷² Ibid 19.

⁷³ See G.W.F. Hegel, *Logic: Being Part One of the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences*. Trans. William Wallace (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975) §123, p. 180.

negative process by which we understand the relation of essence and existence as oppositional.

Bad conscience is the internalization of blame (it's my fault), the vengeful blame issued by those of *ressentiment* (it's your fault). Bad conscience is the ass that bears everything, even this blame. The Slave who seeks to be praised for his labour feels the need to have his power recognized but does so only by blaming others, by shifting fault elsewhere, for this is the method by which the reactive forces limit what active forces can do. Rather than affirm himself, the Slave blames the Master for not being recognized and in turn blames existence for making him a Slave.

In terms of chance and affirmation, Deleuze sees that it is the figure of Hegel who plays with loaded dice, who projects the outcome right from the beginning. If to "know how to affirm chance is to know how to play,"⁷⁴ Hegel has no sense of play if Thought determines the becoming of Being, and so his "creations" from play are static identities that do not become, relying as he does on a model of representation and analogy. "The bad player counts on several throws of the dice, on a great number of throws. In this way he makes use of causality and probability to produce a combination that he sees as desirable."⁷⁵ The desired result becomes an end, irrespective of chance—indeed *denying* the truly affirmative nature of chance itself. "To abolish chance by holding it in the grip of causality and finality, to anticipate a result instead of affirming necessity—these are all the operations of a bad player. They have their root in reason, but what is the root of reason? The spirit of revenge."⁷⁶ Finality sullies life, presupposing that the aleatory character of life can be roughly dismissed and culled by imposing the necessity of false

⁷⁴ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 26.

⁷⁵ Ibid 26-7.

⁷⁶ Ibid 27.

unity: "That the universe has no purpose, that it has no end to hope for any more than it has causes to be known—this is the certainty necessary to play well."⁷⁷ Recourse to necessary *dialectical* reason is to reconstitute abstract universals, fostering an inverted image of thought that regards Being from below, and so therefore not to truly apprehend the concrete conditions of Being, despite Hegel's promise that this would be the result of his method of negative determination.

Negative determination produces the Being of the identical. In Deleuze's view, Hegel's conception of Being is that which returns as identical, as sameness; the concept of Being does not change throughout in any substantive or diverse way, but rather becomes more refined through a singular path or strategy to determine it through contradictions. It is by this method that Being is made to resemble itself, but also oppose its initial state as undetermined with its final state of complete negative determination in the absolute. However, the eternal return is not the oneness or sameness of Being that repeats, but the difference of Being in its constant becoming that repeats. If eternal return had a teleological ontology, there would be an end to the will to power insofar as there could be an end to willing, and the different modes or ways in which Being is expressed would also have an end. For the eternal return to be viable, neither of these ontological claims can hold if Being is said to be affirmatively differential.

We can here complete the picture of eternal return as active nihilism, as Deleuze's unstated completion of Hegel's dialectic and the will to nothingness. The eternal return is the extreme form of nihilism insofar as nihilism in itself is incomplete; the will to nothingness has not yet reached its zenith. The eternal return completes this nihilism,

⁷⁷ Ibid 27.

making “the nihilistic will whole and complete.”⁷⁸ It is when reactive forces break their alliance with the will to nothingness that nihilism can come to its completion, and the eternal return can in turn make “*negation a negation of reactive forces themselves*.”⁷⁹ In other words, the reactive forces that abide by this logic of negation will in turn succumb to this logic themselves. It is a means of pushing the Hegelian dialectic to its most absolute extreme, in this way the critique of Hegel taking form as an assertion that the Hegelian dialectic is in need of a more thorough completion. At the close of this negative nihilism, the process of counter-actualization as the rupture begins in earnest as *active* negation. The eternal return “alone expresses the becoming-active of forces: forces become active insofar as reactive forces deny and suppress themselves in the name of a principle which, a short time ago, was still assuring their conservation and triumph.”⁸⁰ It is only through an active negation that reactive forces can become active, by denying incomplete nihilism and affirming their difference.

The second selection of the eternal return presents a new consequence for Hegel’s dialectic. Hegelian actualization is the muting or suspension of true difference, the ontological claim that Being can only be made whole as identity with the concept, but counter-actualization (the active nihilism that makes the move from the actual to the virtual) is the process by which certain modes of Being that cannot affirm difference and their eternal return are removed by a process of selection. This selection is not performed by a thinking subject, but rather occurs in a more transcendental field—the logic of negation negates itself, and only the affirmative differences return. In later works, Deleuze employs the analogy of genetics to illustrate his point: genes are selected prior to

⁷⁸ Ibid 69.

⁷⁹ Ibid 70.

⁸⁰ Ibid 70.

the formation and actualization of a body, and as much as two bodies can select one another for the purposes of reproducing a degree of sameness in another body, the true selective test occurs in the *a-subjective milieu* of genes in relation in a spontaneous evolution that involves the necessity of chance for the transmission of genetic traits. What is produced is not sameness or identity, but difference that is not necessarily subsumable under the thesis-antithesis of the “parents”. And although one may attempt to predict the outcome of two genetic entities as to their product when placed in relation, one can only produce probability and not absolute certainty. In this sense, one plus two does not always equal three, and so Deleuze wants to point out that there is always a stochastic factor in the genesis of the new. But more importantly, the two terms that enter into relation are misunderstood if it is assumed that the one is a contradiction of the other.

Affirmation of the necessity of these aleatory outcomes means that, contrary to the dialectical procedure of determining the whole through development and negations, Being is already fully expressed and immanent. Moreover, the thought *of* Being is not Being as such for it is merely a reflection or representation of Being. To attribute being to a representation—i.e., where Hegel can still be said to possess some Kantianism—is to make an ontological claim on representation and not on Being. Deleuze and Nietzsche do not require what they perceive to be the theatrical performance of serialized determinations attempting to reach the harmonious endpoint, but rather wish to affirm a full Being and wholeness right from the start. Hegel’s Being shows signs of being proximate to the ontological truth of Being, but his process of the dialectic sullies its fullness, makes it heavy with *ressentiment*, and denounces *sense* as naïve consciousness. However, it is this very move from sense to consciousness that ushers Being down to the

depths from active affirmation to reactive negativity. Deleuze implies that if Hegel had invested more importance to sense, he may have discovered forces to be interpreted and values to be evaluated, bringing him closer to the truly immanent character of Being that affirms its difference, that being of the sensible, the being of becoming.

According to Deleuze, Hegel's conceptuality is a dogmatic image of thought, and that such methods of negative determination in thought cannot produce new ways of thinking.⁸¹ In a new image of thought, Deleuze states that it is necessary to rethink the body. For Deleuze, consciousness is nothing more than a symptom of forces expressed. Instead of the Hegelian ontological model that posits a stable conscious self that wends its way through a series of negative determinations to gain a more sophisticated understanding of itself at the very end of its journey, very little attention is paid to the body and the forces that inhabit this body. This consciousness is mapped on a world of superior values, using these values as a model or litmus to determine its own perfection or realization in the world. But consciousness "is never self-consciousness, but the consciousness of an ego in relation to a self which is not itself conscious...This is the servility of consciousness; it merely testifies to the 'formation of a superior body'."⁸² Deleuze states that a body is not the medium of forces waging a pitched battle for supremacy in the body as if the body was the third term in a synthesis, rather "all reality is already quantity of force. There are nothing but quantities of force in mutual 'relations of tension'."⁸³ A *body* is a non-numerical quantity of forces in relative degrees of tension, of affinity. "What defines a body is this relation between dominant and dominated forces.

⁸¹ In our fourth chapter below, we will encounter Deleuze's refined position on the dogmatic image of thought as it appears in *Difference and Repetition*.

⁸² Ibid 39.

⁸³ Ibid 40.

Every relationship of forces constitutes a body—whether it is chemical, biological, social or political. Any two forces being unequal, constitute a body as soon as they enter into a relationship.”⁸⁴ It is the tension, not an equalization, that make a body. In a sense, the “unity” of the body is dialectical without opposition, and without a third term. The dialectic, in relying on opposition, “is unaware of the real element from which forces, their qualities and their relations derive” and so can only traffic in symptoms.⁸⁵ In Deleuze’s view, opposition is merely abstract thought’s imposition upon how things really are, but there are more subtle and differential elements than the dialectic can assess with its method of negative determination.

Deleuze views consciousness as always trying to rig outcomes, attempting to claim its false dominance over bodies through its process of negative determination, but “the body is always the fruit of chance” more astonishing than consciousness and spirit.⁸⁶ It is astonishing precisely because we have yet to truly comprehend what a body can *do*, but rather that Thought imposes the fiction of limitation upon it, making its definition as a body depend on its reactions. The body is the vehicle of becoming and action, the scene of difference; consciousness is overcoded and habitually tied to its image of thought. Without taking the notion of the body seriously, there can be no sense in speaking of movement.

However, what of this distinction of active and reactive forces in the body? We have only yet begun to broach this subject of what they are and what their relation entails:

Being composed of a plurality of irreducible forces the body is a multiple phenomenon, its unity is that of a multiple phenomenon, a ‘unity of

⁸⁴ Ibid 40.

⁸⁵ Ibid 157.

⁸⁶ Ibid 40; which is to say that the difference that precedes the thought of the body is more transcendental than either Thought or the Hegelian Absolute.

domination'. In a body the superior or dominant forces are known as *active* and the inferior of dominant forces are known as *reactive*.⁸⁷

Active and reactive forces are the differential element of a body, and these forces that enter into relation

do not have quantity without each of them having, at the same time, the quality corresponding to their difference in quantity as such. This difference between forces qualified according to their quantity as active or reactive will be called *hierarchy*.⁸⁸

The continuing problem with consciousness is that it “sees the organism from its own point of view and understands it in its own way; that is to say, reactively.”⁸⁹ It is in this sense that “the organism is always seen from the petty side, from the side of its reactions.”⁹⁰ Consciousness cannot apprehend active forces, for the domain of active forces is the pre-conscious or the unthought. Even reactive forces present a problem for consciousness insofar as “reactions cannot be grasped or scientifically understood as forces if they are not related to superior forces—forces of *another type*. The reactive is a primordial quality of force but one which can only be interpreted as such in relation to and on the basis of the active.”⁹¹ Instead of being able to interpret the quality of reactive forces, consciousness only sees *reactions* via a model of causation. The Hegelian method of privileging Thought cannot account for an explanation of active forces and their quality for,

by nature, they escape consciousness...Consciousness merely expresses the relation of certain reactive forces to the active forces which dominate them. Consciousness is essentially reactive; this is why we do not know what a body can do, or what activity is capable of.⁹²

⁸⁷ Ibid 40.

⁸⁸ Ibid 40.

⁸⁹ Ibid 41.

⁹⁰ Ibid 41.

⁹¹ Ibid 42.

⁹² Ibid 41.

Active forces are preconscious, and it is for this reason that Hegel's method of negative determinations by way of Thought can gain no purchase on the real conditions of Being, for Thought lapses into the tacit belief in the supremacy of consciousness to determine the quality of Being. If Thought is the apparatus that motors these negative determinations, which will does this Thought serve? Could we not question the validity of Thought and all of its subsequent determinations? Is there a new way of thinking of Being that does not rely upon this image of thought that has hitherto dominated ontology? A new image of Thought will not be possible if we continue to privilege the primacy of Thought at the expense of Being, a Thought that will act as governor of Being's quiddity. The theory of forces demonstrates the rupture in the false dominating power of Thought, and this is witnessed in the underlying forces in Being.

Why do we need a new image of Thought, and why does Hegel not provide it?

The dialectic

carefully avoids asking the preliminary question: '*Who* must undertake critique, who is fit to undertake it?' They talk of reason, spirit, self-consciousness and man; but to *whom* do all these concepts refer? They do not tell us who man or spirit is. Spirit seems to hide forces which are ready to be reconciled with any kind of power, with Church and State.⁹³

When we judge false morality from the basis of moral facts, we remain poor critics insofar as we treat morality itself as some sacred terrain:

This is why Nietzsche, in this domain as in others, thinks that he has found the only possible principle of a total critique in what he calls 'perspectivism': there are no moral facts or phenomena, but only a moral interpretation of phenomena...there are no illusions of knowledge, but

⁹³ Ibid 88.

knowledge itself is an illusion; knowledge is an error, or worse, a falsification.⁹⁴

Total critique is that of the object, whereas former attempts at critique always mistakenly began with the subject, the thinking consciousness as its foundation from which all “facts” of the moral or ontological order pertain to and issue from. This is the “great error” of philosophy: presupposition of thought as the correct measure of all things, and thought is particularly at its weakest when it deals in the currency of the moral; that is, *thought as of yet does not know how to evaluate and interpret the forces and their relation*. Therefore, the blindness of thought to the forces that undergird Being is the creation of an inverted image of thought. Thought, when it fails to interpret forces, cannot think, feel or perceive anything new or differently in accordance with the differential becoming that constitutes every Being of becoming:

In Nietzsche, principles are never transcendental; it is these very principles which are replaced by genealogy. Only the will to power as genetic and genealogical principle, as legislative principle, is capable of realizing internal critique. Only the will to power makes a transmutation possible.⁹⁵

New ways of feeling, thinking, and evaluating—the properties of the Nietzschean Overman—cannot appeal to the “facts” already established by Thought and its valuations, but must rather establish a new and concrete *practice*. In contrast, Deleuze views the Hegelian dialectic as an inverted image of this will to power, and that all the dialectic can do is to skim the surface of interpretation and never get beyond mere symptoms.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Ibid 90; the implications of this statement can be seen as a nascent form in Foucault’s own claim—using the genealogical method in his discursive analysis of social practices—that knowledge is socially constructed rather than transcendently guaranteed.

⁹⁵ Ibid 91.

⁹⁶ Ibid 157.

Deleuze boldly claims that the Primacy of Consciousness is mere Representation. In order to understand this in terms of his critique of Hegel, it is necessary that we view the idea of the will to power in light of the Master-Slave dialectic in order to give the context to Deleuze's second major claim against Hegel in terms of Thought. This differs slightly from what was presented above because it deals precisely with the issue of recognition.

Recognition is the problem central to the identity of Being. "In Hegel, consciousness wants to be recognized by another and represented as self-consciousness."⁹⁷ This comparative strategy of consciousnesses illustrates the power relation as a representation, and this does not permit that a consciousness can internally differentiate itself without the need of an Other to recognize it as such. Be it the relation of the Master and Slave or need and an object, this definition of power can only be representational for it relies on an external agency. Contrary to this view of power, the will to power does not rely on such external agency. In the case of the Master-Slave dialectic, there is no real sense of the Master; that is, what we (re)present to ourselves as "the master is the idea of him formed by the slave, the idea formed by the slave when he imagines himself in the master's place, it is the slave as he is when he actually triumphs."⁹⁸ In succeeding to the position of Master, to the representation of Master the Slave projects, the Slave is still a slave, but a Slave triumphant according to the triumph of reactive forces. In Hegel, we are not privy to what a real Master looks like, but rather the power relation is one of representation instead of a true feeling of power itself. When we desire recognition, we are in a sense asking to be judged, measured against something

⁹⁷ Ibid 80.

⁹⁸ Ibid 81.

outside of us, and what it is to be recognized in the one who desires it is the transcendent value of “good” (for example) which is nothing more than an abstract term, a representation. The one who desires recognition, making recognition an object, asks to be judged according to transcendent values as good or useful:

When we make power the object of representation we necessarily make it dependent upon the factor according to which a thing is represented or not, recognized or not. Now, only values which are already current, only accepted values, give criteria of recognition in this way.⁹⁹

The Slave is the one who seeks recognition, for it is the Slave who cannot affirm difference and make difference the object of an affirmation. Instead, the Slave negates difference and seeks completion and determination outside of the self—recognition by an Other—thereby attributing privilege to the inverted image of thought from where judgement is issued.

But these values do not truly exist; they are fictions that are a product of the denial of life, the Ass who affirms and bears the weight of all imposed false values and projects them as the object of willing. However, the image of Master that the Slave projects is a mere representation of power, fiat mastership, for the “notion of representation poisons philosophy: it is the direct product of the slave and of the relations between slaves, it constitutes the worse, most mediocre and most base interpretation of power.”¹⁰⁰ And indeed, “the whole conception of the will to power, from Hobbes to Hegel, presupposes the existence of established values that wills seek only to have attributed to themselves.”¹⁰¹ The true conception of the will to power is not in the obedience to already established values, but in the creation of *new* values.

⁹⁹ Ibid 81.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid 81.

¹⁰¹ Ibid 81.

Established values are attributed and are fortified by struggle: bloody contradictions that are overseen by established values, and established values that result from these struggles: “the only values it creates are those of the triumphant slave.”¹⁰² A struggle between such terms as “good” and “evil” is not creative, does not produce difference, nor is it an affirmation of difference. These pitched battles between established values are “the means by which the weak prevail over the strong, because they are the greatest number.”¹⁰³ The affirmative quality of the will to power does not depend on these reactive, uncreative struggles precisely because these struggles always have an objective, and one side always seeks to be recognized by the other, to declare *triumph of the same*. The established values that enter into conflict do not become something else, but rather in triumph declare their sameness, showing themselves to have prevailed without being altered. Good remains good at the end of the struggle against evil, just as the Slave remains Slave contra the master, and Being remains Being at the end of its struggle with the Other. The primary difference of this repetition is dependent upon conflict with an outside force: good repeats itself because it is recognized as distinct from evil in a conflict. What is gained is only a further determination or “perfection” of a value because it was forced by the external property of conflict with its other to adapt, and adaptation is not spontaneous or creative, but rather reactive and slavish.

Dialectics poses as tragedy, and indeed has all the familiar elements or components of the formulaic tragedy. Deleuze states that “the whole dialectic operates and moves in the element of *fiction*. How could its solution not be fictitious when its

¹⁰² Ibid 82.

¹⁰³ Ibid 82; this is an elaboration of Nietzsche’s claim that “one has always to arm the strong against the weak.” See Friedrich Nietzsche, *Writings from the Late Notebooks*. Trans. Kate Sturge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) 259.

problems themselves are?”¹⁰⁴ In the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Spirit leaves its “naïve” setting in the purely empirical state of Nature and wends its torturous way of despair, through a series of conflicts and contradictions where it discovers more about itself as it discovers what it is not, until finally it reaches its zenith in its own full self-realization of the Idea. In sum, the hero of humble beginnings sets out into the world, articulates himself through struggles, gains recognition for his exploits, but is always alienated from himself until the very end when he returns “home.” It is the predictable story of Hercules who must conquer over adversity, set the world to rights by abolishing all the different beasts of the land, to perform the highly negative twelve labours to gain recognition from a jealous cousin, and to finally be accepted into the pantheon of the gods as a hero. But the price of this service is his own death: the hero only becomes as such when he dies; Hegelian Being only truly becomes Being when becoming stops and Being itself is unmoving in some full present as identical to itself. The dialectic is

not a tragic vision of the world but, on the contrary, the death of tragedy, the replacement of the tragic vision by a theoretical conception (with Socrates) or a Christian conception (with Hegel). What has been discovered in Hegel’s early writings is in fact the final truth of the dialectic: modern dialectic is the truly Christian ideology. It wants to justify life and submit it to the labour of the negative.¹⁰⁵

Being becomes mere conception, a product of negativity, which is to say that Being is no longer aligned with life—it is merely its denial.

From the standpoint of reactive ethics, life is culpable for our suffering, for it has endowed us with self-consciousness. We are alienated from Nature, forever denied the Edenic existence of simplicity and pleasure. It is life that has doomed us to this situation,

¹⁰⁴ Ibid 158.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid 18; See also 159: Deleuze is more bold when he states: “The dialectic is the natural ideology of *ressentiment* and bad conscience...It is a fundamentally Christian way of thinking, from one end to the other; powerless to create new ways of thinking and feeling.”

life that confuses our perceptions, throws us into error, and it is only reason—reason as originating from, and justified by, a transcendent force of some divine or unified will—that will resolve our alienation and justify existence. Existence is made a crime, an excess, for it is unjust in that we are made to suffer, and it justifies atonement insofar as this suffering is necessarily sanctified by a divine will or unified order. It was the creation of a supersensible world that made existence that much more unbearable, and life guilty for seemingly resisting reason's desire to create stable unity. Even Hegel's attempt to make Spirit the absolute reality *behind* this dualism of Nature and Reason is, in Deleuze's view, an implicit accusation of life, for even in this operation Hegel wants to integrate the allegedly irrational into his perfect system. It is this myth of the perfect and complete system that limits the will, creating for history a telos, and forces all of existence to bow its head before the sword of transcendent values and the absolute. It is the assumption that existence requires perfection and completion, and the way to achieve this is through Thought, for even in the *Logic* Hegel begins with empty Being and places the charge on negative determination (Thought) to fill the content of this Being, and then proceeds to "fill in" the remainder of existence by recovering contents and forcing these to fit into a system of the absolute. The premise that redirects this method of dialectical negation is that of a purely immanent, full being. This Being does not require systematization; that is, it does not require a conscious strategy of completion or perfection in alliance with negative thought determination. Being is already fully determined by the forces that possess it and by the multiplicity of sense it expresses:

The imputation of wrongs and responsibilities, the bitter recrimination, the perpetual accusation, the *ressentiment*—this is the pious interpretation of existence. 'It's your fault, it's your fault', until the accused, in turn says,

‘it’s my fault’ and the desolated world resounds with all these moans and their echoes.¹⁰⁶

The Christian nihilistic view of existence not only judged existence to be blameworthy, but also faulty and responsible. Sentencing life to shuffle through this narrow corridor of guilt, blame and sin is to burden it with *our* reactive image of life, to force life to submit and internalize this limited image, as being ancillary to thought alone, answerable to thought in all respects. “When existence is posited as blameworthy only one step is needed in order to make it responsible.”¹⁰⁷

We come now to the question of how this new image of thought benefits Deleuze, and to the justification for thinking of the being *of* the sensible, and of his pluralist empiricism. A pluralist empiricism does not aim to make life blameworthy: “Innocence is the truth of multiplicity. It derives immediately from the principles of the philosophy of force and will. Every thing is referred to a force capable of interpreting it; every force is referred to what it is able to do, from which it is inseparable. It is this way of being referred, of affirming and being affirmed, which is particularly innocent.”¹⁰⁸ The interpretation of forces brings us closer to the nature of Being than imposing facts upon it that have their seat in conscious reflection, in Thought. Facts can only serve as a representation of existence, and to take representation as the entirety of the real is to impoverish the real itself insofar as it is made to depend too much on the faculty of Thought. It is to this end that Hegel’s actualization of the self-identical is a product of taking representations for actual modes of Being, for it is the faculty of Thought that relies too heavily upon identity and recognition as a negative measure in order to

¹⁰⁶ Ibid 21.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid 22.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid 22.

determine a Being that, according to Deleuze, was already full and internally differentiated from the start.

The system of blame and guilt makes a mockery of force and will, making them victims of transcendent values:

We create grotesque representations of force and will, we separate force from what it can do, setting it up in ourselves as 'worthy' because it holds back from what it cannot do, but as 'blameworthy' in the thing where it manifests precisely the force it has. We split the will in two, inventing a neutral subject endowed with free will to which we give the capacity to act and refrain from action.¹⁰⁹

We must pay special attention to what a philosophy of action is. The Master *acts* and the Slave *speculates*. Action is enjoyment and reaction is a labour insofar as reactivity depends on something external to be able to respond. It is not through endless speculation that we gain special access to existence, but through the acting and willing character of existence itself. The reactive Slave is nothing more than the character of Hamlet, always speculating as to whether or not to act, always waiting for something external to facilitate action. However, this external dependency is re-action, a response to a conditioned set of circumstances. Hamlet is an archetype of speculation and reaction par excellence, placing his potential to act in reserve. What prevents his hand from striking down his uncle is his belief in the law, the law of the land and the people that limits what he can do. We even witness this indifferent speculation in the famous "To be or not to Be" speech, for he poses the question of his own existence *as though* he were a neutral subject endowed with free will given the option to act or refrain from action.

By misconstruing the true character of the will, "we deny existence itself, we replace interpretation by depreciation, we invent depreciation as a way of interpreting and

¹⁰⁹ Ibid 23.

evaluating.”¹¹⁰ It is by this depreciating of the true vivacious and dynamic character of life, holding to its negative image, separating Being from forces, that renders existence culpable. The play of forces is what undergirds existence, and this play is a constant *becoming*:

there is no being beyond becoming, nothing beyond multiplicity...Multiplicity is the inseparable manifestation, essential transformation and constant symptom of unity. Multiplicity is the affirmation of unity; becoming is the affirmation of being. The affirmation of becoming is itself being, the affirmation of multiplicity is itself one.¹¹¹

We cannot think the being of becoming without also thinking of the affirmation of becoming: “*Return is the being of that which becomes*. Return is the being of becoming itself, the being which is affirmed in becoming. The eternal return as law of becoming, as justice and as being.”¹¹² All that can affirm the being of becoming is that which can affirm its eternal return. It is a frightening “Yes” to becoming itself, an affirmation of this becoming, and a firm “No” against that way of denying life that is incapable of affirming life as multiplicity.

The problem with knowledge is that it

sets itself up as end, as judge, as supreme instance...the opposition between knowledge and life and the operation by which knowledge makes itself judge of life are symptoms, only symptoms. Knowledge *is* opposed to life.¹¹³

Although knowledge is opposed to life insofar as it finds in existence error or tries to impose limitations (the reactive strategy of the law, of a means of disciplining, punishing, or assimilating difference), it is still *of* it, at least as a symptom of life. But the type of knowledge that feels fit to judge life only proclaims verdicts over symptoms, facts over

¹¹⁰ Ibid 23.

¹¹¹ Ibid 23-4.

¹¹² Ibid 24.

¹¹³ Ibid 100.

interpretations, universals over singularities, never capable of judging forces, and so knowledge of this type belongs to the reactive contingent of forces. An active knowledge, according to Deleuze, would be an *active thought*, both creative and productive of differences. Judgement in knowledge ceases to be the proper measure of life, but is substituted in active thought by interpretation and evaluation. Again, the false power of the Slave in the Master's place is only a representation of power just as knowledge's ascension to life by way of judgement is also a representation of power rather than real affirmative power. This representation of life is all that serves thought when in fact life is not *for* thought; thought is a product of life. Encounters in and through life produce new ways of thinking, and it is folly for thought to assume dominance over life merely because it can think the sameness of Being and think away the difference of Being in a resolved unity. When knowledge renders life intelligible, all it produces is symptoms; when knowledge renders life sensible, it assumes the position of forces that are in the charge of producing the sensible, and so again knowledge can only produce a symptom of the sensible. Deleuze suggests an alternative:

A thought that would go to the limit of what life can do, a thought that would lead life to the limit of what it can do? A thought that would *affirm* life instead of a knowledge opposed to life. Life would be the active force of thought, but thought would be the affirmative power of life. Both would go in the same direction, carrying each other along, smashing restrictions, matching each other step for step, in a burst of unparalleled creativity. Thinking would then mean *discovering, inventing, new possibilities of life*.¹¹⁴

Rather than a mediate relation between Thought and Being toward a unity, Deleuze issues his own ought: that (active) Thought and Being work in tandem in going to the limit of their power, but during all this to *retain their singularity and not dissolve one*

¹¹⁴ Ibid 101.

into the other, or make one subservient and the other dominant according to a negative dialectic that would pattern such relation by recognition and identity.

It is not that *all* thought sets limits to life, or vice versa, but rather that life “goes beyond the limits that knowledge fixes for it, but thought goes beyond the limits that life fixes for it.”¹¹⁵ Thought and Being are *coextensive*. For this to work, there needs to be a retirement of the old dogmatic image of thought. But the very fact that there can be a concert of life and thought without negative determination is the very principle by which new thought can emerge and how being can truly be immanent *without dialectical negation*. Essentially, if the determination of truth depends on its opposite, error, to define itself, what value is this truth? What of a truth that can affirm itself *without* passing into its opposite? Deleuze poses this question to Hegel. There *must* be an affirmative, less dependent way of going about the determination of Being.

It is the Hegelian dialectic that seeks to recover contents without questioning whether these contents are noble or base:

The free thinker has the strange craze for recovering every content, everything positive, but without questioning the nature of these self-styled positives or the origin or quality of the corresponding human forces...The free thinker wants to recover the content of religion but never considers that religion might in fact contain man's basest forces, forces which we might want to leave behind.¹¹⁶

Hegelianism has no subtle sense of *evaluation* or a means of *interpretation* that does not attempt to *ground facts*. For Deleuze, the dialectical method is beguiled by its own image, posing general questions, but complicit with its categories, assuming human consciousness as the fundamental beginning and ending of the question of Being. The process that leads toward self-articulation of the self is a reactive odyssey, for as the self

¹¹⁴ Ibid 101.

¹¹⁶ Ibid 60.

encounters the limits of law, limits in itself—indeed everything in terms of limit—it sloughs off difference, allows itself to be separated from what it can do. The self becomes wholly reactive at the very end: an inert and reactive entity who triumphs over active forces and their difference. The Slave takes the Master's chair, but still speaks in the tongue of a slave, still performs the reactive operation of a slave. Instead of the self adhering to the statement of "become what you are" (which means to affirm one's difference, and to make this difference the object of affirmation), the dialectic demands that one "become what one is not, to deny what one initially was" (to begin with an empty abstract form of Being and to recover these contents through negative determinations until one is full and perfected). The sophistication or perfection of this Being by the recovering of contents through negation is the reactive form of hierarchy insofar as any degree of perfection or sophistication will depend on *judgement*, this judgement formed by way of an *analogous* relation between the form and its content.

The new image of thought is the thought of affirmative difference and the eternal return. The eternal return critiques the alleged truth of the equilibrium state, that if it was possible that an equilibrium state could be achieved, the universe would have already achieved it. This is contingent upon an infinite model of time:

The infinity of past time means that becoming cannot have started to become, that it is not something that has become. But, not being something that has become it cannot be a becoming something. Not having become, it would already be what it is becoming—if it were becoming something.¹¹⁷

This means that if the past was infinite, becoming would have already achieved an equilibrium state *and* to posit this final state means that becoming would not have budged from its initial state. Deleuze questions Hegel's teleology: "If becoming becomes

¹¹⁷ Ibid 47.

something why has it not finished long ago? If it is something which has become then how could it have started to become?"¹¹⁸ If we align our thinking of time to a full and privileged present at the expense of an infinite past and infinite future that bifurcates this present as to make it hollow and empty—where no motion or becoming is at all possible—there is no way of apprehending the thought of a pure becoming. The way out of this problem of becoming is the thought of eternal return:

All we need to do to think this thought [of pure becoming] is to stop believing in being as distinct from and opposed to becoming or to believe in the being of becoming itself. What is the being of that which becomes, of that which neither starts nor finishes becoming? *Returning is the being of that which becomes.*¹¹⁹

This is the fundamental error in the Hegelian logic as Deleuze sees it: to oppose Being to Becoming, to subsume Becoming as merely a moment in Being that transcends itself and disappears in a resolved synthetic unity. The seduction of this way of thinking is the logical appeal of negative determination insofar as the becoming of Being is put into motion and stopped in turn by this negative thought that qualifies Being and reduces Being to a final product of identity.

A new image of thought furnishes us with a total and positive critique. A total and positive critique allows for the creation of new concepts, for in the active negation of all established values, the stage is clear for new ways of thinking, feeling, perceiving and being. It is reactive values and the dogmatic image of thought that hinder creativity, that perform a reactive strategy of separating from active forces what they can do, will and create—which, of course, is to say that *action, willing, and creating* are synonymous aspects. Concepts judged based on utility are at the heart of *ressentiment*, an ignorance of

¹¹⁸ Ibid 47.

¹¹⁹ Ibid 48.

the genealogy of forces. Utility, to whatever ends that may be, including the formation of a stable unity at the end of history, is to rely on abstract relations in order to make such gains. Utility and finality are united in this aspect:

the taste for replacing real relations between forces by an abstract relation which is supposed to express them all, as a measure, seems to be an integral part of science and also of philosophy. In this respect Hegel's objective spirit is no more valid than the no less 'objective' concept of utility.¹²⁰

This abstract relation always results in

replacing real activities (creating, speaking, loving etc.) by the third party's perspective on these activities: the essence of the activity is confused with the gains of the third party, which he claims that he ought to profit from, whose benefits he claims the right to reap.¹²¹

To circumvent reliance upon the passivity of concepts and to study action rather than sully it with abstract relations entails a threefold method: symptomatology (interpretation of phenomena as symptoms of forces being expressed), typology (interpretation of forces as qualities, either active or reactive), and genealogy (evaluation of forces and their relation to the will to power, the values of nobility and baseness as their criteria).

¹²⁰ Ibid 74.

¹²¹ Ibid 74.

Chapter Three: Critical Forces: True Critique or Mere Criticism?

The worst readers are those who behave like plundering troops: they take away a few things they can use, dirty and confound the remainder, and revile the whole.

--Friedrich Nietzsche, Assorted Opinions and Maxims

There are several thinkers who assert that the entire Deleuze-Hegel debate has become stale, only rehashing the same terrain and that therefore committed Deleuzians ought to be taking Deleuze's philosophical gains seriously, not getting bogged down with fruitless debate, and freely create concepts.¹ Although we do acknowledge the importance of this innovative feature of Deleuzianism, and despite the fact that this debate is going two decades old, it still behooves us to return to and rearticulate this debate. In the spirit of Nietzsche, we must clear the stage in an act of active nihilism before we can be free to create concepts. This is not to say that this debate will rage forever. Rather, less focus will be placed on the objections Hegelians and Deleuzians have with one another. Then we will be free to trace out precisely what use and application Deleuzianism has for us.

Although there are many notable critics of Deleuze's Hegel interpretation, we have here selected the most salient and, in our opinion, the most relevant and meticulous critic who seems to best lead the charges against it. The criticism in question takes the form that Deleuze performs an aberrant misreading of Hegelian themes. Houlgate asserts that Deleuze performs violence against the finery of the Hegelian system while at the same time implying that Deleuze is struggling in a theoretical quicksand and sinking faster the more he struggles. It is our intention that we put forth these criticisms in an

¹ Dorothea Olkowski is one notable example of this. See *Gilles Deleuze and the Ruin of Representation* (University of California Press: Berkeley, 1998).

orderly fashion and then attempt to respond with the assistance of strong textual support from Deleuze's principal works. However, of equal importance is that we perform this delicately without prematurely dismissing Hegel or making him a sacrifice in order to further a Deleuzian cause. There are many commentators and critics on either side of this debate; our plan is to trace a fair path between them to revive an argument that may have been lost in the heat of polemics and complicity. In sum, Stephen Houlgate argues that Deleuze's Hegel interpretation is a distortion.

Four years after Hugh Tomlinson's translation of Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy* brought Deleuze into the English-speaking world, there would be a stir among Hegelian scholars about the relevance of Deleuze's critique. In response to the task of how to critically assess this critique of Hegel, Stephen Houlgate's *Hegel, Nietzsche and the Criticism of Metaphysics* devotes a significant portion of his first chapter responding to the popularization of Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche as a critique of Hegelianism.

Houlgate levels three key interrelating criticisms against Deleuze's understanding of Hegel, all of which amount to the claim that Deleuze's interpretation of Hegel is a "distortion."² These key objections are: 1. Deleuze implies that the entire operation of the dialectic is based upon an initial external negation of specific differences between things; 2. Deleuze's aversion to oppositional structures is not consistent insofar as his version of affirmation is essentially opposed to Hegelian negation; 3. Deleuze's fully self-affirmative Being, because it is not negatively determined, can have little value for us. The first criticism is in direct response to the Deleuzian claim that Hegel's Being relies

² Stephen Houlgate, *Hegel, Nietzsche and the Criticism of Metaphysics*, (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1986) 5.

on negation and so is therefore not internally different nor is conceptual difference a true concept of difference. The second and third criticisms are in response to the Deleuzian claim that Hegel's labour of the concept does not provide new ways of thinking.

According to Houlgate's reading, Deleuze's understanding of Hegel's dialectic in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* is in error insofar as Deleuze's version implies that the entire operation of the dialectic is based upon an initial external negation of specific differences between things.³ Houlgate highlights Hegel's strategy, which also indicates why Deleuze's understanding of the Hegelian dialectic is incorrect: "a thing must be *in itself* the negation of something else."⁴ That is, dialectical negation does not begin outside the object, but is already inherent in the object from the very beginning. The reality or specific concreteness of an object depends on negative determination, and the Hegelian dialectic goes to great lengths to demonstrate that any form of affirmative determination (or non determination) would be an impossibility.

For Hegel, negative determination must be necessary and not merely sufficient so that objects can possess quality, for an object without quality has no real existence (or is yet to be determined, determination being the role of consciousness). Without negation, there is no determinateness, no quality, and so no real object.⁵ If Deleuze wants to do away with negative determination in his ontology, then how can his objects be qualified and be made real? Negation is a moment of the reality of the object that results in its affirmation, and by no means the only reality of that object. However, without negative determination, without contradiction in the object, objects cannot have qualities. For example, redness on its own without relation to other colours is mere undetermined

³ Ibid 5.

⁴ Ibid 7.

⁵ Hegel, *Science of Logic*. Trans. A.V. Miller (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1969) 123-5.

abstraction, and so depends on what it is not (green, blue, yellow, etc.) in order that its quality can be realized as a positive content. But the negation that results in determining redness from another colour does not begin, contrarily to Deleuze's interpretation, by merely negating the specific external difference of another colour found outside the initial colour. Rather, there is already something inherent to redness that is negatively determined, just as there is in all the other colours, and so it is their immanent relation by negativity that mutually determines them. In the quality of redness there is already the idea of not-red serving as a moment in the positive constitution of this redness. In this same redness there is both redness and not-redness inherent to it; the specificity or qualified difference of red and not-red is determined in its relation with an actual other thing (such as green) that also possesses the quality of not-red in its constitutive content qua greenness as an idea. The not-redness as the negative quality of red, when put in relation with the not-redness of green, is in this instance green. Therefore, the positive result of this negatively determining relation is both the affirmation of red and green. The difference of red and green must be in thought, not outside it, for it is thought that determines differences between *and in* things.

Houlgate claims that Deleuze's understanding of negation is too limited, and this limitation could be the very source of Deleuze's distortion of Hegel. According to Houlgate, Deleuze views negation as "always either a denial of already qualitatively specified forces, or the secondary consequence of the self-affirmation of already qualitatively specified forces."⁶ Therefore, Houlgate points out, what is lacking in Deleuze's interpretation is negation conceived as that which differentiates forces. According to Houlgate, Deleuze does not recognize the truly immanent character of

⁶ Houlgate, *Hegel, Nietzsche and the Criticism of Metaphysics* 7.

negation in the determination of affirmative being, and so Deleuze's view of dialectical negation is little more than a caricature of Hegel's dialectical negation. By reassigning the negative as a mere after-effect of already qualified forces (leaving us to ponder just how these qualified forces were specified or determined in the first place), we are left with no qualitative identity between affirmative and negative modes of being, but rather return to the rhapsody of empty empirical "thises"—or, to how every being begins with merely affirming and positing itself as full and determined in its content without relation to anything else. Without this relation of negativity, there is no way to qualify being.

These qualitatively specified forces of active and reactive are, for Deleuze, irreducible to conceptual differentiation, and so in Hegelian terms these forces would lack sufficient determination.⁷ Without this determination acting as a proper foundation, these forces would not only remain undifferentiated, but would not even have any reality. And so, if these forces in their already pre-differentiated quality are said to express being fully, then Deleuze is committed to reject a notion of the Other that would otherwise be necessary to determine selfhood, for this Other would be superfluous to the determination of being that is already affirmatively self-determined: "The only true sense of selfhood for Deleuze is that of the affirmative, active mode of being, which affirms its own specific qualities 'immediately' and does not conceive of itself as inherently mediated by negation, as *intrinsically* the negation of the other."⁸

Houlgate's second objection is that Deleuze's aversion to oppositional structures is not consistent insofar as his version of affirmation is essentially opposed to Hegelian negation. Although Deleuze criticizes the dialectical operation for creating oppositions as

⁷ Ibid 7.

⁸ Ibid 8.

fictional concepts for what it takes to be real phenomena, Deleuze himself applies this very structure in his own assertion of affirmative being insofar as he “determines affirmation as essentially *opposed* to negation (in the sense of the negative will to power).”⁹ Negation forms a moment in the will to power, in opposition to the affirmative mode of the will to power. However, despite this oppositional structure in the will to power between negative and affirmative modes, Deleuze is not willing to admit that negation is an inherent and necessary component of affirmation.¹⁰ Instead, the negative is a distinct component *outside* of the affirmative power, or as a secondary by-product of affirmation itself.

If Deleuze fails to recognize the immanent character of negation in the determination of being, says Houlgate, the consequences of following this line of reasoning will be unsavoury. If Being begins as affirmative without any immanent negation inherent to its determination, how can any qualitative difference exist between beings? Houlgate demonstrates this difficulty in reconsidering the Master-Slave dialectic. If the Master is a completely affirmative being without a moment of negation in his determination as an affirmative being, then he can have no shared human identity with the Slave, and so there can be no mediation between the two: the Master continues to exploit the Slave unabated, and the slave continues to be servile consciousness.¹¹ There can be no movement beyond this typology because there is no negation or mediation in this relationship unless the master has some inherent negativity as a moment in his affirmative constitution as being. Therefore, no equality between Master and Slave can result of their relationship. Houlgate suggests that Deleuze is too driven to denounce and

⁹ Ibid 8.

¹⁰ Ibid 8.

¹¹ Ibid 8.

resist the codifying and objectifying attempts to institutionalize human equality that he therefore rigidly commits himself to the view of an “inalienable typological difference between men.”¹²

Houlgate’s third criticism is that Deleuze’s fully self-affirmative Being, because it is not negatively determined, can have little value for us. The problem that emerges from Deleuze’s position, because it does not rely on negative dialectics, is that selfhood is construed “in an asocial, virtually anarchic way.”¹³ Deleuze sees the Hegelian idea of self-consciousness depending on another consciousness in order to recognize itself as a patently weak, life-denying idea, and that it is only the Slave who views consciousness in these terms, in this dogmatic image of thought. However, undialectical being is asocial and anarchic because it affirms itself right from the start and so does not require any Other to determine itself, and it is anarchic because it will not admit of any law that attempts to limit its self-affirmative power. This variety of Being will not enter into any relation, nor will it subordinate itself to any law that it itself does not create and affirm. And so the question Houlgate asks us is this: even if this purely self-affirmative, lawless being were not an ontological impossibility due to the fact that it lacks negative determination, what *value* could it have for us? This type of being could only be a recluse or a god, either of which do not speak of a satisfactory ontological position that would concern the real conditions of our shared human experience—the very central aim of the Hegelian ontology Deleuze seems to sidestep in his own ontological theory of affirmative difference. Moreover, assigning the role of valuation to affirmative difference as a means of explaining the ontological truth of being will get us nowhere, for it would only create a

¹² Ibid 8.

¹³ Ibid 8.

non-society of lawless masters affirming themselves without any need for one another, and so therefore not really a society.

In summary, Houlgate objects not only to Deleuze's "facile" interpretation of Hegel (adopted mostly from the *Phenomenology of Spirit*), but with Deleuze's ontological position in its entirety. There can be no difference outside of Thought, Thought is what makes the different, and so all difference must be negatively determined. He is committed to this view insofar as he rejects Deleuze's conception of a self-affirmative Being that is internally differential. Moreover, Houlgate warns that Deleuze's self-affirmative being is merely the recipe for an anarchic solipsism, and so fails to truly grasp the nature of Being in terms of real concrete experience.

Rejoinders to Houlgate's criticisms call for a Deleuzian reply. Perhaps we cannot here entirely redeem or salvage all the claims Deleuze makes in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, but rather retain that Deleuze's criticisms of Hegel in that text are primarily of an ethical and political nature thereby providing a point of entry to his ontological critique. We will not entertain a full response to these key criticisms, for our subsequent chapter will manage these in their turn, focusing there on my assertion that Houlgate fails to truly understand Deleuzian difference, and how this difference answers Houlgate's objection about forgetting negation. Rather, we will indicate a few points that indicate the plausibility of Deleuze's critique of Hegel that already appear in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*.

Firstly, Deleuze's version of difference and determination differs from Hegel's, and this distinction must be emphasized; i.e., that for Hegel the role of determination is performed by Thought, and for Deleuze determination occurs in what he calls the virtual.

Secondly, Houlgate's claim that Deleuze relies on opposition as a means of denouncing opposition can gain no purchase on Deleuze's view if serious consideration is paid to what Deleuze means by affirmation as a forgetting of negation rather than an opposition to it. Thirdly, Houlgate's claim that Deleuze's view of the Master has no value for us is perhaps to perform a hasty reading of how Deleuze a) critiques the Master-Slave dialectic and, b) how he advances the view of the noble and the base.

Deleuze will not introduce opposition between terms, for it is one thing to create an opposition between *A* and *B* (*B* is not-*A*, *A* is not-*B*), and entirely another to *distinguish* the two terms as merely different. Red and other colours are not *opposed*, but rather are distinctly different. Deleuze is not willing to oppose two types of negation: in the will to power, the negation of the Yes-saying of the reactive forces (which is implicitly a No-saying to life) is at the same time a form of affirmation. Active forces deny quantitative forms of subsumable differences by affirming qualitative differences. These qualitative differences are not the same as qualities in Hegel, for in Hegel the differentiation of qualities operate to the extreme limit of determination (redness is not-yellowness, not-greenness, etc) whereas for Deleuze qualitative differences are expressions of force *without determination*. That is, there is always the chance that some hitherto unknown quality may express itself in a dynamic relation of forces, and that this quality will not be determined but rather an affect of Being. This affirms the not-yet known, the type of qualitative differences that recognition and the dogmatic image of thought cannot apprehend. Affirmation and negation are not in opposition, for "from the point of view of affirmation, the relation between affirmation and negation is (non-negative) difference, and not opposition" and so in the case of the master, he will "never

perceive negation as negative.”¹⁴ That is, the master’s negation of the slave is merely the product of his own affirmation, but the moment that the master recognizes the slave as a slave, he loses his affirmative power. The Master must not realize that the Slave is pure negation, but rather must see that the Slave’s servile consciousness is just another example of affirmation.¹⁵ Following from this, the slave must not recognize the master’s affirmative power or else risk ceasing to be the slave; the slave’s existence as a slave depends on his viewing everything in terms of the negative, as oppositional. In terms of the will to power, its affirmative mode is to go to one’s own limit. Immediately, at first blush, this *limit* sounds peculiarly Hegelian, but in fact it is quite different: this limit is not internalized in the master as it is for the slave (i.e., brought up to contradiction). The master does not know the limit of his power, yet strives toward it, whereas the slave is aware of limits and opposition everywhere. This is why the master’s negation of the slave is not perceived by the master as a negative limit, but as an affirmative power. Conversely, “the Slave is blind to what makes active negation *another* affirmation; in it he sees only destruction, which he must resist with all his strength in order to be.”¹⁶ And so, the master does not recognize negation and the slave does not recognize affirmation. The master’s active nihilism is perceived by him to be affirmative, while the slave sees this negation by the inverted view, as destructive. This is why it is important to assess the *sense* in which affirmation and negation is spoken, for it is only by the viewpoint of negativity that oppositions can exist, and why the master’s affirmative viewpoints only see differences everywhere irreducible to oppositions. It is not that the master willfully

¹⁴ Vincent Descombes, *Modern French Philosophy*. Trans. L. Scott-Fox and J.M. Harding (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980) 164.

¹⁵ Ibid 164.

¹⁶ Ibid 164.

ignores the negative, but that it is *inconceivable* on his viewpoint. It is this viewpoint of the negative that is carried with Houlgate's reading of Deleuze, for Houlgate locates an opposition between Deleuze and Hegel rather than a non-negative difference. It is to the effect that Houlgate, in his reading of Deleuze, actually appears to comply with the reactive image that Deleuze illustrates. But, Deleuze's often polemical tone in regards to Hegelianism in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* may itself be construed as Deleuze creating an opposition. That is, Deleuze *may* be constructing an opposition either directly or indirectly, but this does not necessarily mean that the philosophical force of the text itself is submitting itself to this opposition. And if indeed Houlgate defends what Deleuze would call the viewpoint of the negative, in order to be true to this viewpoint, Houlgate would not be able to find in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* anything affirmatively different but only oppositions.

Certain steps have already been taken to redeem Deleuze from the charge of merely being in opposition to Hegel. Deleuze's critique of Hegel is, according to Hardt, oblique because he engages proximate enemies: Kant especially.¹⁷ However, this conclusion seems somewhat unsatisfactory and incomplete, an unwillingness to confront the issues of Thought and Being that are continually at stake in the works of Hegel and Deleuze. If we are to rely on this line of argument, we would do little more than provide an excuse for Deleuze, and so render the entire project of comparing the claims of Hegel and Deleuze a moot and irrelevant point, a mere return to Hegelianism. If Deleuze is to stay true to his claim about the affirmative mode of Being, even his active negation of Hegelianism (if that is indeed what he is doing) would have to be performed in such a

¹⁷ See Michael Hardt. *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy* and Daniel W. Smith. "Deleuze, Hegel, and the Post-Kantian Tradition."

way as to be truly affirmative and not a mere opposition. This means to not rely on *objections* which can only multiply *uncreative* critiques, or what we can dub as mere *criticism*. In essence, Deleuze must forget Hegelianism.

Houlgate will not admit a difference that is outside of rational thought, outside of a dialectical system that could effectively absorb this difference and make it into another variable in the synthesis: “all difference is dialectically appropriated to establish the identity.”¹⁸ Difference is constructed by Thought that determines it. What Deleuze proposes as an alternative is effectively a subversion of rationality itself, a questioning of the primacy of consciousness and its appointed role to determine difference. What Deleuze sets out to do is to explore how Being can be determined without negation, without recourse to identity, representation, and recognition. In order to satisfy the demands of this position, Deleuze will need to construct a very clear account of what it means to have a different, new image of thought that does not lapse into these modes of representation and the self-identical. In other words, he must demonstrate how the affirmative mode of being thinks the affirmative. He will reject Hegel’s notion of difference as merely conceptual, a labour of the concept, for it is a kind of negation that implies resolution, an *Aufhebung* of all differences. This demonstration takes place in Deleuze’s later work, *Difference and Repetition*.

Houlgate claims that Deleuze fails to recognize the immanence of negation and mediation in affirmative being. There can be no qualitative identity between affirmative and negative modes of being. This means that Deleuze’s “inalienable typological difference between men” cannot be the institutionalizing ground for equality (especially

¹⁸ Simon Lumsden, “Deleuze, Hegel and the Transformation of Subjectivity,” *The Philosophical Forum* Vol. 33.2 (2002): 152.

in the master-slave dialectic and its resolution), thereby placing legislative restrictions that support equality among people into serious theoretical jeopardy. But here we must pay careful attention to what Deleuze means by *master* and *slave*. The Master-Slave dialectic relies on a structure of opposition, patterned on a universal history of *ressentiment*. To avoid this opposition, and to clarify his view of affirmation without negation, Deleuze adopts Nietzsche's typology of noble and base. In the Master-Slave dialectic, there is reciprocal determination: the Master needs to dominate the Slave in order to be defined as a Master, and the Slave's identity is furnished by being servile to the Master. In Deleuze's view, this is to rely on negative determination, and so to punctuate the innate affirmative difference of the Master and the Slave, he reads them as "types" according to the qualities of nobility and baseness. The "noble" does not see the "base" as a contradiction, but as different. If the noble dominates over the base, it is precisely because the noble affirms the difference of what he is without comparing himself to the base. If the noble sees the base as contradiction, the noble ceases to be noble, for that would be to believe in the fiction of contradiction. Simply put in terms of an analogy, the noble or active force that forgets negation is like the sculptor who sees the final product in the slab of marble and not the surrounding material to be subtracted. In sum, it is a matter of *perspective*: to see things affirmatively or negatively. Following Nietzsche's diagnosis, Deleuze signals to us how the master (as creative being, going to the limit of one's power regardless of and indifferent to the legislative restrictions that prescribe total equality) has been dragged into the position of the slave, beguiled by the contagious character of reactive forces to recognize the slave and to therefore surrender the affirmation of the master. The becoming-reactive of the master is his succumbing to

the viewpoint of the negative, and the slave triumphs. However, the slave is still a slave, for the slave is still in the reactive stage that denies life; a slave crowned is still just a slave—especially when the crown is weighted by a restrictive morality of *ressentiment*, pity and bad conscience. It is the transcendent character of morality that has subordinated the differential and intensive powers of creative being. It is law, patterned upon reactive morality, which acts as the limitation of power rather than the nature of one's own being. For Deleuze, power as embodied by law, is a mere representation of power. The power the noble master exerts is not a representation of power, but will to power: difference, affirmative distinction. Deleuze is well aware of the issue of equality, and makes much ado of it in his critique in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, and he is thoroughly uncompromising about the outcome of retiring equality as a patently reactive measure to subdue active forces. Egalitarianism, be it in the realm of science or ethics, always seeks to equalize differences and forms a kind of modern nihilism that denies the real differences between forces.¹⁹ A superficial analysis might yield the unfairness of Deleuze-Nietzsche's master/noble in relation to the slave/base. An egalitarian perspective would claim that such a disproportion of power disadvantages the slave to the benefit of the master. However, such a claim is weak on the grounds that the slave is a slave by virtue of having not been able to say *No* to affirming everything. Therefore, the slave does not give his affirmative *Yes* to life, and so to upbraid the master for exercising his affirmative power is a symptom of base, petty and reactive morality that only views the world according to what it lacks. In the *Gorgias*, Socrates castigates Callicles' call for the "strong few to lead" by countering that the combined power of the weak many can overpower the strong few. But it is Socrates' understanding of power as representation

¹⁹ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 45.

that sees power in this way, whereas Callicles speaks of power in terms of difference and noble distinction. As a corollary point, Deleuze-Nietzsche's philosophy is one of revolution. As such, what revolution does not have its share of inequality and bloodshed? It is in the preface to Nietzsche's *Human, All Too Human* that it is best articulated: "a victory has been won—a victory? Over what? Over whom? An enigmatic, question-packed, questionable victory, but the *first* victory nonetheless: such bad and painful things are part of the history of the great liberation" and "evaluating on one's own account, this will to *free* will: and how much sickness is expressed in the wild experiments and singularities through which the liberated prisoner now seeks to demonstrate his mastery over things!"²⁰ Moreover, the notion of equality—of equalizing and rendering some utopian harmony through an absolute synthesis—is essentially reactive, a patent form of what Nietzsche would call Christianity as Platonism for the people. Not only does it presuppose the moral legitimacy of equality, but also presupposes that unity will, can, and ought to be achieved as the "greatest good". Even so, this equality will still be unequal insofar as it will be to the detriment of active forces. It is a clear case of applying the leaded yoke around the fastest sprinter so that everyone will "win."²¹

The charge that an undialectical view of life leads to an asocial and anarchistic self, is perhaps the most serious objection that Houlgate raises, for it calls into question the very value of Deleuze's ethical-political view. It is the uncompromising, "asocial"

²⁰ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*. Trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 7.

²¹ Cf. Foucault's preface to Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus*: "Withdraw allegiance from the old categories of the Negative (law, limit, castration, lack, lacuna), which Western thought has so long held sacred as a form of power and an access to reality" and "Do not demand of politics that it restore the 'rights' of the individual, as philosophy has defined them." xiii-xiv.

self that affirms itself without recognition by an Other to which Hegel's master-slave dialectic so depends. Deleuze's answer is difference in-itself, the *unilateral distinction of Being*. The long answer to Houlgate's charge (which curiously rings with the fear of what Deleuze calls "crowned anarchy") is to be found in *Difference and Repetition* and beyond, especially in terms of recognition itself and its host of problems. But more importantly, a claim that Deleuze's ontology fosters or creates as a product of affirmation an anarchic being is a very serious charge. Although this consequence may indeed be true, Houlgate does not elaborate further what he means by anarchic, nor does he make mention of what Deleuze has in mind when he speaks of *hierarchization* of values. In essence, the "law" by which being is determined precedes any concrete law formed by consciousness. It is Deleuze's view that the true necessity is in the higher principles of eternal return and the will to power, and not in what he would consider the false necessity of negative dialectics that cannot, in his view, truly account for the necessary conditions that would bring two terms into opposition. Moreover, it is uncertain if Deleuze's view is truly asocial, for, according to him, all is desire and difference, and it is this motivating quality of pure difference and desire without lack that truly motors the social. In his later works with Félix Guattari, there is much discussion on the notion of bodies, desiring-machines, and their bearing on the socius.²²

James Brusseau's account of Houlgate's criticism of Deleuze is particularly sensitive to the seriousness of Deleuze's dislike of objections. Brusseau says "Every criticism potentially reduces thinking to a chess match of minute complaints and arcane

²² See Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* and *A Thousand Plateaus*. It is there that we find a much more developed idea of what Deleuze (and Guattari) has in mind in terms of the social, and how his earlier ontological and ethical principles are laid out on this "plane of immanence."

refutations having nothing to do with experience.”²³ This is to say that Deleuze despises the variety of objections that create nothing, that are regressively mired in theoretical debate rather than spurring philosophy on to greater and more worthy ambitions (such as creation and experimentation). Objections—if any are to be made at all—should be generative, and should set aside right and wrong in favour of whether it is useful and productive. This view that denies objections and issues that can be declared right and wrong is indeed complementary to the entire ontological position Deleuze wants to take. To frame everything in terms of opposition, as right or wrong, is to lapse into the viewpoint of the negative. Houlgate only *implies* that Deleuze’s understanding of Hegel is wrong, when he actually says that it is a *distortion*. This can be taken in another sense insofar as we can view the term “distortion” as not meaning wrong or an aberrant deviation, but as a *variation*, a different way of interpreting.

Brusseau points out that Deleuze stands outside and distant from Houlgate’s version of Hegel, and so Houlgate draws Deleuze into proximity, which means that he draws Deleuze into the reactive oppositions of Hegelianism.²⁴ Houlgate castigates particular features and instances of Deleuze’s treatment while praising him in turn, a cycle of acceptance and rejection (Deleuze’s reading of Nietzsche is persuasive, his reading of Hegel is a distortion). Deleuze and Hegel become irrelevant in Houlgate’s care, for he will rather focus his attention on their *relation*, a relation that is patently negative: “Deleuze is not-Hegel, Hegel is not-Deleuze.”

As we stated above, Houlgate could be seen as bringing Deleuze into an unfair trap. He casts him in the role of the Beautiful Soul who tries to mediate all contradictions,

²³ James Brousseau, *Isolated Experiences: Gilles Deleuze and the Solitudes of Reversed Platonism* (New York: SUNY, 1998) 24.

²⁴ Ibid 25.

succeeding and failing in parts. Houlgate seems to imply, negatively by way of his critique that demonstrates where Deleuze is in “error”, that there is a “right” way of reading and critiquing Hegel that Deleuze fails to employ. What is being created here in Houlgate’s objections? That Deleuze’s reading of Nietzsche is persuasive and the reading of Hegel is distorted? Deleuze would not be altogether sanguine about this charge, and would most likely agree if by distortion we mean creating something different, a mutation. Mapping Deleuze’s reading as to what it lacks is again a reliance upon the patently negative and reactive character of interpretation in the history of philosophy that Deleuze himself wants to distance himself from. In league with the will to power, it is the desire to interpret Nietzsche and to expose a portrait or a new way of thinking about Hegel that motivates Deleuze’s work on Nietzsche. If the work is interpreted as a lack, then the true sense of desire (as will to power) is lost; buried under the imposed image of thought that hierarchically distributes good and bad readings, right and wrong. This interpretation of Houlgate would be more on the side of Deleuze, and it should be here acknowledged as such. However, despite the glibness of some of Houlgate’s objectors such as Brusseau and Hardt, Houlgate does raise very pertinent objections that require serious answers. As insightful as commentators like Brusseau and Hardt are concerned, their assessments may still border on the order of editorializing in favour of Deleuze rather than seriously engaging the arguments Houlgate raises.

It must be understood that one should not assume Deleuze is dismissing Hegel as irrelevant, for the truth is the opposite. Deleuze realizes how important it is to address the Hegelian project, but he knows best to not fall into the dialectical trap of negating Hegel and in turn becoming Hegelian as a result of such a move. Much akin to his treatment of

Bergson, Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy* engages in a somewhat ambivalent antagonism contra Hegel. That is, despite his most vitriolic statements via Nietzsche, it does appear that the project is more indexed to Kant.²⁵ And, as Michael Hardt warns, if Nietzsche is positioned as a strict anti-Hegelian, Deleuze runs the risk of devaluing Nietzsche as a reactive tool for the negation of the Hegelian monolith, i.e., performing a dialectical operation that pits Nietzsche against Hegel.²⁶

Houlgate does pick up on what may be an apparent opposition in Deleuze insofar as he cites the well-known passage that could be construed as a direct attack against Hegel: "We will misunderstand the whole of Nietzsche's work if we do not see 'against whom' its principal concepts are directed. Hegelian themes are present in this work as the enemy against which it fights."²⁷ As an important clarification, the genealogical task is concerned with locating the "presubjective force or will" and not a particular person.²⁸ However, even if it is not a direct confrontation, this formulation may still also present itself as Deleuze's form of creating an opposition. However, there is a fundamental difference between engaging in an attack and being opposed; that is, oppositions have the possibility of resolution through consensus or compromise whereas attacks are destructive acts not amenable to resolution. If Deleuze was merely opposed to Hegel, there could still be the possibility of that compromise, but Deleuze's own alignment with Nietzsche commits him to rejecting the possibility of a compromise with Hegelian themes.²⁹ It is this alignment with Nietzsche that tars Deleuze in the same brush that his

²⁵ Michael Hardt, *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy* 27-9; see also Daniel W. Smith's "Deleuze, Hegel and the Post-Kantian Tradition."

²⁶ Ibid 28.

²⁷ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 162.

²⁸ Hardt, *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy* 31.

²⁹ See Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy* 195.

critique of Hegel is indeed not mere opposition, but an attack. His assessment of Nietzsche is very telling of where Deleuze sees himself as to whether he is in opposition to or attacking Hegel: “The philosophical learning of an author is not assessed by numbers of quotations...but by the apologetic or polemical directions of his work.”³⁰ Moreover, if Deleuze is interested in total critique, and total critique is destructive in its creation, then Deleuze’s critique of Hegel cannot be adequately portrayed as mere opposition.

Against Houlgate’s claim that *Nietzsche and Philosophy* is only a selective critique of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*’s master-slave dialectic rather than engaging anything beyond this one Hegelian theme, Hardt notes “Deleuze directs the Nietzschean attack not against Hegel’s master and slave, but against an extrapolation from Hegel’s *Science of Logic*. We no longer ask the question ‘What is the dialectical logic of being?’ but ‘Who wills this logic?’”³¹ And to that effect, Hardt’s appraisal of Houlgate’s criticism and Hegelianism in general is thus that it “fails to appreciate that Hegel’s negative logic is required for determination” and “its conception of self does not meet the requirements to achieve genuine interiority.”³² But, as Lumsden notes, what weakens Hardt’s criticism is that nowhere does he engage with the theme Deleuze is attempting to critique: that of Hegelian self-consciousness.³³ Instead, Hardt assumes complicity with Hegelian self-consciousness, and so Houlgate’s questions remain unanswered. Moreover, Hardt does

³⁰ Ibid 162.

³¹ Hardt, *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy* 37.

³² Ibid 37.

³³ Lumsden, “Deleuze, Hegel and the Transformation of Subjectivity” 151: “This passage makes it seem that the Hegelian notion of self-consciousness is somehow transparent or straightforward. Moreover, without some attempt to make a genuine engagement with these thinkers, we are left simply with an opposition.”

not make clear where in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* Deleuze extends the critique of Hegel beyond the *Phenomenology*, but merely states that it does.

Houlgate highlights the issue that Deleuze does not give any thought to determination. This may be a bit hasty, for Deleuze has his own view of determination, but it is the variety that does not rely on Thought for this type of determination relies on external movement, an opposition of terms where this opposition is not in the things themselves but introduced there by Thought. Moreover, as Hardt indicates, Houlgate assumes that Deleuze is trying to repair the Hegelian argument for self-consciousness and interiority, when in fact Deleuze is quite explicit in his rejection of both. Deleuze wants the unthought of thought and a genuine interiority rather than a conceptual one. To fault Deleuze for failing to emend the Hegelian arguments would only be to portray Deleuze as attempting to perform some degree of compromise with Hegelian themes when in fact his tasks lie outside of them.

We have sketched a few essential criticisms of Deleuze's interpretation and critique of Hegel, and how these criticisms indicate points of inconsistency or potential weakness in Deleuze's arguments in favour of an affirmative ontology of difference. What remains to be demonstrated is precisely the intricacies of Deleuze's own ontology, and how these are mapped on or against the Hegelian project. It is by allowing Deleuze himself to speak, and in meticulously arranging the most salient features of his own "system" that will perform the test as to whether or not Deleuze's viewpoint can be redeemed from the above charges leveled against him.

Chapter 4: Deleuze's Ontology as Response to Houlgate's Objections

Deleuze's ontology is one of affirmative difference. It is a means of demonstrating that the real is not solely determined by rationality, but rather that determination occurs in another milieu, the virtual. The focus of Deleuze's ontology is precisely this new way of understanding difference, and to demonstrate the role of the empirical in terms of the concept. For our purposes, the Deleuzian ontology furnishes us with a framework to support Deleuze's ethical-political claims.

Being, for Deleuze, is univocal and immanent. That is, Deleuze's formulation of Being entails reality without actuality and ideality without abstraction. This is the very essence of the virtual.¹ It suffices for us to state for now that the being of the sensible is outside of conceptual difference. That is, the difference *of* Being is ontologically prior to the being that is different.

Deleuze's argument is to prove that "difference can be internal, yet not conceptual."² However, the task of illustrating an affirmative conception of difference will entail an overturning of the longstanding tradition of difference as negativity as simply the negation of identity. Thus, Deleuze says difference "is the state in which one can speak of determination *as such*. The difference 'between' two things is only empirical, and the corresponding determinations are only extrinsic. However, instead of something distinguished from something else, imagine something which distinguishes

¹ A discussion of the virtual appears below in the section devoted to the actual-virtual.

² Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*. Trans. Paul Patton. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993) 26.

itself—and yet that from which it distinguishes itself does not distinguish itself from it.”³ Examples of this are not easy to conjure up, for it is the dogmatic image of thought that constrains our thinking to not be able to perceive or think in these terms. Deleuze is not inventing a new form of difference, but rather decentering it from its negative status. Therefore, as opposed to Hegel whose ontology begins with pure Being, Deleuze begins with Difference. The importance this has for a robust critique of Hegel is in Deleuze’s demonstration that difference can be affirmative and not rely on the dialectical operation, the famous “labour of the negative” in order to be difference in-itself.

In *The Science of Logic*, Hegel gives his definition of Pure Being that is not yet mediated: “Pure Being is similar to itself alone...it has no differentiation either within itself or relatively to anything external.”⁴ If we can even speak of this Parmenidean Pure Being, which is altogether abstract and still devoid of content, this similarity relies on an analogy, presupposing imminent contradiction. There is differentiation within Being, for this in fact grants the necessary “movement” of Being, for according to Hegel immanent activity is necessary development.⁵ Pure Being “is pure indeterminateness and vacuity.—Nothing can be intuited in it, if there is any question here of intuition...In fact, Being, indeterminate immediacy, is Nothing.”⁶ Hegel attempts to frame the problem of Being in its self-affirmation without negation as immobile, for it has no determinate place or time. It is in the categories that Being can “move” through deduction and gain its constitutive content, i.e., that Being can become.

³ Ibid 28.

⁴ Hegel, *Science of Logic*. Trans. A.V. Miller (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1969) 94.

⁵ Ibid 39.

⁶ Ibid 94.

For Hegel, the thought of Being precedes its differentiation. He states that the “determinateness of Determinate Being, as such, is existent determinateness, or Quality. By virtue of its quality Something is opposed to an Other: it is variable and finite” and “Determinate Being issues from Becoming...Becoming, which mediated [pure Being and pure Nothing] is left behind; it has transcended itself, and Determinate Being therefore appears as something primary and as something from which a beginning is made.”⁷ For Hegel, Becoming is an elaboration and *Aufhebung* of Being and Nothing. That is, a labour that gives detail to Being, carving it off from Nothing, effectively eviscerating the pure abstraction of Being and making it detailed as determinate in space, time, and eventually *property*. Becoming, as such, *takes* time and transcends itself. It is in this sense that time transcends itself as well, for it is the very character or quality of time as an invisibility to make things appear or pass away while it itself cannot come to be or pass away. Time and Becoming present the paradox of the necessary invisibles that make determinate Being visible. But this becoming-determinate of Being is only the *appearance* of a beginning whereas the true Hegelian beginning is the abstract positing of Being and Nothing followed by their subsequent relation through mutual determination. How can this paradoxical circle even begin? Becoming is itself considered as an instability, and so “collapses” at the point when two terms enter into relation: becoming becomes determination.

For Hegel, the difference between Determinate Being and not-Being must begin with thought, for it is thought that will perform the critical distinction between the two in their simple unity.⁸ Determinateness and Being “must always be carefully distinguished:

⁷ Ibid 121-2.

⁸ Ibid 122.

only that which is posited in a concept is proper to the contemplation which develops it, to its content.”⁹ This role or task falls upon Thought. Reflection must abide by the fixity of its assertion. That is, once some A is posited in the idea, this A must be developed without adulteration so that we may attain to the proper content. But, Hegel reminds us:

The determinateness, however, which is not yet posited in the concept is part of our reflection, whether it regards the nature of the concept itself, or is external comparison...It is an external reflection which holds that the whole, the unity of Being and Nothing, is contained in the one-sided determinateness of Being; but this reflection will actually be posited in the negation, in Something and an Other, and so forth.¹⁰

For Deleuze the concept of Being is not simply determined by Thought, but is created by a process of spontaneity, a movement from the actual to the virtual. Being is real even when it is not actualized. The inverted image of thought can only create for Being a transcendent categorical absolute. The concept of Being is true movement (for it is inseparable from its becoming) and not a static conceptuality that does not explain to us how the movement of Being is at all possible, unless we are to remain complicit with a spatialized understanding of time. Deleuze rejects the preconstituted framework that posits Being as requiring a series of false and empty moves patterned on negative determinations. Instead, he posits that the positive movement of Being will be that of affirmative difference. Deleuze argues that Hegel begins with a false problem (Being and Nothing), and this dialectic of Being and Nothing is, for Deleuze, typical of the movement of the dialectic insofar as the dialectic relies on the labour of the negative to move the positive term up to contradiction (*Aufhebung*).

Of course, Deleuze would be called upon to provide concrete examples of such a singularity without equivalence, for it does not accord with Hegelian rationality.

⁹ Ibid 122.

¹⁰ Ibid 122.

However, Deleuze criticizes the source of this problem: our image of thought that reactively distorts the real conditions of the world due to our loyalty to falsifying procedures where we view the world as itself loyal to our impositions of oppositional structures upon it. Such binary equivalences fail to see the world as it is: forces in relation that are expressed in sense, these forces are *internally* related.¹¹ Such examples could be: the altered state of consciousness when one feels a sense of the uncanny or untimely in a particular situation, the artist whose sense powered by an inexpressible intuition prompts him to create, the event that prompts us to articulate a state of affairs in a radically new way, or new means of articulating a concept.

Allowing for the non-equivalent singularity is the only means by which truly unbounded experimentation and creativity is possible, for otherwise the Hegelian formulation “traps” or “cages” each instance of becoming as subordinate to a process of negative determination, denying true difference. There is no Hegelian phantasy of progressive perfections through ever-more complex individuations, but rather an engine of difference that motors articulations of Being that are not reducible to this logical and Enlightenment spectre of perfection and progress. All that negative determination can offer, as a sort of negative deduction, is the limitation of things whereas a truly affirmative engine of difference produces more difference in an infinite series of becomings—neither graded on a scale of perfection nor imperfection, for such measure relies on an already given universal and the primacy of contradiction. No matter how

¹¹ And, of forces, it is not the variety Hegel discusses in his chapter on “Force and The Understanding” in the *Phenomenology* insofar as the forces under consideration there are still merely conceptual; that is, the relation of forces are already opposed (Nature and Law) whereas the type of relation between forces that Deleuze utilizes retain their singularity and are governed by the will to power. However, a more concrete example of a singularity is still required if we are even to begin considering Deleuze’s alternative as viable.

strict and explicit the laws of logic may be, there will always be exceptions and transgressions that logic will not be able to reduce to mere oppositions or propositions.

Conceptual, Hegelian, difference is not refined enough to detect real differences, and so is still too baggy to act as a sufficient concept of difference. The abstract relation of the particular to the concept in general is merely a representational device. The particular is arrested and limited by how it is predicated by the concept. These artificial determinations fall short of accounting for real objects insofar as the universal concept can apply to an “infinite number of things such that no actually existing thing can correspond to the concept’s generality; each determination is only a logical or ‘artificial blockage.’”¹²

As Deleuze warns: “the principle which lies behind a confusion disastrous for the entire philosophy of difference: assigning a distinctive concept of difference is confused with the inscription of difference within concepts in general—the determination of the concept of difference is confused with the inscription of difference in the identity of an undetermined concept.”¹³ This confusion has been the source of what Deleuze qualifies as an error in much of the history of philosophy, for it is a formula where “the subordination of difference to opposition, to analogy, and to resemblance, all the aspects of mediation renders difference as “no more than a predicate in the comprehension of a concept.”¹⁴ This is the tragic error of representational forms of difference, for it renders difference *negatively*. Although Deleuze calls for “a concept of difference without

¹² Patrick Hayden, *Multiplicity and Becoming: The Pluralist Empiricism of Gilles Deleuze* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1998) 10.

¹³ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* 32.

¹⁴ *Ibid* 32.

negation”¹⁵, negation is still a form of difference, “but difference seen from its underside, seen from below.”¹⁶ Difference as negation subordinates difference to identity,¹⁷ and thus becomes “inverted” insofar as a) representation subordinates difference to identity, b) false problems construct fictions of difference patterned by negativity, and c) extensity and quality obscure or explain away intensity.¹⁸

Representation is a site of transcendental illusion. Not that representation itself is an illusion, but a scene where this illusion is found.¹⁹ This illusion has four forms: thought, sensibility, Idea, and Being. Thought is covered by an ‘image,’ this image is composed of distorting postulates that corrupt thought’s operation and genesis. Thought is distorted to the extent that the process of Hegelian negation fails to recognize the genealogy proper to thought (as genesis, the forces that motivate it) and what it can do (operation). This negation is reactive insofar as it limits what the active force of thought can do, wherein active thought always comes to think of what it does not yet know. Thought as positive genesis must be a fortuitous encounter with the not-yet-known. This disavowal of proper genealogy and affirmative operation on the basis of Hegel’s Thought as a negative power of determination renders the entire process based on the principle of identity which is abstract and empty. For Deleuze, “the Hegelian system is a movement in words and representations, not a movement of life or evolution.”²⁰ And, “as long as it remains within the limits of representation, philosophy is prey to the theoretical

¹⁵ Ibid xx.

¹⁶ Ibid 55.

¹⁷ Ibid 58.

¹⁸ Ibid 235.

¹⁹ Ibid 265.

²⁰ Keith Ansell Pearson, “Deleuze Outside/Outside Deleuze: On the Difference Engineer,” *Deleuze and Philosophy: The Difference Engineer*. Ed. Keith Ansell-Pearson. (London: Routledge, 1997) 6.

antinomies of consciousness.”²¹ Despite the seemingly innocuous claim Hegel makes that “a truth cannot lose anything by being written down,”²² there is nothing that guarantees that it will gain anything either by its being represented. Representation is, for Deleuze, the apogee of difference, for representation submits difference to nothing more than mere conceptuality, the power of the negative. However, it can easily be objected that a creation is a representation, and so Deleuze’s call for a new image of thought that can create new ways of thinking or being, would in itself succumb to the process of representation. If Deleuze’s complaint that “in philosophy we’re coming back to eternal values, to the idea of the intellectual as custodian of eternal values”²³ is true, then philosophy should “always [be] a matter of inventing concepts. I’ve never been worried about going beyond metaphysics or any death of philosophy.”²⁴ Beyond conceptuality, Deleuze gives his definition of concept: “There are no universals, only singularities. Concepts aren’t universals but sets of singularities that each extend into the neighborhood of one of the other singularities.”²⁵ In order to give flesh to what Deleuze has in mind in terms of the non-representational concept, he appends two other essential features for the truly creative concept: “concepts involve two other dimensions, percepts and affects. That’s what interests me, not images. Percepts aren’t perceptions, they’re packets of sensations and relations that live on independently of whoever experiences them. Affects aren’t feelings, they’re becomings that spill over beyond whoever lives through them

²¹ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* 268.

²² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller (Oxford University Press, 1977) § 95, p. 90.

²³ Deleuze, *Negotiations: 1972-1990*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995) 121.

²⁴ *Ibid* 136.

²⁵ *Ibid* 146.

(thereby becoming someone else).²⁶ Since philosophers, says Deleuze, are “stylists” (and style has its own syntax insofar as it is a syntax that is not a movement toward the syntactic or linguistic), style “in philosophy strains toward three different poles: concepts, or new ways of thinking; percepts, or new ways of seeing and hearing; and affects, or new ways of feeling.”²⁷

What is a concept? What is conceptuality? Deleuze states that there are no simple concepts; concepts are conditioned by their components in combination.²⁸ Even concepts that purport to be universal do not contain every component, which is to say that they are whole without being a universal totality. Concepts circumscribe a world in order to explain it, and are a response to perceived problems.²⁹ Moreover, although concepts appear to explain the world, acting as foundation for knowledge claims, the concept is a *response* to empirical actuality in its multiplicity, as the condition of a problem for thought (what he will call the Idea). Concepts are not isolated, and in fact share their components which is precisely why there can be equivalent currency in philosophical debate. That is, we can speak of the concept of Being of different philosophers because differing conceptions of Being share some of their components. Neither are concepts created *ex nihilo*. Their components are held together as an articulated whole, as an endoconsistency that is both heterogeneous and inseparable, and they have an

²⁶ Ibid 137; see also Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* Trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994) 177. Deleuze distinguishes between two types of becoming: sensory and conceptual. The first type of becoming is the ceaseless act of becoming-other, while conceptual becoming “eludes” what it is as difference “grasped in an absolute form.” The distinction is precisely between concepts of sensations and sensations of concepts. Concepts are the embodiments of expression, these expressions acting as the empirical condition of the concept, and so it is for this reason that Deleuze is interested in the shared theoretical terrain between philosophy and art.

²⁷ Ibid 164-5. See also Michel Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*. Trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Random House, 1985) 9. He defines philosophy as the activity of thought whose task is “to know how and to what extent it might be possible to think differently.”

²⁸ Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* 15.

²⁹ Ibid 16.

exoconsistency insofar as they share components with other concepts.³⁰ Like forces, concepts are autonomous, but are always in relation to both their constituent components and other concepts with their constituent components. The concept functions in relation to its components, in part, not unlike the manner of relation the will to power has with forces. This is a suitable analogy for understanding what Deleuze means by concept precisely because the concept, like the will to power that does not act on matter, is “an incorporeal, even though it is incarnated or effectuated in bodies.”³¹ Another indicator for this relation between concept and will to power is Deleuze’s understanding that the concept expresses or “speaks the event, not the essence of the thing.”³² Concepts do not operate by reference. They are self-referential and they affirm both themselves and the object denoted.³³ More importantly, Deleuze’s understanding of the concept is, beyond merely attempting to demonstrate the consistency of the theory of forces and how it pertains to his entire project, a juxtaposition to Hegel’s stance on conceptuality.

According to Hegel, conception (picture-thinking drawn from sensuous material) plus Thought (understanding) creates a universal, simple image, which in turn forms the Concept (*Begriff*).³⁴ Interconnected facets of the universal in their particularity are sufficient in their totality to form the Concept proper, for the Concept comprehends the essence of a thing and represents it as its true thought. This thought-concept is the realization of essence (universal truth + particular facts). Therefore, Being + essence = Idea (Concept). Thought determines itself as a concrete real, and the Concept particularizes itself as the thought that recovers the content in order to comprehend the

³⁰ Ibid 19.

³¹ Ibid 21.

³² Ibid 21.

³³ Ibid 22.

³⁴ Hegel, *Logic* §20, p. 29-31.

unity of Being and Essence in the concept. The Concept forms the organic union of the Universal, Particular, and the Individual. We get to the universal by way of negation, or that is, by Thought determination: "That which enables the Notion to advance itself is the already mentioned negative which it possesses within itself; it is this which constitutes the genuine dialectical moment."³⁵ Moreover, this negative "is the wellspring of the activity which allows progressive development," this developing being is, in Hegel's view, necessary according to immanent activity.³⁶ The immanence of the Hegelian system is the relation of whole to parts; the categories are finite and unstable, and Thought reveals their contradictions (form-content, universal-particular, Being-Nothing, etc.). It is in this way that the dialectic seeks to resolve contradictions and perfect their nature into a stable, organic unity or whole, but a whole that is the immanent unity of its parts plus the idea of its wholeness. The operation of Thought determination is both negative and positive: "reason is negative and dialectical because it resolves the determinations of the understanding into nothing; it is the positive because it generates the universal and comprehends the particular therein."³⁷ This relation which comprehends the part and the whole grounds the very Truth of Being: "Truth in philosophy means that concept and external reality correspond"³⁸ and "Truth...is only possible as a universe or totality of thought."³⁹ Therefore, the Truth is the Concrete. The concept itself is universal, not general, but explains the general and particular. That is, 'red' is not a concept but a general representation. These constitutive terms are too empirical (i.e., class, attribute, type) and so remain as mere conceptions unless they can be determined by Thought

³⁵ Hegel, *Science of Logic* 55.

³⁶ Ibid 55.

³⁷ Ibid 28.

³⁸ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, trans. T.M. Knox (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1967) §21, p.29.

³⁹ Hegel, *Logic* §14, p. 20.

which means to set ‘redness’ in relation to an Other, defining it by what it is not (redness is not greenness, not blueness, etc.). For Hegel, conception is finite and incomplete. “The fault in conception lies deeper.”⁴⁰ That is, what is generally taken as concept, if isolated as mere contents and without an organizing, determinant principle to bring these terms into a unified development, is not to gain access to the concrete actuality of these terms. It is the understanding that “introduces relations of universal and particular, of cause and effect, etc., and in this way supplies a necessary connection to the isolated ideas of conception; which has left them side by side in its vague mental spaces, connected only by a bare ‘and’.”⁴¹

Conception found itself opposed to sense, and Thought as such overcomes this contradiction. “It might in that case seem arbitrary to devote a special science to thought, while will, imagination, and the rest were denied the same privilege. The selection of one faculty however might even in this view be very well grounded on a certain authority acknowledged to belong to thought, and on its claim to be regarded as the true nature of man in which consists his distinction from the brutes.”⁴² Moreover, “Nature shows us a countless number of individual forms and phenomena. Into this variety we feel a need of introducing unity: we compare, consequently, and try to find the universal of each single case.”⁴³ In perhaps the most telling statement wherein Hegel declares the primacy of thought over mere sense or conception, he states: the universal “is neither seen nor heard, its existence is only for the mind.”⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Ibid §20, p. 30.

⁴¹ Ibid §20, p. 30.

⁴² Ibid §20, p. 32.

⁴³ Ibid §21, p. 34.

⁴⁴ Ibid §21, p. 34.

In Hegel's discussion of the *Vorstellung* as "inferior" to the *Begriff*, we find that he has a narrower sense of representation than Locke's or Kant's. Conception, for Hegel, involves three principle phases of development: recollection, imagination, and memory. Recollection is internalization of a perception by way of an image (*Bild*). This image of the object in the mind separated from space and time, and this image is not always conscious. The "I" possesses the image in a way it cannot possess objects and intuitions. In reproductive imagination, the recollection of an image previously intuited by consciousness does not depend on the presence of an object but can be conjured in its absence. In the other species of imagination, associative imagination makes associations between images and conjures up relations that are not there in the world (and here we think of Descartes: centaurs as the conjoined mental image of the concepts of horse and man). Images are discrete, individual and external in relation to conceptions (*Begriffe*). As a final form of imagination, phantasy is the association of a universal concept with a sign (*Zeichen*). Words (as signs) are intuitions. These are arbitrary and willful. Memory is the faculty that converts sign-intuition to a universal *Vorstellung* (word type, not just ephemeral token). We no longer need intuition or image because the name functions as an imageless conception, and it is in names that we think.⁴⁵ It is this understanding of representation that Deleuze will take especial issue with. For Deleuze, a concept—not understood as mere conceptuality—involves articulation and singularity. That is Thought's organization and determination is the false imposition of a universal concept on an otherwise singular setting. When faced with two seemingly identical instantiations, the concept cannot account for the contingency of becoming that produces infinite variations. It seems as though the Hegelian concept operates by this reliance on

⁴⁵ Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit* §462, p. 277.

comparison and resemblance, and that it assumes that the sufficient reason is the necessary reason. Organization does not account for how things are related in themselves, their own forces, how they can be articulated without recourse to an absolute exteriority.

In sum, conception is at first subjective conception, while thinking and thought are impersonal and objective when it is internalized as concept. However, what remains is that Thought and Conception are not clearly drawn in Hegel, which could be the source of much misunderstanding, even for Deleuze.

Hegel's version of conceptuality is, according to Deleuze, too negative and cannot give adequate form to Being. In contrast to the "bagginess" of the concept that cannot account for the subtle variations of instantiated things, Deleuze prefers "to show how thought as such produces something *interesting* when it accedes to the infinite movement that frees it from truth as supposed paradigm and reconquers an immanent power of creation."⁴⁶ To do this, logic, science, and history would need to trace itself back to the virtual, but "it is this sphere of the virtual, this Thought-nature, that logic can only *show*...without ever being able to grasp it in propositions or relate it to a reference. Then logic is silent, and it is only interesting when it is silent."⁴⁷ Presumably, it is precisely when logic is silent, when it ceases to busy itself with recognition, systems of reference to the Identical, representation, and retrograde determinations, that it can truly behold immanence and infinite movement of the virtual.

Deleuze does make a concession to Hegel, stating that "Hegel showed that the concept has nothing to do with general or abstract idea...But he succeeded in doing this at the cost of an indeterminate extension of philosophy that, because it reconstituted

⁴⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* 140.

⁴⁷ Ibid 140.

universals with its own moments and treated the personae of its own creation as no more than ghostly puppets, left scarcely any independent movement of the arts and sciences remaining.”⁴⁸ It is Deleuze’s philosophy of immanence that truly makes pure ontology an ethics, “because it is derived from the immanent relation of beings to Being at the level of their existence (and hence privileges concepts such as *puissance* (power of capacity) and affectivity).”⁴⁹ This means that beings take on a definition as having a capacity to act, to affect or be affected by, and determined by their degree of power (intensity). One is then not limited in action by a transcendental (moral) limit, but rather by one’s own internal power. In addition, without a transcendent framework, the future remains open rather than predetermined by past events and the guilt that is carried along with them.

Like Deleuze, Hegel also moves from organic to orgiastic representation, “albeit by another route. If Hegel discovers in serene representation the intoxication and restlessness of the infinitely large,” it is still a matter of consigning difference to the limit or extreme representation as merely a conceptual contrary.⁵⁰ Despite Hegel’s “movement” from organic to orgiastic (Bacchanalian) representation, Hegel falls back on the organic, for he is still clutching the notion of infinite representation, and this infinite representation “includes the Whole or ground as primary matter and the essence of subject, absolute form or Self. Infinite representation relates at once both the essence and the ground, and the difference between the two, to a foundation or sufficient reason. Mediation [as the fourfold root of identity, opposition, analogy and resemblance] itself

⁴⁸ Ibid 12

⁴⁹ Daniel W. Smith, “Deleuze and Derrida, Immanence and Transcendence: Two Directions in Recent French Thought,” *Between Deleuze and Derrida*. Eds. Paul Patton and John Protevi (London: Continuum, 2003) 63.

⁵⁰ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* 45.

has become the foundation.”⁵¹ This infinite representation “is the object of a double discourse: that of properties and that of essences...that of figures and moments or categories in the case of Hegel.”⁵² More importantly, infinite representation is still tied to the principle of identity as its presupposition, figuring in Hegel as a series of monocentering “circles.”⁵³ “There is indeed a dialectical circle, but this infinite circle has everywhere only a single center; it retains within itself all the other circles, all the other momentary centers. The reprises or repetitions of the dialectic express only the conservation of the whole, all the forms and all the moments, in a gigantic Memory. Infinite representation is a memory which conserves.”⁵⁴ So, although Hegel’s move from organic to orgiastic representation (what he calls in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* a “Bacchanalian revel”), thereby (re)discovers the “monstrous”, Hegel’s procedure is to demonstrate that, in the end, unity and stability will be restored, that the monstrosity will be quelled by the eventual sublation of all differences into an organic unity. It is by these so many Herculean labours of the negative that the monsters of difference are arrested and subdued, or even exterminated in the synthesis. Orgiastic representation “must be said to *make* the difference, because it selects it by introducing this infinite which relates it to the ground (either grounding by the Good which functions as a rule of the game or principle of choice, or grounding by negativity which functions as suffering and labour.”⁵⁵ And so, “orgiastic representation has the ground as its principle and the infinite

⁵¹ Ibid 49.

⁵² Ibid 49.

⁵³ Ibid 49.

⁵⁴ Ibid 53. Also, see Patrick Hayden, *Multiplicity and Becoming: The Pluralist Empiricism of Gilles Deleuze* 14-15. Hayden summarizes Deleuze’s account of representation between Leibniz (the infinitely small) and Hegel (the infinitely large). Both of these conceptions of difference fail for the already mentioned reason that they confuse difference in itself as the inscription of difference within the identity of the concept in general.

⁵⁵ Ibid 43.

as its element, by contrast with organic representation which retains form as its principle and the finite as its element...[D]ifference thus appears as the orgiastic representation of determination and no longer as its organic representation.”⁵⁶ In terms of hierarchical distribution of values and pronouncing judgements on things, “orgiastic representation makes things themselves so many expressions or so many propositions.”⁵⁷ This allows the concept of difference to be *grounded*, but as such this ground is fraught with contradictions that will tend toward resolution, this resolution already functioning as the presupposition of the contradiction in the first place.

Resemblance is the second “illusion.” No longer just an organization of the model-copy relation as is the order of representation, the diversity of the sensible being is appropriated and subsumed within the process of negation. The identity of the concept applies to resemblance and draws from it a form of specificity, i.e., an essence is derived.⁵⁸ Deleuze engages in a long polemical treatment of recognition and the image of thought that is in accord with his overall view of philosophy as a constructionism rather than reflection, and an expressionism rather than a series of communications.⁵⁹ Resemblance is the order of likeness. As Deleuze sees it, Hegel’s Being is defined not only by what it is not, but its contents are arranged by a pattern of resemblance. That is, a chair is more *like* a chesterfield than it is *like* a kiwi. Therefore, chair and chesterfield are contained under the category of “Things That Support My Posterior”. However, it is not enough to make comparisons by way of likeness to determine the differences between

⁵⁶ Ibid 43.

⁵⁷ Ibid 43.

⁵⁸ Ibid 266.

⁵⁹ Deleuze, *Negotiations: 1972-1990* 147.

things, nor is it enough to explain these differences by contradiction and what they are not.

Contradiction is Thought's tendency to determine an object by what it is not, by locating in the world an opposite, thereby imposing a limitation to the object. Determining the object by what it is not makes its difference conceptual and external rather than allow that object to be internally differentiated. Contradiction, as limitation and opposition, is the motor of negative determination, for it carves a kind of ontological contour around the object which in turn forms the contour of another object. The essential problem of relying on contradiction is that it does not suffice in defining the difference and singularity of an object without its being related to other objects that it is not. Deleuze charges Hegel with having only myopically located contradictions in order to give any object any ontological content. Difference conceived of in this way is not affirmative difference, and so thus relies on Thought to create these contradictions. If we did not have this system of contradiction we would, in Hegel's view, be lost in the rhapsody of empirical senses that cannot be separated from mere "thises"; however, this view privileges human rationality to an extreme by positing that it is *necessary* that objects or terms enter into an extreme opposition in order to be mediated and therefore determined. What if, Deleuze asks, Being was determined right from the start, without Thought having to intervene? What if the *sense* of Being was in itself transcendental?⁶⁰ Contradiction is an artifice of thought, demonstrating more how we reflect on things rather than a real reflection of the things themselves.

⁶⁰ The section below dedicated to transcendental empiricism pursues the character of this new Being of sense, and so we only allude here to this problem between Hegel's view of empiricism and Deleuze's call for a transcendental empiricism.

Representational conceptions of difference will characteristically move all differences up to the point of contradiction, to which end the differences will enter into a synthesis, or slaughter-bench whereupon the unique and affirmative character of whatever is retained as truly different is subordinated by negation to elimination (or, effectively the same: interiorization of difference in the concept of the Identical, the unity of opposites held together that differ only in a conceptual way). This occurs when a term in its singularity is defined by what it is not, when an Other is brought in as a representation to the term as a means of mediation. However, when we push representation to its absolute limit, when it “discovers the infinite within itself, it no longer appears as *organic* representation but as *orgiastic* representation: it discovers within itself the limits of the organized; tumult, restlessness and passion underneath apparent calm. It rediscovers monstrosity.”⁶¹ This “very notion of limit changes completely: it no longer refers to the limits of finite representation, but on the contrary to the womb in which finite determination never ceases to be born and to disappear, to be enveloped and deployed within orgiastic representation. It no longer refers to the limitation of a form, but to the *convergence* towards a ground; no longer to the distinctions of forms but to the correlation of the grounded and the ground; no longer to the arrestation of power but to the element in which power is effectuated, on which it is grounded.”⁶²

Why is a negative conception of difference, patterned by contradiction, such a bad thing for Deleuze? As he sees it:

according to Hegel, ‘contradiction’ poses very few problems. It serves a quite different purpose: contradiction resolves itself and, in resolving

⁶¹ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* 42.

⁶² Ibid 43.

itself, resolves difference by relating it to a ground. Difference is the only problem. The criticism that Hegel addresses to his predecessors is that they stopped at a purely relative maximum without reaching the absolute maximum of difference, namely contradiction; they stopped before reaching the infinite (as infinitely large) of contradiction.⁶³

Moreover, “this Hegelian infinite remains the infinitely large of theology, of the *Ens quo nihil majus*.”⁶⁴ This theologico-philosophical support nexus will result in what Deleuze will deem unfortunate ethical consequences. Regardless of how it is formulated—infinitely large or small—the concept of difference in this manner is still too abstract, not accounting for the real conditions of experience in a profound way. That is, a concretely determined condition of experience is still impeded by representational thinking that forcibly governs and restricts the fortuitous nature of empirical content. It is to this effect that “Hegel determines difference by the opposition of extremes or of contraries. However, opposition remains abstract every time it is posed outside of finite oppositions: the introduction of the infinite here entails the identity of contraries, or makes the contrary of the Other a contrary of the Self.”⁶⁵ Since Hegel treats the essential as a genus, and employs the infinite as an operator that divides this genus as well as suppresses division in the species (determining what empirical content can be contained within the *set*), he renders the genus as itself *and* the species it determines, granting the Whole privilege over the part.⁶⁶ More explicitly, Deleuze states that “Hegelian contradiction does not deny identity or non-contradiction: on the contrary, it consists in inscribing the double negation of *non*-contradiction within the existent in such a way that identity, under that condition or on that basis, is sufficient to think the existent as such. Those

⁶³ Ibid 44.

⁶⁴ Ibid 45.

⁶⁵ Ibid 44.

⁶⁶ Ibid 45.

formulae according to which ‘the object denies what it is not’, or ‘distinguishes itself from everything that it is not’, are logical monsters (the Whole of everything which is not the object) in the service of identity. It is said that difference is negativity, that it extends or must extend to the point of contradiction once it is taken to the limit.”⁶⁷ In this sense, difference (motored by identity) is the ground, “but only the ground for the demonstration of the identical. Hegel’s circle [of identity and difference] is not the eternal return, only the infinite circulation of the identical by means of negativity.”⁶⁸ In effect this will have disastrous consequences for any positive and affirmative formulation of difference, for “difference remains subordinated to identity, reduced to the negative, incarcerated within similitude and analogy.”⁶⁹ “Infinite representation is indissociable from a law which renders it possible: the form of the concept as a form of identity which constitutes on the one hand the in-itself of the represented (A is A) and on the other the for-itself of the representant (Self=Self). The prefix RE- in the word ‘representation’ signifies this conceptual form of the identical which subordinates differences.”⁷⁰

As a selective test, Deleuze invites us to consider an alternate program for assessing apparent contradictions: “every time we find ourselves confronted or bound by a limitation or an opposition, we should ask what such a situation presupposes. It presupposes a swarm of differences, a pluralism of free, wild or untamed differences; a properly differential and original space and time; all of which persist alongside the simplifications of limitation and opposition.”⁷¹ It will not seem surprising that Deleuze’s solution will begin precisely at the level of the empirical. That is, a critique of Hegel’s

⁶⁷ Ibid 49.

⁶⁸ Ibid 50.

⁶⁹ Ibid 50.

⁷⁰ Ibid 56.

⁷¹ Ibid 50.

critique of sense-certainty. To Hegel's thoroughly rigid system of determinations of the concept, Deleuze contrasts a pluralism wherein the multiplicity of the concept is determined by the content that in turn has no limit and cannot be determined through negations (rather than a limited or false pluralism of particulars held together in a unified whole, immanently expressed as negativity). The oppositional framework that constitutes the Hegelian concept is too antagonistic and abstract, not allowing for the empirical "messiness" of chance to introduce new terms and species to link together in *extrinsic* rather than *intrinsic* relations. Deleuze's new model for oppositions is a more "inclusive type of scission" insofar as they are "roughly cut from a delicate milieu of overlapping perspectives, of communicating distances, divergences and disparities, of heterogeneous potentials and intensities. Nor is it primarily a question of dissolving tensions in the identical, but rather of distributing the disparities in a multiplicity."⁷² Hegelian contradiction presents the problem of a fundamental duplicity: "opposition...represents in turn the second order power, where it is as though things were spread out upon a flat surface, polarized in a single plane, and the synthesis itself took place only in a false depth—that is, in a fictitious third dimension added to the others which does no more than double the plane."⁷³

Relying on the separation of things by negative determination is a dissatisfying consequence for affirmative difference, for space and time "display oppositions (and limitations) only on the surface, but they presuppose in their real depth far more voluminous, affirmed and distributed differences which cannot be reduced to the banality

⁷² Ibid 50.

⁷³ Ibid 50.

of the negative.”⁷⁴ The nature of contradiction is incomplete, for contradiction fails to go deep or far enough to assess the actual differences—this is to say that the oppositions in the dialectic only concern superficial or even merely nominal differences, a staged battle between abstract entities. As Deleuze says, there “is a false profundity in conflict, but underneath conflict, the space of the play of differences. The negative is the image of difference, but a flattened and inverted image, like the candle in the eye of the ox—the eye of the dialectician dreaming of a futile combat.”⁷⁵ And: “Our claim is not only that difference in itself is not ‘already’ contradiction, but that it cannot be reduced or traced back to contradiction, since the latter is not more but less profound than difference.”⁷⁶ In restating the case that the dialectic busies itself with simply mere representations—taking mere words for things—Deleuze is essentially charging the Hegelian dialectic with being a false movement: “Hegel...creates movement, even the movement of the infinite, but because he creates it with words and representations it is a false movement, and nothing follows.”⁷⁷ This “movement” begins where it ends, with a presupposition of Being by the image of thought *without investigating the true movement of Being in its differential pre-thought expression*. By contrast, difference “itself constitutes the true movement. Difference is the true content of the thesis, the persistence of the thesis. The negative and negativity do not even capture the phenomenon of difference, only the phantom or the epiphenomenon. The whole of Phenomenology is an epiphenomenology.”⁷⁸

The Hegelian view of negative determination contains two essential features that Deleuze critiques: the notion of judgement and of reflection. Judgement as such

⁷⁴ Ibid 51.

⁷⁵ Ibid 51.

⁷⁶ Ibid 51.

⁷⁷ Ibid 52.

⁷⁸ Ibid 52.

possesses “two essential functions: distribution, which it ensures by the *partition* of concepts; and hierarchization, which it ensures by the *measuring* of subjects,”⁷⁹ hence *value*. Distribution concerns judgement as the partition of common sense whilst hierarchization distributes value based on “good sense.” Deleuze asserts, “every philosophy of categories takes judgement for its model—as we see in the case of Kant, and still even in the case of Hegel.”⁸⁰ Moreover, even recourse to the field of analogy is no curative, for analogy turns out to be “the essence of judgement, but the analogy within judgement is the analogy of the identity of concepts. That is why we cannot expect that generic or categorical difference, any more than specific difference, will deliver us a proper concept of difference.”⁸¹

All that we have stated above about affirmative difference and Being still requires a more coherent framework in order to be a convincing alternative to conceptuality and negatively determined Being. Hence, Deleuze adopts the virtual-actual distinction as a means of demonstrating how difference is ontologically prior to conceptuality: “The virtual is opposed not to the real but to the actual. The virtual is fully real in so far as it is

⁷⁹ Ibid 33; Deleuze will not abandon the notion of hierarchization but will retain a sense of hierarchy as an ethical consequence of his metaphysical privileging of affirmative difference. “There is a hierarchy which measures beings according to their limits, and according to their degree of proximity or distance from a principle. But there is also a hierarchy which considers things and beings from the point of view of power: it is not a question of considering absolute degrees of power, but only of knowing whether a being eventually ‘leaps over’ or transcends its limits in going to the limit of what it can do, whatever its degree [of power].” Hierarchy is not a means of measuring things in terms of good/bad or right/wrong, but on the basis of noble/base and dominating/dominated. Hierarchy concerns *forces*, and does not begin with Thought and its means of distributing value. Recalling what was stated in chapter two, genealogy concerns the art of going to the origin of values in order to interpret them, and it is the problem of Thought that evaluation of values occurs when the values it purports to study are already given and in play so that any evaluation of values is already marked by established values.

⁸⁰ Ibid 33.

⁸¹ Ibid 33.

virtual.”⁸² What is actualized (what has become) does not resemble that which in the differential generated its actualization. Virtuality defines partial objects, or rather a part of the object: “the virtual must be defined as strictly a part of the real object—as though the object had one part of itself in the virtual into which it plunged as though into an objective dimension.”⁸³ But is this “virtual” any more real than the actual, especially if the term “virtual” itself makes such a claim on reality counter-intuitive? Deleuze replies: “The reality of the virtual consists of the differential elements and relations along with the singular points which correspond to them. The reality of the virtual is structure.”⁸⁴ This structure takes the form of “a double process of reciprocal determination and complete determination [defining] that reality: far from being undetermined, the virtual is completely determined.”⁸⁵ And so the virtual is “the completely determined structure formed by its genetic differential elements, its ‘virtual’ or ‘embryonic’ elements. The elements, varieties of relations and singular points coexist in the work or the object, in the virtual part of the work or object, without it being possible to designate a point of view privileged over others, a centre which would unify the other centres. How, then, can we speak simultaneously of both complete determination and only a part of the object?”⁸⁶ What this determination lacks “is the whole set of relations belonging to actual existence. An object may be *ens*, or rather (non)-*ens omni modo determinatum*, without being entirely determined or actually existing.”⁸⁷ This second aspect of determination which

⁸² Ibid 208.

⁸³ Ibid 209.

⁸⁴ Ibid 209.

⁸⁵ Ibid 209.

⁸⁶ Ibid 209.

⁸⁷ Ibid 209.

makes this determination complete is that of actualization. The virtual and the actual function in concert.

Actualization as a determination functions by integration. This integration “is by no means the inverse of differentiation but, rather, forms an original process of differentiation. Whereas differentiation determines the virtual content of the Idea as problem, differentiating expresses the actualization of this virtual and the constitution of solutions.”⁸⁸ But why differentiate the terms if they are two parts of a complete determination? Why create the term of differentiation for the virtual and differentiation for the actual? The reason is that these two “processes” of determination cannot equally be contained under one term, for every object “is double without it being the case that the two halves resemble one another, one being a virtual image and the other an actual image.”⁸⁹ It is precisely in this way that difference as such differs in itself; it is not merely one conceptual term that is defined as distinct from what it is not, but that its internal difference portrays two distinct senses: one of differentiation and the other as differentiation, according to the virtual and actual aspects of the object. Furthermore, even these two terms can be split into a bipartite typology. Differentiation has two aspects: 1. Varieties of relations; 2. Singular points emergent of the values of the varieties. Differentiation also has two aspects: 1. qualities/species that actualize varieties; 2. number/distinct parts actualization of singular points.⁹⁰ For this typology, Deleuze uses the example of genes. Genes are differential variations in relation that are incarnated in species and organic parts as a response to a problem (the part of the ear is the solution to the problem of sound). “Species are differentiated only insofar as each has parts which

⁸⁸ Ibid 209.

⁸⁹ Ibid 209.

⁹⁰ Ibid 210.

are themselves differentiated. Differentiation is always simultaneously differentiation of species and parts, of qualities and extensities: determination of qualities or determination of species, but also partition or organization.”⁹¹ “On the one hand, complete determination carries out the differentiation of singularities, but it bears only upon their existence and their distribution.”⁹² And, on the other hand, “the essential aspects of sufficient reason—determinability, reciprocal determination, complete determination—find their systematic unity in progressive determination.”⁹³

The actualization of the virtual is differentiation, the solution to a problem by integration: “Each differentiation is a local integration or a local solution which then connects with others in the overall solution or the global integration.”⁹⁴ The organism is the solution to a problem, “but nothing within the organism, no organ, would be differentiated without the internal milieu endowed with a general effectivity or integrating power of regulation.”⁹⁵ The forms of contradiction, lack, resemblance, etc., are mere derivatives—not the motoring instance—of an initial problem: the organism to be constructed. The structure of the virtual, already completely determined is that by which things become, the creative “zone” where differential elements enter into relation by fortuitous encounter, and are then actualized. However, what is actualized *does not bear any resemblance to what elements initially merged in the virtual to produce it.*

The virtual is not the possible, not a Kantian sum of all possibilities, for the possible is an opposition to the real to which it submits its realization. The virtual “is not

⁹¹ Ibid 210.

⁹² Ibid 210.

⁹³ Ibid 210.

⁹⁴ Ibid 211.

⁹⁵ Ibid 211.

opposed to the real; it possesses a full reality by itself.”⁹⁶ The virtual cannot be realized, but actualized. “It would be wrong to see only a verbal dispute here: it is a question of existence itself. Every time we pose the question in terms of possible and real, we are forced to conceive of existence as a brute eruption, a pure act or leap which always occurs behind our backs and is subject to a law of all or nothing.”⁹⁷ Moreover, “[w]hat difference can there be between the existent and non-existent if the non-existent is already possible, already included in the concept and having all the characteristics that the concept confers upon it as a possibility?”⁹⁸

In Hegel’s dialectic of the possible and actual, the actual is the truth of the possible. The question remains as to what the major difference is between Deleuze’s virtual and Hegel’s “real” versus “empty” possible. Hegel objects to the empty possible for, like pure Being and Nothing, something purely possible can be said to be equally impossible: “Nothing therefore can be more meaningless than to speak of such possibility and impossibility.”⁹⁹ Empty possibility lacks concrete content whereas Hegel’s “real” possible has not only self-relation, but is a moment in actuality. There is a mutual grounding between the actual and the possible, but it is actuality (in the form of thinking) that includes the possible as a moment within it, and so there is a distinction to be made between an empty possible that has no real connection to actuality and a real possible that is plausible on the grounds of it being truly possible. For example, it is an empty possibility to state that it is possible that a portion of Mars is made out of cheese (for nothing in our actual experience can remotely support this), whereas it is a real possibility

⁹⁶ Ibid 211.

⁹⁷ Ibid 211.

⁹⁸ Ibid 211.

⁹⁹ Hegel, *Logic* §143, p. 203.

that one day human beings will walk on the face of Mars precisely because of observations in the actual that make this possibility plausible (capability of space travel, humans walking on the moon, etc.).

For Hegel actuality is the unity of essence and existence, the inward and the outward, the universal and the particular. Actuality and Thought are One, which is to say that the actual is the rational.¹⁰⁰ In Hegel's words, ideas "are not confined to our heads merely, nor is the Idea, on the whole, so feeble as to leave the question of its actualization or non-actualization dependent on our will."¹⁰¹ Actuality is not just the sensible/palpable: "it is not the vulgar actuality of what is immediately at hand, but the idea as actuality."¹⁰² Actuality is firstly possibility: "Possibility is what is essential to reality, but in such a way that it is at the same time only a possibility."¹⁰³ Actuality is necessity, the unity of Universal and Particular.

In returning to the question as to whether Deleuze's "virtual" is merely a reformulation or misunderstanding of Hegel's "real" possible, it is necessary to compare the two terms. For Hegel, the "real" possible bears a resemblance to the actual, as a derivative or thought abstracted from the actual, whereas for Deleuze, the virtual need not have any resemblance whatsoever to what is actualized or vice versa. That is, in the case of genetics, the conjunction of genes that produces an organism does not resemble the organism any more than the organism resembles the genes; however, in this case, the genes are still the "virtual" or "partial" element of the produced organism. Moreover, if for Hegel the real possible must resemble an instantiation of the actual from which it

¹⁰⁰ Ibid §142, p. 201.

¹⁰¹ Ibid §142, p. 201.

¹⁰² Ibid §142, p. 202.

¹⁰³ Ibid §143, p. 202.

proceeds, then nothing new can be created for it would already be presupposed within actuality.¹⁰⁴ This, according to Deleuze's view, does not account for something new or affirmatively different being produced. In sum, our thinking—no matter how meticulous or well-trained it is in calculating the probability of possibilities—cannot always foresee the production of something novel or uncanny by this method. Because there are encounters with the not-yet-known, all attempts to rig the outcomes of chance by recourse to actuality will not always furnish us with the real conditions of experience, recalling our discussion of the dicethrow above in chapter two.

It is this discussion of the virtual-actual that truly punctuates Deleuze's argument against Hegel's conceptual difference. For Hegel, "Difference can no longer be anything but the negative determined by the concept: either the limitation imposed by possibles upon each other in order to be realized, or the opposition of the possible to the reality of the real. The virtual, by contrast, is the characteristic state of Ideas: it is on the basis of its reality that existence is produced in accordance with a time and a space immanent in the Idea."¹⁰⁵ For Hegel, the "real" possible is only reflection-into-self as a moment in actuality, whereas the virtual "designates a pure multiplicity in the Idea which radically excludes the identical as a prior condition."¹⁰⁶ If the possible is the image of the real, and the real resembles the possible, all that our thought of existence can produce is a representation of Being, an analogy: "Such is the defect of the possible: a defect which serves to condemn it as produced after the fact, as retroactively fabricated in the image of

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, §12. In his famous analogy of the acorn and the oak, Hegel defines his view of actualization of the dialectic as an immanent program, or Concept, which replaces Aristotelian entelechy. The acorn is a potential oak tree, and the fully-grown oak is the actuality of the potential of the acorn. It can be said that the acorn represents the potential to become an oak tree, and that the oak tree is the unity of the acorn and the efficient causes that developed the acorn into the oak tree. This acorn possesses the entire structure of the oak tree, but only implicitly.

¹⁰⁵ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* 211.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid* 211-212.

what resembles it.”¹⁰⁷ The possible is then a production post facto, “as retroactively fabricated in the image of what resembles it.”¹⁰⁸ When the virtual is actualized, it is always through difference and not resemblance. The differentiation of the virtual and its singularities never resembles what is made actual; that is, singularities are not mirrored in the actualized thing and vice versa. One must envision the fortuitous encounter of singularities that enter into relation and the creatively generative process that cannot be back-traced from the actual. What emerges in the actual is the product of a relation, just as in Deleuze’s reading of Nietzsche phenomena is the actualization of forces in relation. It is to this extent that Deleuze wants to demonstrate that the true actualized concept is created in the virtual as a merger of fortuitous forces that generate the concept. If it is true that, for Hegel, the concept is determined by Thought, this would be anathema to the Deleuzian virtual, for this would presuppose that the concept could descend back into the virtual and determine its own generation. “Actualization or differentiation is always a genuine creation...to be actualized is to create divergent lines which correspond to—without resembling—a virtual multiplicity.”¹⁰⁹ The “solution” or actualization of the virtual by differentiation does not resemble the conditions of the problem by which the “solution” was created. If the solution were merely a representation of the initial problem, then the difference that produced the problem (variation of relations by fortuitous encounter) would be reducible to similitude and identity, i.e., not true difference. “Difference and repetition in the virtual ground the movement of actualization, of differentiation as creation,” for otherwise, to conceive of the real as a resemblance of the

¹⁰⁷ Ibid 212.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid 212.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid 212.

possible, we are left with a false, retrograde movement, a determination of things by abstract generality.

As an example, Deleuze invites us to consider Leibniz's reflection on the roaring of the tide:

Either we say that the apperception of the whole noise is clear but confused (not distinct) because the component little perceptions are themselves not clear but obscure; or we say that the little perceptions are themselves distinct and obscure (not clear): distinct because they grasp the differential relations and singularities; obscure because they are not yet 'distinguished', not yet differentiated.¹¹⁰

In this case, the problem is reposed not on the order of whole-parts, but on the virtual-actual distinction. Instead of the perceptions being logically arranged as a whole (the tide as a concert of small perceptions grasped in their totality) or part (the singular perceptions of each drop), it is rather the actualization of each drop's differential relation and incarnation of those singular points of perception in the idea. "The nature of the Idea is to be distinct and obscure. In other words, the Idea is precisely *real without being actual, differentiated without being differentiated, and complete without being entire*."¹¹¹ It is not a matter of distinguishing the forest from the trees, but to comprehend that the forest is the actualization of the singular points of the trees themselves in relation that produce the idea of the forest.

But a question still remains:

How does actualization occur in things themselves? Why is differentiation at once both composition and determination of qualities, organization and determination of species? Why is differentiation differentiated along these two complementary paths? Beneath the actual qualities and extensities, species and parts, there are spatio-temporal dynamisms. These are the actualizing, differentiating agencies.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Ibid 213.

¹¹¹ Ibid 214.

¹¹² Ibid 214.

And so, rather than to move from the general to the particular, “determination progresses from virtual to actual in accordance with the primary factors of actualization.”¹¹³ That is, the Hegelian method of determination begins from the general to determine the particular while simultaneously giving content to the universal. If the virtual is already full and completely determined, what remains is for it to be actualized or *expressed* as things. The expression of objects is not a predetermined matter, but one of creative generation; not of negative determination through abstract qualities, but through a constant becoming through differentiation: “The double differentiation of species and parts always presupposes spatio-temporal dynamisms”¹¹⁴ and it is the dynamic process “which determines the actualization of Ideas. But what is their relation to this actualization? They are precisely *dramas*, they dramatize the Idea...they create or trace a space corresponding to the differential relations and to the singularities to be actualized.”¹¹⁵ Because all objects are “dramatized” as dynamic, we are not only given to define beings genetically, by the dynamisms that constitute and determine their internal milieu, “but also ecologically, by the external movements which preside over its distribution within an extensity.”¹¹⁶ This extensity satisfies the relation required to map the “inside” with the “outside”, the inner constitution of differential being and its differentiated actualization. Moreover, “the dynamisms are no less temporal than spatial. They constitute a time of actualization or differentiation no less than they outline spaces of actualization...the times of differentiation incarnate the time of the structure, the time of progressive

¹¹³ Ibid 215.

¹¹⁴ Ibid 215.

¹¹⁵ Ibid 216.

¹¹⁶ Ibid 216.

determination. Such times may be called differential rhythms.”¹¹⁷ That is to say that all actualizations are becomings, and becomings take time. Without time, and indeed, without the principle of eternal return, nothing could be generated. But, what is generated is the actualization of the virtual, the *drama* of beings:

dramatization is the differentiation of differentiation, at once both qualitative and quantitative. However, in saying ‘at once’ we mean that differentiation differentiates itself into these two correlative paths, species and parts, determination of species and determination of parts. Just as there is a difference of difference which gathers up the different, so there is a differentiation of differentiation which integrates and welds together the differentiated.¹¹⁸

The differential relations condense as singular points in the actual as *parts*, and the singular points are condensed in the actual as *species*.¹¹⁹ Deleuze states: “Dynamism thus comprises its own power of determining space and time, since it immediately incarnates the differential relations, the singularities and the progressivities immanent in the Idea.”¹²⁰

Singularities are the immanent modes of expression that give rise to the Idea, whereas the Idea itself is an unfolding drama of forces in relation: “the role of dramas is to specify concepts by incarnating the differential relations and singularities of an Idea. Dramatization...acts below the sphere of concepts and the representations subsumed by them.”¹²¹ Even the typology of differentiation is dramatic, for it implies a dynamism. As Deleuze states, there “is necessarily something cruel in this birth of a world which is a chaosmos, in these worlds of movement without subjects, roles without actors.”¹²² But

¹¹⁷ Ibid 217.

¹¹⁸ Ibid 217.

¹¹⁹ Ibid 218.

¹²⁰ Ibid 218.

¹²¹ Ibid 218.

¹²² Ibid 219.

where does actualization take place? The drama of actualization “takes place in three series: space, time and also consciousness.”¹²³

We now begin to note the crucial importance of time in any “manifestation” or “incarnation” of the virtual in the actual, for “repetition is the power of difference and differentiation: because it condenses the singularities, or because it accelerates or decelerates time, or because it alters spaces. Repetition is never explained by the form of identity in the concept, nor by the similar in representation.”¹²⁴ And perhaps the most telling feature of all that truly brings Deleuze’s theory of the immanence operating behind and through the Idea is the temporal nature of the concept itself insofar as what “remains outside the concept refers more profoundly to what is inside the Idea.”¹²⁵ This is what furnishes our ability to find new ways of thinking.

However, our portrait of this virtual-actual couplet remains incomplete. We have considered the movement from virtual to actual, but what of the reverse movement, or *counter*-actualization. What is it? How does it work? But more importantly, how does it differ from Hegelian actuality?

Hegel does not demonstrate how becoming is at all possible, but rather installs it as a given item as the result of a synthesis between Being and Nothing. However, this type of becoming passes away when Being becomes static and determined. Becoming without real movement is not becoming, for how else can Being endure if not by the constant duration of becoming? Moreover, a merely conceptualized form of becoming belies real movement insofar as it only demonstrates becoming as a representation, as simply part of our image of thought. And, if becoming is reduced to nothing more than

¹²³ Ibid 220.

¹²⁴ Ibid 220.

¹²⁵ Ibid 220.

our thought *of* it, then the *movement* that is the result of this becoming is also merely conceptual, loaded down by reconstituted universals as the image of thought that arrests the becoming of things into a static and temporal unity. An *actualized* becoming ceases to be a true becoming, but imbues becoming with telos, assigning its own completion in the static determination of Being. However, what is the movement from the actual to the virtual? It is the violent and insurgent birth of affirmative difference from the repressive encasement of representation and the reconstituted universal; it is the becoming-active of forces. The universal and abstract nature of the concept of Being is dissolved in this rupture: the conceptual difference of Being is sloughed off in a fiery ascent of becoming-different. Without the universal to give Being its determination, Being becomes immanent and univocal, no longer chained by conceptuality—a being that can only be known through its effects, its univocal expression, a being *of* the sensible.

From the above, we may begin to glean what difference exists between Hegelian conceptuality and Deleuzian counter-actualization. For Hegel, negation is determination, the actualization of Being, but it fails to explain the real movement of Being the way that Deleuze's counter-actualization (movement from the actual to the virtual) does. Counter-actualization is the opposite of Hegelian actualization, which is to say that the external differences of Being produced by dialectical negation are counter-actualized and affirmative internal differences within Being emerge. A new image of thought arises at the point that the actuality of dialectical negation is counter-actualized and Being is grasped as a Being of the sensible rather than Being as mere conceptuality. Hegelian negation is a becoming-reactive of thought, a will to nothingness through its serialized determinations that beget static actualizations. Despite the term *Aufhebung* and its

definition of “raising up and preserving,” determinations and actualization sink and depreciate life, a kind of *Absteigen*, for these are the means by which the difference of Being is rendered only conceptual, and Being is made “heavy” with imposed contradictions through our tendency to make Being a representation in our old image of thought. By contrast, Deleuze’s counter-actualization is an *active* negation that raises actualization up to the point of its dissolution, affirming the being of becoming. However, we could not say that counter-actualization is an *Aufhebung*, for what is raised up is not “preserved”, but submitted to a complete dissolution of all negativity in an active nihilism performed by the two selective principles of the eternal return.

The discussion on the difference between Hegel’s actuality and Deleuze’s virtual-actual couplet is not enough in itself to truly punctuate Deleuze’s argument as an effective critique of Hegel. The means by which we can truly get at a robust Hegel critique is through what Deleuze calls “transcendental empiricism.” We have already been made privy to Deleuze’s theory of forces, which implies transcendental empiricism as its milieu, but what remains is to complete the picture. Transcendental empiricism unites the particular discussions of force, concept, chance and the eternal return, the being of becoming, virtual-actual distinction, and non-conceptual difference in such a way as to function as Deleuze’s most finely tuned argument against Hegelian metaphysics.

Deleuze’s empiricism is an effort to demonstrate the “concrete richness” of the sensible, wherein what makes transcendental empiricism “transcendental” is that it is necessary condition without providing a foundation for knowledge claims, and it is an empiricism because it focuses on the real conditions of actual experience.¹²⁶ What truly

¹²⁶ Bruce Baugh. “Transcendental empiricism: Deleuze’s response to Hegel,” *Man and World*, 25 (1992): 133.

demarcates this type of empiricism is its focus on real instead of conceptual difference, difference that is the being of the sensible. Conceptual difference “determines the possibility of repeatable experiences that are identical in respect of their organizational form”, which is to say that conceptual difference determines the equivalence of different actualizations or instantiations of the concept.¹²⁷ The real difference is the being of the sensible that is outside of this conceptuality, functioning as the ground of a truly being-different.

Why does Hegel not attribute to empiricism this transcendental aspect? The problem with empiricism, as Hegel sees it, is that it can only deal primarily with finite and sensuous knowledge. Pure sensuous experience cannot gain access to pure thought of Being and its determination. Empiricism cannot give an adequate explanation of necessary causes; it can only speak of accidents. If perception precedes conception, how is thought at all necessary or possible?: “The Empirical School elevates the facts included under sensation, feeling and perception into the form of general ideas, propositions, or laws...general principles (such as force) are to have no further import or validity of their own beyond that taken from the sense-impression, and that no connection shall be deemed legitimate except what can be shown to exist in phenomena”¹²⁸ and in empiricism “lies the great principle that whatever is true must be in the actual world and present to sensation.”¹²⁹ Hegel charges empiricism with taking certain metaphysical presuppositions for granted. Its method is still rationalist insofar as it proceeds by the deductive syllogism: “there is a fundamental delusion in all scientific empiricism. It employs the metaphysical categories of matter, force, those of one, many, generality,

¹²⁷ Ibid 134.

¹²⁸ Hegel, *Logic* §38, p. 61.

¹²⁹ Ibid §38, p. 61.

infinity, etc.; following the clue given by these categories it proceeds to draw conclusions, and in so doing presupposes and applies the syllogistic form.”¹³⁰ The Empirical school “makes sense-perception the form in which fact is to be apprehended; and in this consists the defect of Empiricism. Sense-perception as such is always individual, always transient.”¹³¹ The empirical analysis of concrete things attempts to separate the attributes of that thing, the result that the thing is merely the collection of these attributes and nothing more (i.e., no essence). This analysis kills the life of the thing, for “life can exist only in the concrete and one.”¹³² What empirical analysis lacks is a reunion with Thought to understand the essence *as well as* its existence in their unity. Empiricism posits differences in all things, “these very differences are nothing after all but abstract attributes, i.e., thoughts. These thoughts, it is assumed, contain the real essence of the objects; and thus once more the axiom of bygone metaphysics reappear, that the truth of things lies in thought.”¹³³ And so, empiricism by its very method, is brought back to what it had initially separated from: the primacy of Thought.

However, Hegel asserts, there are two consequential errors of the empirical method: one, that the multitude can never equal the universal (for a mere enumeration of all existent things lacks the thought of their totality) and two, that it lacks necessary connection (for it lacks the universal concept to unify them as a whole). Moreover, to follow the principle of empiricism further, thinking itself is merely another accident in a manifold of undetermined singularities. That Thought should be thus degraded to the empirical offers no unifying faculty to organize or give necessary connection between

¹³⁰ Ibid §38, p. 62.

¹³¹ Ibid §38, p. 62.

¹³² Ibid §38, p. 63.

¹³³ Ibid §38, p. 63.

mere existent things and their essences, and so the only way in which things are differentiated is by attributes that initially rely on the faculty of thought to be recognized in the first place.

Hegel includes sensible particularity as a moment in the self-articulation of the Notion. However, although Hegel's Notion has an empirical content, it lacks a true sense of empirical actuality. Bruce Baugh uses the example of the same symphony performed on two separate nights: the *difference* between these same performances are not in the Notion, but rather the synthesis of form and content are the same. That is, what is performed is identical but the performances differ. Hegel's system cannot account for this variation. Such a variation in the expressed content under the same concept of its form can be the result of other subtle or subterranean variations in difference in the two performances, such as a placement of instruments, a minute effect of reverberation in the concert hall, the placement of the patrons, the placement of the instruments in their relation, etcetera. "The Hegelian Idea, to the extent that it transcends its actualizations [cannot] explain the existence of any particular actualization...but only the form the actualization will take."¹³⁴

For Hegel, if the empirical is pure actuality (pure here and now) it falls outside the Notion, and so therefore has no real content because it lacks the determinacy that conceptual thought grants it. However, there can be, according to Deleuze, difference without thought. He argues this by way of outlining his transcendental empiricism as an alternative to classical empiricism.

¹³⁴ Baugh, "Transcendental Empiricism: Deleuze's Response to Hegel" 134.

Non-conceptual difference accounts for the differences between a multiplicity of instantiations of a singular concept.¹³⁵ This means that several representations or instantiations of the same concept can still be identical in terms of the concept and yet retain their singularity without a correlation of negative determination. It is not Thought that produces these differences, but Thought that discovers them in a post facto way, as a product of fortuitous experience.

The relation between actualities is purely contingent: “there is no necessity for a set to have n number of members, it has the number of members that correspond to the quite fortuitous conjunction of circumstances producing actual members of the set.”¹³⁶ The relation between actualities is external, i.e., *non-dialectically determined*.

This logic of non-conceptual difference that relies on external relations (the contingent and particular rather than the necessary and universal) is an inversion of abstract conceptual thinking. For, Deleuze’s transcendental empiricism asserts that the condition of the concept is precisely given by the real conditions it abstracts from. That is, in contrast to classical empiricism, the real conditions of experience—instantiations of empirical actuality—are not explained by an a priori concept. The intelligibility or inner design that may be said to exist prior to the actual instantiation of the possible is, according to Deleuze, mapped on to the real conditions post facto. Deleuze views the rational explanation of the real as an illusion, since this rationalization can only truly occur only after what is to be made intelligible has occurred. This is to say that the concept is pushed back to the origin, as the explanatory foundation of all concrete experience. “No amount of abstraction will ever generate the concrete” precisely because

¹³⁵ Ibid 135.

¹³⁶ Ibid 136.

empirical actuality is not merely the difference between concepts, but a fundamental difference between the concept and the actual instantiation of that concept.¹³⁷ The error Deleuze attributes to Hegel is exactly this: that *nowhere within the concept is there an explanation of its empirical actuality*.¹³⁸ The concept of Being does not in itself have any explanatory resource to explain an actual instance of Being. The weakness becomes evident when something unexpected and new is produced in the world, and conceptual thought attempts to seize upon it and render it intelligible *while at the same time* this concept is presented as though it preexisted the fortuitous discovery of a new empirical actuality. That is, the concept is made to explain all empirical actuality and anything new that occurs is patterned against an already existing concept rather than to understand something new in its own difference. This is not to say that anything new that is produced emerges *ex nihilo*, for indeed the conjunction of two or more things may already be known in their own right to exist in Thought. What the concept cannot explain is why particular elements or forces come together, nor can it always predict the outcome of their conjunction. For Deleuze, the richness of the problem field act as conditions that are prior to the conceptual: “The real causes of experience, unlike universal concepts in relation to representations, need not resemble their effect in any way, any more than an organism need resemble its genetic material.”¹³⁹ These real causes are not universal a priori conditions, but are themselves singular and particular. The causes that are instantiated are as aleatory and singular as the effects they produce. As we noted in chapter two, the aleatory combination of forces act as the real causes of things, these

¹³⁷ Ibid 138.

¹³⁸ Recall for Kant the problem of how a particular intuition is subsumed under a particular concept. Kant’s solution is his schemata. Ideas, for Deleuze, are problems and function as his schemata.

¹³⁹ Ibid 138.

forces being *coextensive* with their effects. These forces do not merely disappear when a being is produced, but rather owing to the perpetual becoming of that being these forces are constantly at play, affected and affecting. These real experiences “*empirically constituted* through a chance concatenation of forces” fall outside of thought, and are indeed productions of the unthought.¹⁴⁰ Although thought can train itself to understand forces in terms of their type, it cannot foresee the outcome of these forces in relation. And so therefore the concept is not an adequate explanation for why beings persist, why they continue to become, and why anything new is produced. This will essentially come to the fore in Deleuze’s argument against Hegelian teleology of inner design. Transcendental empiricism is both a genesis and a production. It is a genesis of things without conceptual origin, as a coextensive relation of forces as singular causes to their unforeseeable effects, and is a production of new empirical actuality. These productions are multiplicitous, and their plurality cannot be adequately reduced to the concept.

Deleuze’s assertion that the causes do not necessarily precipitate an “exact match” to the actuality of things is not too distant from Hegel’s view. Both Hegel and Deleuze want to explore concrete actuality through a historical genesis, but the main difference will be one of logical method.¹⁴¹ That is, for Hegel, the historical genesis of things is determined by negations that resolve themselves in the positive content of a synthesis, and for this to hold the causes that enter into relation must be *intrinsically* connected to one another. Moreover, the causal development of things functions as its own purpose, thereby rendering these causal developments as teleological. Deleuze, on the other hand, wants to retain development *without* global teleology. Does this mean that Deleuze holds

¹⁴⁰ Ibid 139.

¹⁴¹ Ibid 140-1.

to a view of external design or teleology of the bad infinite? If Being is, according to Deleuze, always in a state of becoming, it can never become *something*, these becomings are not moved up to contradiction, and so therefore he avoids Hegel's criticism of external design. Hence, Deleuze's non-dialectical genealogical method; rather than forcing all causal developments under a universal telos, he endorses a kind of development or becoming that is perpetual and contingently patterned on external relations. Rather than viewing each emergent development of something as subordinate to a larger reason or immanent purpose, all emergent things are viewed in a positive way that interprets them as singularities.¹⁴² This is to interpret things as newly interactive conjunctions not foreseen by conceptual thought, not merely as a new instance of an old concept. This new form of "intuition" is sensitive to all that is outside of thought, and is the ground for new ways of thinking, feeling, and being. For the objection to hold that Deleuze endorses external design would require that the Being of becoming become *something*, that all Being has some at least immediate purpose, and that our rationality is the condition of all things created. If Deleuze held the view of external design, he would have understood determination negatively; i.e., that all things created are determined by some rational agency toward some ends. But, as we have seen, to believe in purpose is to rely on a representational understanding of power. To say that a grouping of trees has as its purpose in the creation of a house is to impose a representational limit on the singularity these trees are, subsuming their existence under some finite ends.

But Deleuze has not abandoned determination; in fact, it is a necessary ingredient in his theory of transcendental empiricism. His major objection to Hegel in this regard is in terms of a negative determination that tries to ground facts, that attempts to

¹⁴² Ibid 141.

subordinate all causal developments to a necessary teleological reasoning. For Deleuze, it is not the labour of the negative, but the affirmation of a new empirical actuality that understands difference as affirmative and always the product of a not-yet-known.

As Deleuze says of empiricism: it “is by no means a reaction against concepts, nor a simple appeal to a lived experience.”¹⁴³ As a mysticism *and* a mathematicism of concepts, empiricism is the scene of creation. The concept is “an object of an encounter.”¹⁴⁴ It is precisely the task of a higher empiricism to unmoor the universal concept and the old image of thought that rests satisfied with determining all that can be included in the concept before those encounters even truly begin. “We believe in a world in which individuations are *impersonal*, and singularities are *pre-individual*.”¹⁴⁵ If in individuation the ‘I’ is not presupposed, how can the introduction of the term “Other” form a suitable basis for contradiction? If particularity is not presupposed of singularity, then the introduction of the universal will equally seem insufficient to form a contradiction. Without contradiction no development through a process of negations can occur. What Hegel appears to perform in his critique of empiricism is the imposition of false contraries which only serve as a means for Hegel to restate his own position that privileges Thought and its generalities as a means of making empiricism an easy foil. Instead of demonstrating real movement and mediation, “Hegel substitutes the abstract relation of the particular to the concept in general for the true relation of the singular and universal in the idea.”¹⁴⁶ The “drama” of ideas, the “theatre of repetition” that is the time of the virtual and actual, is buried under a thick philosophical bed of representational

¹⁴³ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* xx.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid xx.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid xxi; emphasis added.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid 10.

concepts: Hegel “creates a false theatre, a false drama, a false movement.”¹⁴⁷ It is essentially Hegel’s critique of the sensuous and immediately given in traditional empiricism that allows him to justify his own dialectical method, a series of developmental blockages that inaugurate an elaborate latticework of fixed generalized concepts. These concepts reflect the real, but this reflection as such is the element of generality and representation, and it is the Thought-concept that can only lead back to itself.

With all that we have said about affirmative difference and singularities, one could object to Deleuze’s transcendental empiricism as merely another way of speaking of diversity. However, transcendental empiricism is not a doctrine of difference as diversity. Instead, transcendental empiricism lays down the conditions for actualizing diversity. This particular construction of transcendental empiricism as the difference that is not diversity plays itself out on two boards: the ontological and the epistemological. As ontology, “transcendental empiricism holds that we must provide a generative account of the concepts that we use in thought as opposed to positions which hold that concepts can be used to explain our experience.”¹⁴⁸ Transcendental empiricism does not attempt to provide the ground for all possible experience, but of the real conditions of experience. That is why transcendental empiricism is not a “sliding back” to the Kantian problem of the thing-in-itself. Transcendental empiricism allows us to think difference without a reduction to conceptual difference. That is, to think the concept of difference and not conceptual difference. That is, transcendental empiricism thinks difference without negativity, otherwise it would return to the model of the identical. That is, it thinks

¹⁴⁷ Ibid 10

¹⁴⁸ Levi R. Bryant. “The Transcendental Empiricism of Gilles Deleuze” presented at the Pennsylvania State University for the 2000 Meeting of *The Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy* 2.

difference as a capacity to differ from itself. If difference were to lead back to mere diversity, Hegel would be waiting for us, saying that this difference as diversity already implies the contradiction and negative determination that characterizes conceptual difference. Finally, transcendental empiricism accounts for how Being, through the process of becoming, is individuated in the movement from the virtual to the actual. Since the guiding principle of transcendental empiricism is affirmative difference, it is possible to think being as a true singularity “without having recourse to hylomorphic models of individuation that think individuals in terms of a synthesis of essences.”¹⁴⁹

The epistemological character of transcendental empiricism is the immanence of difference to Thought. Knowledge is not immune to the process of becoming. Thought and Being are both in a state of becoming and so new difference is produced. Our Being and Thought are particular durations, but the being of the sensible is how these durations form a part of, and with, other durations. To *be* is to enter into other durations, and multiplicity is the different senses this produces. Empiricism deals with the passive manifold whereas transcendental empiricism is the being of the sensible: “Far from being the sensible itself, the being of the sensible is that through which the given is given without itself being given to the faculty of perception.”¹⁵⁰ Transcendental empiricism is *intensive* difference while diversity is *extensive* difference. The Hegelian model of difference relies on differences that exist outside of what is to be differentiated. It is the process of negative determination that makes difference merely conceptual, and merely diversity within the overall unity. Deleuze’s gains from phenomenology inform this position of intensive difference, but only to a point: transcendental empiricism is a

¹⁴⁹ Ibid 4.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid 5.

“return to the matters themselves in order to determine their real conditions, but unlike phenomenology this return is not the return of a subject that would reflectively analyze the intentional structure of consciousness.”¹⁵¹ Intensive differences are unequal and so cannot be instances of negated quantity. Just as forces are unequal, intensity cannot attain an equilibrium state. Intensity is never contradiction, but rather that those forces affirm their own quality without degrading this affirmation by making it contingent upon contradiction. Intensity is already given in all matter, allowing objects to manifest themselves in their most intense form of singularity. That is, in sum, that difference is bigger than a “mere” difference between two things set into an opposition.

Deleuze also wants to point out that there is more to the sensible than accidental instantiation, more than a collection of disorganized “thises” that require to be placed under the care of the Concept: “the aim is not to rediscover the eternal or the universal, but to find the conditions under which something new is produced.”¹⁵² Transcendental empiricism is truly a logic of multiplicities, and “multiplicity is the real element in which things happen. It’s multiplicities that fill the field of immanence, rather as tribes fill the desert without it ceasing to be a desert...immanence is constructivism.”¹⁵³ Whereas, in representation “[a]bstractions explain nothing, they themselves have to be explained: there are no such things as universals, there’s nothing transcendent, no Unity, subject (or object), Reason; there are only processes, sometimes unifying, subjectifying, rationalizing, but just processes all the same.”¹⁵⁴ These processes are themselves

¹⁵¹ Ibid 6.

¹⁵² Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues*. Trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987) vii.

¹⁵³ Deleuze, *Negotiations: 1972-1990* 146.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid 145.

becomings,¹⁵⁵ and these becomings “are acts which can only be contained in a life and expressed in a style.”¹⁵⁶ To *become* “is never to imitate...The question ‘What are you becoming?’ is particularly stupid...Becomings are not phenomena of imitation or assimilation, but of a double capture, of non-parallel evolution, of nuptials between two reigns.”¹⁵⁷ The transcendent character of representation as opposed to a transcendental Being of difference fails to account for the real conditions of experience, for when you invoke “something transcendent you arrest movement, introducing interpretations instead of experimenting.”¹⁵⁸ The only way in which empiricism can become transcendental is when it is apprehended “directly in the sensible that which can only be sensed, the very being *of* the sensible: difference, potential difference and difference in intensity as the reason behind qualitative diversity. It is in difference that movement is produced as an ‘effect’, that phenomena flash their meaning like signs. The intense world of differences, in which we find the reason behind qualities and the being of the sensible, is precisely the object of a superior empiricism.”¹⁵⁹

Deleuze effectively radicalizes Being, defining Being as difference. In addition, he defines time as repetition, but the repetition of what differs, and the difference of what repeats. Deleuze’s clarion call for positive difference presents an alternative model to Hegel’s conception of difference as the negation of identity: “In accordance with Heidegger’s ontological intuition, difference must be articulation and connection in itself;

¹⁵⁵ Ibid 146.

¹⁵⁶ Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues* 3.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid 2.

¹⁵⁸ Deleuze, *Negotiations: 1972-1990* 146. The use of interpretation here should not be mistaken for how it is used in Deleuze’s reading of Nietzsche wherein interpretation is the evaluation of *forces*.

¹⁵⁹ Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* 57.

it must relate different to different without any mediation whatsoever by the identical, the similar, the analogous or the opposed. There must be differentiation of difference, an in-itself which is like a *differentiator* by virtue of which difference is gathered all at once rather than represented on condition of a prior resemblance, identity, analogy, or opposition.”¹⁶⁰

The codification of difference into prefabricated binary oppositions denies the “seismic” perturbations of forces entering into dynamic relations. Hegel’s negation of the negation is simply not adequate to account for affirmative difference since it “presupposes affirmation as its ground and provenance”¹⁶¹ rather than discover it in its true “already-there-ness.” Moreover, history itself is not truly accounted for by negation, for there “are no definitive markers in a History of development through which to assign the value of a current state in relation to a previous one, no dialectical crust governing the nature and import of contradiction weighting movement with negation.”¹⁶²

But where do Hegel and Deleuze agree? Both will agree that the metaphysical project, despite what various postmodern philosophers like Derrida state, is unfinished; however, Hegel and Deleuze will disagree on the matter of teleology. There will no doubt be lingering doubts as to the rigour and charitable character of Deleuze’s critique of Hegelianism, that he conflates the *Phenomenology* with the *Logic*, but this criticism necessitates a study all its own. However, to merely make objections to Deleuze’s ontological project through a solely Hegelian lens will not do us much service; Deleuze himself despised the league of objectors and critics. In his view, objections “have never

¹⁶⁰ Ibid 117.

¹⁶¹ Daniel W. Conway, “Tumbling Dice,” *Deleuze and Philosophy: The Difference Engineer*. Ed. Keith Ansell Pearson (London: Routledge, 1997) 74.

¹⁶² Diane Beddoes, “Deleuze, Kant and Indifference,” *Deleuze and Philosophy: The Difference Engineer*. Ed. Keith Ansell Pearson (London: Routledge, 1997) 34.

contributed anything.”¹⁶³ For Deleuze, objections do not create anything, they do not construct problems—they merely remain mired in irrelevance: “You can listen to people for hours, but what’s the point?...That’s why arguments are such a strain, why there’s never any point arguing. You can’t just tell someone what they’re saying is pointless. So you tell them it’s wrong. But what someone says is never wrong, the problem isn’t that some things are wrong, but that they’re stupid or irrelevant.”¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues* 1.

¹⁶⁴ Deleuze, *Negotiations: 1972-1990* 130.

Conclusion

Deleuze's novel understanding of difference beyond conceptual difference is doubtless one that generates a host of serious questions, especially among Hegelians. Whenever one suggests an alternative to Hegelianism, even when it is not intended as a means of undermining a longstanding philosophical tradition, one must tread carefully and exercise great care not to give hasty treatment to Hegel's work. It is with view to this cautionary remark that our first chapter detailed the trajectory of the inquiry to the specific philosophical problem of difference.

In the second chapter, we outlined the ethical-political position of Deleuze in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* without attempting to confront Hegel except where it was necessary to foreground the subsequent chapters. Through Deleuze's understanding of genealogy, forces, chance, the eternal return, and the new image of thought, we detailed Deleuze's position on the Master-Slave dialectic and the Hegelian dialectic in general. Moreover, our discussion of the theory of forces and the art of posing the question (genealogy) functioned as key concepts in convening the claim of affirmative difference as an alternative to conceptual difference. It is precisely in showing Deleuze's ethical-political position that we are privy to how Deleuze was inspired by Nietzschean ethics, and the step he takes beyond Nietzsche to refine his own ontological position. The recognizable Nietzschean rubrics of genealogy, typology, will to power, and eternal return function, for Deleuze, as a means of critiquing the established view of difference as negatively determined, and furthermore ground his theories of transcendental empiricism and the virtual-actual distinction.

Our third chapter detailed and assessed Stephen Houlgate's criticism of Deleuze's ethical-political position, and his claim that Deleuze's understanding of Hegel is a distortion. We then fielded these objections by recourse to the text, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. By way of our exposition of Houlgate's charges, we discovered that Deleuze performed an unsatisfactory reading of Hegelianism; however, Houlgate himself engaged in a less charitable reading of Deleuze by remaining loyal to Hegelian negation without adequately considering Deleuze's position of affirmative difference, and what this entails as a forgetting of negation. Consequently, Houlgate viewed Deleuze's position of affirmative difference and the Hegelian dialectic as an oppositional structure, despite Deleuze's insistence that such oppositions are the tools of the dialectician, and not of the one who views life as affirmative difference. Moreover, Houlgate's commitment to a dialectical reading confirms Deleuze's assertion that those who remain loyal to a dialectical understanding create the fiction of oppositions in everything and so cannot think difference in its non-negative aspect. The choice of reading *Nietzsche and Philosophy* as an attempt to oppose Hegel, or as a theoretical launch pad for thinking the new, is a choice that may determine the type of reader in accordance to the typology of active and reactive, noble and base, which Deleuze sets down in the text.

In the fourth chapter, we detailed Deleuze's ontology as it is elaborated in *Difference & Repetition*, and showed how his theory of transcendental empiricism and virtual-actual couplet function as a critique of Hegel's negative conception of difference. As a response to Houlgate's criticisms, we elaborated upon the ontological features of Deleuze's philosophical approach, which showed how a negative conception of

difference is committed to the fictions of identity, resemblance, representation and contradiction. In order to think, feel, and perceive the new or affirmatively different, Deleuze asserts that we must forget negation and appreciate the uniquely intense singularities of things as they are, and he demonstrates this by his theory of transcendental empiricism. This theory, which we contrast with Hegel's understanding of classic empiricism, and the role Hegel extends to actualization, turns out not to be in direct opposition to Hegelianism, but rather a different way of understanding the world. We do not engage in declaring absolutely that one position is right and another wrong; instead, we identify Deleuze's specific problems with Hegelianism as a means of showing that in interpreting these problems, this actually opens up new and creative spaces where another way of thinking can emerge. This brings us back to Deleuze's ethical-political position of the importance of critique, for it is precisely the act of critique that identifies problems, these problems in turn functioning as zones for the possibility of creating/thinking something new. It is the shift from Be-ing as Think-ing to Being as Creating. There is a hidden ought in this premise: that we ought to align thinking with a creative act, and not to constrain thought under a rigid pattern of understanding.

In conclusion, following Deleuze's argument, all critique is inseparable from an act of creation. So, if Deleuze has critiqued Hegelianism, what has he created? What value can Deleuze's critique have for us? If Genealogy must appreciate each instance of that which needs to be questioned in an affirmative and unique way without recourse to negativity, has Deleuze succeeded in interpreting the forces and evaluating the values of Hegelianism? Has he determined the "types" or conceptual personae in Hegelianism?

And, more importantly, has he done this without resorting to the negativizing feature of creating or imposing opposition between his own view on difference and that of Hegel's?

In our discussion of Deleuze's ethical-political position, Hegelianism was portrayed as a reactive and base will, a negative will to power. In the dialectic's attempt to ground facts, establish essence, and to make of power a representation, Deleuze found all the dramatic characteristics of the Slave that blamed life in order to redeem it. In sum, he found in Hegelianism the dominance of reactive forces precisely due to the dialectical procedure of seeing life by its petty underside, as a series of oppositions to be resolved into a synthesis. He also discovered in Hegelianism a desire to rig the outcomes of chance, to make a representation of Being right from the start rather than to affirm the fortuitous nature of forces in relation that produce the Being of becoming.

However, it would be unfair to state, as Houlgate has, that Deleuze is posing his affirmative difference in opposition to Hegel's conceptual difference. Firstly, Deleuze's understanding of the will is inclusive; that is, negative dialectics is not opposed, but a part of the entire conception of the will to power as either affirmative or negative. Secondly, by what Deleuze says about the Master as completely self-affirmative and not relying on the Slave to define himself, the lesson of eternal return tells us it is not that we must oppose negation, but forget negation. If we actively negate the nihilism of the dialectic, it is precisely because this active nihilism is destructive in its act of creation, an active force going to the limit of what it can do irrespective of the obstacles in its path. It is the case of the painter or writer who destroys entire worlds and tramples over prevailing moral values without revenge; that is, the negation is an after-effect of an initial instance of

creation. It is when we begin with negation through a rational determination of life that is vengeful, that installs the fiction of opposition everywhere in order to triumph over a perceived opposition in order to declare victory. However, in making this victory depend on the triumph of an other, it is to make the power of triumph a representation, to make this other a limit to be traversed. It is to declare that here and now a foe has been overcome, and now I am Master. However, as the will to power states, true power is in perpetually becoming, perpetually overcoming resistance without fabricating objective ends, without making resistance against *something* one's end goal. Rather, it is to create and go to the limit of one's power, wherever that may be. Because this is a game of chance, we must be good players: we must affirm that everything is in a state of becoming as well as to affirm the results of this becoming no matter how monstrous, for it is often the case that in something monstrous is something new. Without this newness, we are damned to repeat ourselves, to feel, think and be in the same way, to misunderstand the stochastic nature of life itself. It is this Nietzschean overman that appears monstrous to us, for it affirms chance and what results of it, and as a result has gained a new perspective: the multiplicity of sense that it discovers in this new way of thinking, feeling and perceiving.

It is precisely why we misunderstand Deleuze if we read his works as reacting against Hegel. Deleuze's ideas are schemata, and an idea is not a solution but a problem. Ideas as questions rather than facts are the new image of thought. Genealogy is the art of posing problems, not grounding facts, and in essence is aligned with the will to power in the affirmative sense: to go to the limit of one's power to question. It is in this way that

we come to understand the typology and topology of the real, how our genealogical inquiry into the origin of values and the value of origin produces a geology of Being, the virtual milieu as the lava by which things become—and continue becoming. It is by this mode of questioning that we come to realize that Being is difference, affirmative, singular and as intensity or degree of power. Contrarily, the negative dialectic can only give content to Being through what it is not; that is, the character of difference in Being is reduced to mere diversity rather than the differential in itself inherent in its modes of expression, and so is moved up to contradiction. Hegelian negation fails to recognize the genealogy proper to thought and what it can do. Forces do not depend on the faculty of thought, but rather are pre-conscious. They relate to pre-individual singularities and intensities by way of a dramatization of ideas.

For Deleuze, Hegel is a false revolutionary, for his system is a movement of words and representations rather than one of life and evolution. It cannot account for real differences not already conceptually determined. He reconstitutes universals as moments within the concept, to which end all differences will be sublated at the end of time as a stable unity known as the Absolute. However, the question Deleuze poses to Hegel is this: if the argument for infinite global teleology is true, why has Being not already achieved equilibrium? The genealogical method of questioning demonstrates that forces are always unequal and singular, and so there is a constant development without teleology. That is, if forces are in relation without being reciprocally determined, they cannot be instances of negated qualities, and so therefore this development or becoming

is without cease and cannot resolve itself into equilibrium. If everything could be set into opposition and be negatively determined, how can anything truly new be produced?

The question still arises as to why we should adopt this theory of forces, this view of a perpetual becoming that does not rely on the universal concept or moral schema, why we should perceive difference affirmatively rather than to rely on negative determination. The answer, if it can be said that there is one, is *freedom*. By adopting the genealogist's non-moral system of valuation and interpretation of pluralism, we are free to interpret the multiplicity of senses Being possesses, we are free to affirm ourselves for what we are and that we are constantly becoming. We are free from a dogmatic image of thought that installs the fictions of opposition in the world. We are free to interpret life as singular, unique, and intense. More importantly, we are free to determine ourselves without recourse to what we are not. It is, in the Nietzschean sense, that Hegel may be perceived as a *delayer*, for complete self-determination only occurs at the end of history, whereas Deleuze provides us with a new reason to rejoice: that we may affirm ourselves now as completely determined right from the start, as different only in relation to our own innate difference and degrees of intensity. It is not thought that makes difference, but that difference is our constitution of Being.

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